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A master's thesis entitled:

The Vitalness of Somalia's Military Reform: A Key Element in Geo-Economic and Geopolitical Stability

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ABSTRACT

In 1991 growing political pressure and infighting led to the collapse of the Somalia government. Key institutions of governance disintegrated, and public services could no longer be provided. The Somali National Army was amongst the key institutions that collapsed and, in its place, warlords and clan militias emerged to fill the gap. Henceforth for over two decades, these non-state actors competed over control of both political and economic power while other radical organizations such as Al-Shahab emerged with an objective to establish an Islamic state. This instability thus led to displacement of populations, insecurity both at the domestic and regional level. This thesis seeks to examine how the collapse of Somali impacted the military and why moving forward in the transitional period, reforming the military is vital to the future of Somalia and geopolitical and economic stability. The thesis adopts state building and realism as it theoretical frameworks and argues for the need of military reforms within the conceptual frameworks of security reforms. Specifically, the thesis reiterates that if the Horn of Africa and the greater Eastern Africa region is to experience geopolitical and economic stability, then the Somali National Army should undertake key reforms in order to reinforce its capacity to resolve domestic instability in Somalia. This instability has been the causal factor in geopolitical and economic problems as a result of threats such as terrorism, piracy, and bilateral tensions between regional states. The study suggests that reforms in the military such institutional capacity building, coordination of security assistance, and establishing civilian oversight over military is critical in reviving the capacity of SNA and with it, the first step towards restoring regional stability.

ÖZET

1991'de artan siyasi baskı ve iç çatışmalar, Somali hükümetinin çöküşüne yol açtı. Yönetimin kilit kurumları parçalandı ve kamu hizmetleri artık sağlanamadı. Somali Ulusal Ordusu, çöken kilit kurumlar arasındaydı ve onun yerine, boşluğu doldurmak için çeşitli milisler ortaya çıktı. Bundan böyle yirmi yılı aşkın bir süredir, bu devlet dışı aktörler hem siyasi hem de ekonomik gücün kontrolü için rekabet ederken, El-Şebab gibi diğer radikal örgütler bir İslam devleti kurma hedefiyle ortaya çıktı. Bu istikrarsızlık, nüfusların yerinden edilmesine, hem yerel hem de bölgesel düzeyde güvensizliğe yol açtı. Bu tez, Somali'nin çöküşünün orduyu nasıl etkilediğini ve geçiş döneminde kalkınmanın, orduda reform yapmanın neden Somali'nin geleceği ve jeopolitik ve ekonomik istikrar için hayati olduğunu incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Tez, teorik çerçeve olarak devlet inşasında realizmi benimsemekte ve güvenlik reformlarının kavramsal çerçeveleri içinde askeri reformların gerekliliğini tartışmaktadır. Tez, özellikle, Afrika Boynuzu ve daha geniş Doğu Afrika bölgesi jeopolitik ve ekonomik istikrar yaşayacaksa, o zaman Somali Ulusal Ordusu'nun Somali'deki iç istikrarsızlığı çözme kapasitesini güçlendirmek için kilit reformlar yapması gerektiğini vurgulamaktadır. Bu istikrarsızlık, terör, korsanlık ve bölge devletleri arasındaki ikili gerilimler gibi tehditler sonucunda jeopolitik ve ekonomik sorunlara neden olmuştur. Çalışma, askeri alanda kurumsal kapasite oluşturma, güvenlik yardımının koordinasyonu ve ordu üzerinde sivil gözetim kurulması gibi reformların, Somali Ulusal Ordusunun kapasitesini canlandırmak ve bununla birlikte bölgesel istikrarı geri kazanmak için kritik öneme sahip olduğunu öne sürüyor.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFRICOM : United States African Command

AMISOM : African Union Mission in Somalia

ASWJ : Ahlu-Suna Wal Jama

AU : African Union

CIC : Council of Islamic Courts

EU : European Union

FGS : Federal Government of Somalia

FMS : Federal Member States

ICG : International Crisis Group

ICU : Islamic Courts Union

IED : Improvised Explosive Devices

IGAD : Intergovernmental Authority on Development

IMF : International Monetary Fund

MSSP : Mogadishu Security and Sustainability Plan

NATO : North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NISA : National Intelligence and Security Agency

SNA : Somali National Army

SSF : Somali Security Forces

SSR **:** Security Sector Reform

TFG **:** Transitional Federal Government

TNG **:** Transitional National Government

UAE **:** United Arab Emirates

UK **:** United Kingdom

UN **:** United Nations

UNHCR **:** United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees

UNSOS **:** United Nations Support Office in Somalia

US **:** United States

USD **:** United States Dollar

WB **:** World Bank

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1 CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Introduction

From a historical standpoint, societies that were directly involved in conflicts were often subjected to incur the impact and costs of reconstruction mainly on their own. However, increasingly, for either strategic security or moral reasons, concerns over the consequences of violent conflicts on national, regional, and international security have expanded significantly. Individuals or groups are not only preoccupied with how to end wars, but also how to engage in post-conflict reconstruction in a manner that prevents the future occurrence of such conflicts. Former UN Secretary-General Boutros Ghali (UN 1998: paragraph 63) introduced the concepts of preventive diplomacy, peace-making, and peacekeeping sequentially as key in the preservation of peace. In his definition of peacebuilding which encompasses these three concepts, Ghali emphasized on the ability of peacebuilding to "identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid relapse into conflict." The military occupies a central position in these post-conflict peacebuilding and state-building institutions.

In the past, that is, during the precolonial era, some scholars (Luckham 1994; Goody 1971) linked traditional militaries to modes of production and domination/ destruction. At the time, there was a significant dependence on the military to extract resources from the public (peasant farmers and merchants) in the form of tributes (tax) and in return, the leadership of different kingdoms, chiefdoms or city states would reinvest such tributes in the acquisition of weapons that were used by the military in the expansion of territory. However, one of the unintended consequences of this approach was that it deterred the further creation of wealth as producers could not access their surplus production in order to reinvest in productive activities. Similarly, for the other societies that became the target of territorial expansion by other groups, wealth was equally destroyed during conflicts.

In Europe, studies such as Tilly (2019) argued that majority of the European states emerged as "protection rackets" that were premised on the extraction of surplus productions through the use of force in exchange for protection. Thus, it was only after i) surplus wealth could be accumulated as a result of capitalism and more investments availed in industrialization of war; and ii) when leaders recognised that their ability to acquire more surplus to invest in warfare demanded that producers ought not to be overtaxed, that the role of the military and its nature evolved. These changes enabled states to engage in war in a much larger scale not witnessed before and expand their influences throughout other regions across the globe. Militaries thus became subordinated to those who had control over land and capital.

However, this image of the military has evolved significantly in the modern era even though there is the continuation of certain facets that characterised traditional militaries particularly in fragile and less developed countries. One key reason for the evolved military image in the modern era is that unlike in the past, concepts such as human rights, good governance, democracy, and increased inter-state relations have become widespread, and they play a big role in how militaries function and how they are legitimised in the domestic and international public spheres. In very exceptional circumstances are the military mainly subordinated to land holders or owners of critical capital. Indeed, in the contemporary times, to barely claim that the institution of the military has become a key pillar in the society constitutes an understatement. Modern militaries are not only important for the stability of a state, but also the survival of the state itself. In many ways, military personnel are a reflection of the people and under ideal circumstances, the larger society should be able to see the reflections of their collective values and aspirations in the military.

However, for far too long, militaries particularly those in Africa have barely reflected these ideals; that is, for several decades, it was too difficult to distinguish any common values between those of a society and the military. This is because after independence, during the

wave of consolidation of power by African heads of states and governments, the military acted as an effective and efficient tool to put down popular protests, and silence opposition voices calling for political reforms, thus, acting as main sources of conflict and insecurity. Similarly, in other parts of the world, the German military was criticised that it was used to propagate monarchical authority, used in despotic repression, and that it was isolated from the society, during the late 1840s when growing calls for military reforms intensified (Hochedlinger, 2016). Key among the propositions for reforms by the German liberal politicians and scholars included implementation of the requirement for all officers to take constitutional oaths, reduction in military costs, opening rank recruitment in the military for all 'men' of ability, and subjection of the military to parliamentary oversight (Boehling, 1996). In addition, the reformers called for decreased mandatory time of service for military personnel, reforms in the military judicial systems, guarantee of all civil rights of soldiers, and the establishment of a more efficient and effective national military (ibid).

While it is easy to point out the 'ills' of the military, there is a much bigger picture. In several countries particularly across Africa, military personnel have also been poorly compensated, and their ranks unjustly denied after splendid service. Soldiers have also often been exposed to inadequate training, provided with outdated equipment, irregularly paid, denied access to suitable insurance covers, and mismanaged. These challenges have tended to push many military personnel either individual or collectively in groups into unlawful activities. But due to little public accountability or civilian oversight that characterises governance in several African countries, many soldiers despite engaging in criminalised activities, have been able to get away with the worst abuses and subsequently, military institutions have tended to become embedded into a culture of impunity and violence. This characterization that cuts across fragile states experiencing crumbling military regimes and derailed development is openly recognizable to any observer of African politics. Many armies are yet to demonstrate

resemblance to the modern complex organisational and operational models that is found in the modern developed state. Instead, many African militaries are still organised as armed camps with clientelist allegiance to competitive high-ranking military officers or civilian political elites.

But this trend has comparatively been shifting since the beginning of the 21st century. Whereas other regions such as Latin American has increasingly become militarised (Scharpf 2020), sub-Saharan Africa has registered a different trend. Increasingly the region has been transforming from a hotspot of military coups and regimes (Powell and Thyne 2010; Basedau 2008) to a region characterised by increased confinement of the military within the barracks even though it is quite early to declare that the military has ceased its influence in domestic political issues. In this context, it is imperative to acknowledge that state formation in Africa will continue to remain tenuous in the near future partly because of the failure of fragile states such as Ethiopia, Somalia, Liberia, Mozambique, and Angola to establish monopoly over the use of force because of the existence of armed rebellion or armed groups, and secondly because some of the regimes have their legitimacies challenged by their own citizens.

Indeed, it is this understanding that underlies this thesis. Using the case of Somalia, I seek to demonstrate why as part of the post-conflict peacebuilding and state-building processes, it is vital for Somalia to undertake vital military reforms in order to lay a strong foundation for the state in consolidating domestic and regional stability. The lessons of South Sudan conflict in which the military was divided into two factions serves as a stern reminder on why failure to pursue essential military reforms risks thrusting a very fragile Somalia into an uncertain future where the chances of a similar outbreak of violent conflict is a live reality.

1.2 Contextualising Somalia

The Horn of Africa is a complex and conflict-prone region- two of states, that are South Sudan and Eritrea were established as an outcome of intrastate conflicts since the emergence

of the Cold War which partly laid the foundation for the existing rivalries through the strategy of proxy wars that characterised the era (Prunier 2004; Reno 1999). The region has also hosted some of the most fragile states including those with the possibility of having breakaway states. Some other regional governments have also from time to time demonstrated very limited constraints to the principles of non-interference on the internal affairs of other states, and low development, poverty, environmental degradation, drought, and challenges of governance have had a significant role in the emergence of perennial challenges facing the region, thereby, creating justifiable concerns on national, regional and international security. Indeed, it is this fragile nature of the region that has contributed to region's identity as a region prone to proxy wars, big power politics, and regional rivalries which have consistently thwarted efforts by previously collapsed states such as Somalia to re-emerge and establish sustainable stability by building a government widely accepted in the domestic sphere and beyond the territorial jurisdictions of Somalia.

Somalia is one amongst a very few numbers of nation-states in the whole world. Located in north-eastern horn of Africa, it gained independence in 1960 as the Republic of Somalia constituted of both the Italian and British administered Somaliland. Yet even after independence, there were more calls particularly during the government of Siad Barre who advocated for a much larger version of Somalia inclusive of all lands occupied by Somali ethnic groups in Djibouti, eastern Ethiopia and the Northern Frontier Districts of Kenya. Indeed, it was this grand vision of a 'Greater Somalia' that led to the Ogaden War with Ethiopia after Siad Barre ordered a military invasion into Ethiopia to expand the territorial boundaries of Somalia in 1977. The loses that Somalia incurred during this war which included the death of over 25,000 Somalis in less than a year, and the subsequent loss in the War marked the emergence of a united opposition with the intent of overthrowing the

government, a fete that was achieved in 1991, thus sparking the beginning of deeper fragmentation of Somalia and instability that has lasted for over three decades (Hesse, 2010).

When the government by Said Barre was overthrown in 1991, what followed was the disintegration of crucial institutions that sustain governance and demographic alterations in Somalia. The absence of a functioning central government rendered the state at the mercy of warlords who began to violently scramble for control of state assets both in the urban centres and in the rural areas that were under their spheres of influence. Events that surround the months between 1991 and 1992 were so devastating, displacing over 1.5 million people and leaving 25000 others dead (Healy & Bradbury, 2010: 10). Although the people who witnessed the disintegration of the state describe it as burbur (catastrophe), what the conflict has done to the Horn of African country nearly three decades is captured on the Failed State Index where Somalia has ranked amongst the top five countries between 1991-2021 (Daniels 2012; Hansen 2013; Makinda 1999). Since then, the conflict has transformed from a civil war to a complex mixture of terrorism, piracy and sectarian violence and an ill-equipped military has slowed the processes of post-conflict state-building. The impact of the crisis is no longer affecting the people of Somalia alone, but new threats have emerged threatening even regional countries. This comes on the background of a region whose member countries have yet to satisfactorily solve other pressing challenges such as disease, poverty, unemployment, low levels of literacy and underdeveloped infrastructure.

During the course of the three decades (1991-2021), the unprecedent crisis witnessed in Somalia could be explained in terms of the collapse of the state. However, other factors such as the impact of internal and external interests and pressures have also contributed to the difficulties in the establishment of an effective central government (Menkhaus, 2013). In many ways, the decades-long elusive peace can be attributed to several missed opportunities as a result of certain poor decisions by both domestic and international actors in Somalia.

First, the establishment of flawed Transitional National Government (TNG) contributed to long periods of instability. In 16 years leading to 2012, Somalia was involved in 14 collapsed peace and reconciliation conferences. For instance, the Arta Conference that first established the TNG in 2000 collapsed on grounds that it had been dominated by clans based in Mogadishu such as the Hawiye and did not represent a government of national unity.

Secondly, missed opportunities from the prior implementation of the Mogadishu Security and Stabilization Plan (MSSP) which was established in 2005 to a) facilitate the demobilization of militia groups; b) enhance public security through the disbandment of more than 40 militia installed roadblocks in the city; and c) oversee the creation of district and municipal councils as well as the administration of Mogadishu contributed to the long period of instability in Somalia. At the beginning, the initiative was successful in improving public security and it enhanced popular mobilization that temporarily emboldened civil society groups and the media, such that both militia groups and Islamist leaders were caught unawares by the introduction of 'people politics' in Mogadishu which had been missing since the government collapsed in 1991. For the first time, militia groups and the Islamist leaders were facing an organised public condemning them of their criminal and radical activities. According to a study by Menkhaus (2007) popular radio talk shows were packed by callers who criticised militia leaders for contributing to insecurity while women groups publicly confronted armed youths to remove roadblocks across the city. However, this spontaneous civic movement quickly lost momentum and having sensed the threat of such a popular movement re-emerging again, al-Shaabab assassinated a leading peace activist in July 2005, thereby, marking the beginning of the reversal of the achievements of the MSSP, and deteriorating instability.

Third, the collapse of the US-led Alliance against the Islamists contributed to further violence and conflict in Somalia. In 2006, the United States had established an Alliance for the

Restoration of Peace and Counter-terrorism due to the concern that Somalia could become a major operational hub for the al-Qaeda terrorist group, and that some of the high-ranking members of the organisation implicated in the 1998 US embassy bombings in Nairobi had found a safe haven in Somalia amongst the Islamists. This development created far-reaching political consequences that thrusted Somalia into further conflict. Specifically, Islamist groups and warlords in the capital Mogadishu established an coalition of convenience to counter the US-led Alliance which was comprised mainly of other local clan militia groups and businessmen drawn from the Hawiye clan (Barnes and Hassan, 2007). The defeat of this Alliance accelerated the rise to national power of the Islamists who won almost every battle while projecting themselves as better trained, motivated, and equipped that the other local militia groups allied to the United States (Tomlinson, 2006).

Fourth, the radicalisation of the Council of Islamic Courts (CIC) comprised of both moderate and hardliners further contributed to a long period of instability in Somalia. CIC was an umbrella organisation for the Islamists and was considered as the strongest political and militia force in Mogadishu (Mantzikos, 2008) and during the early months after its establishment in 2006, it enjoyed great success. Its control expanded to other parts of the country outside Mogadishu; became the leading militia and political force; enjoyed widespread and passionate support of Somalis in the country and in diaspora; gained greater access to financial resources and weapons; governed Mogadishu; and even managed to win over support from the international community which put pressure on the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) to negotiate with the CIC in order to establish a government of national unity. This expanded appeal to the CIC by Somalis was partly because many Somalis were more attracted to the idea of Islamism than its alternative clannism, and partly because CIC had successfully managed to get rid of warlords and criminal gangs in Mogadishu for the first time since the collapse of the state in 1991. However, with the outfit largely seen as the basis

from which a new period of state revival and stability could be achieved in Somalia, two deterrents, that is Ethiopia and the radical wing within the CIC itself emerged as very significant challenges. However, the failure of the moderate Islamist to consolidate control over the hardliners (jihadist wing) thrusted CIC into entrenched radicalization that culminated in a violent confrontation with Ethiopia. The CIC also begun drawing sharp criticism for the consolidation of power and authoritarianism by its tendencies to intimidate critics and deconstruct any potential platforms that opposition voices could use against it. For instance, media entities were coerced not to air or print stories which could 'public create confusion' and unauthorised public gatherings where political matters were on the agenda were forbidden. In addition, the composition of CIC came under critical scrutiny and the dominance of the Hawiye clan in the institution was evaluated as a strategy by the Islamists (Hawiye) to counterbalance the influence of the Darood who dominated the Transitional Federal Government. Ultimately, the influence of the radical wing of CIC- the al-Shaabab, as well as the tensions with the Transitional Federal Government backed by Ethiopia, led to violent clashes with Ethiopia in which the CIC lost and Ethiopian subsequently occupied Mogadishu in 2006 leading to more violence, suffering and displacement.

Lastly, the Ethiopian occupation and 'counterinsurgency' operations in Mogadishu heralded the complete evolution of the al-Shaabab into a terrorist group conducting terrorist activities such as targeting hotels and buildings where personnel of the Ethiopian forces resided. The loss of Mogadishu by the CIC as well as the resistance of local Somali communities in Mogadishu against the authority of the TFG accelerated armed a vicious armed resistance. Both the Ethiopian forces and the TFG responded by organising counterinsurgency operations that targeted whole neighborhoods and led to civilian casualties and mass displacement of people. According to Menkhaus (2007), 'mopping up' operations lead to the death of over 1000 civilians and displaced about 300, 000 residents from Mogadishu during the early

months of fighting in 2007. The TFG additionally imposed strict regulations on the distribution of humanitarian assistance into Mogadishu, and although it lacked qualified manpower to inspect shipments of food, it insisted that it had to carry out the task, thus greatly hindering the delivery of humanitarian aid in Mogadishu.

This brief contextualisation of Somalia provides an insightful overview of the political challenges that has faced Somalia since the collapse of the central government. It provides the reader with a background information of how conflict in Somalia has survived for over three decades and lays the ground for the analysis of why, and how the Somali military, a key element in state-building and survival can play a greater role in restoring the hope and aspirations of Somali citizens at independence. The military has become a vital component if the Somali crisis is to be resolved as well as position the country as a significant actor in the geopolitical and geo economic stability in the larger Eastern Africa region.

1.3 Problem statement

According to a study by Schmitter et al. (1997), a historical observation from the emergence and development of states demonstrates that change is part and parcel of political systems, although given that political systems are constituted of different parts, not all changes can occur at the same pace and have the same impact. The different components of a political system include military, electoral systems, mechanisms of public accountability, political parties, and civil liberties. The military, which forms the main topic of analysis in this thesis, is unique because despite its linages to other subsystems of a political system, tends to evolve based on its own internal dynamics. In other words, that the military can lag behind during the transformation of other subsystems of a political system or outpace them. Similarly, it can impact political systems by extending its role beyond its traditional mandate of deterrence and defense to other domains such as creating restriction on candidates who can participate in political competition, establishment and management of political parties, or curtail civil

liberties in the guise of "protecting national security" (Croissant et al. 2013). If the military develops a strong influence on the different subsystems of a political system, then, good governance or democracy which is critical especially for fragile states emerging from violent conflict can be thrown off course.

By recognising this, then we appreciate the possibility of the military to impact the trajectory of a political system at any given point. For a country like Somalia, the military is not properly constituted and managed to operate in a professional manner, it could stall any democratic gains or at worst, reverse such gains during critical periods of transitional processes from conflict to stability. Yet, if propre reforms are successfully implemented within the institution of the military, then this assumed threat of the military erodes and civilian authorities become empowered to generate ways of harnessing the skills and capacity of the military in nation building while also consolidating civilian oversight of the military.

Yet despite the relevance of the military in facilitating transitional processes after conflicts, and its potential role in nation-building, attention to military reforms has been limited. This is despite observable and documented realities of the challenges facing the Somali National Army such as delayed payment of soldiers, existence of "ghost soldiers" in payrolls, low operational capacity, and lack of adequate resources. This study will thus focus on which key areas of reforms are needed to be addressed in order to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of Somali National Army.

1.4 Research question

This thesis identifies three core research questions to guide the study

1. How has the SNA evolved between 1960 and in post 2008 era?

2. What are the key challenges facing the SNA and operationalisation capacity?

3. How can military reforms in Somalia contribute to geopolitical and geo-economic stability?

1.5 Justification of the study

The year 2021 marked the third decade since the collapse of the state of Somalia in 1991. During this period Somalia has suffered from three expansive categories of violence. The most prominent of these has been the conflict between government (both the national and federal government) and terrorist or radical organizations such as the al-Shaabab and the Islamic State in Somalia. This conflict has been subjected to significant international and regional attention. Secondly, there has been significant levels of inter-clan conflicts largely shaped around the struggle for political power in the country, both at the regional and national levels. Competition in this form of conflicts have been driven by the desire of particular clans through clan militias, to have higher influence over critical infrastructure such as ports, transport routes, and economically prosperous towns across Somalia. Between 2011-2016, a report by the World Bank noted that clan militias were accountable for approximately 15% of all the violent incidences that were recorded. Thirdly, Somalia also experiences localised intercommunal conflicts over scarce natural resources such as farmlands, grazing lands, and water sources, problems that have been exacerbated by environmental degradation and climate change.

Although a national army is not instrumental neither is it recommended in dealing with intercommunal or inter-clan conflicts, it is of great significance in combating non-state actors such as terrorist organisations operating in the country. The war on al-Shaabab has spanned over a decade, largely because of the previous absence of a national army and even after the re-establishment of the army, internal challenges have hampered the military from performing its duties as required. The ability of the state to establish strong control not only with its capital city Mogadishu, but also in other regions of the country has been limited and although

international peacekeeping missions such as the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) have played a significant role, the country, as it is in a period of transitioning from conflict will require a feasible strategy to protect the state and its citizens and provide an exit strategy for international peacekeepers.

It is in this context that this study becomes relevant in stimulating and advancing the debate on the essence of military reforms in Somalia. The study will seek to demonstrate that a functional military of Somalia is not only important at the domestic level, but also holds the key to the regional political and economic stability of the larger Horn of Africa and the East African region. The findings of this research will be of significance to military experts as well as in academia particularly for those scholars and readers focusing on Somalia's post-conflict processes and the African politics in general. It lays a foundation upon which new and existing discourses can continue on how the military should be reformed to enable it to adapt to the complex economic, political, and security dynamics facing modern states.

1.6 Key argument

The military is an essential institution of the state fundamentally used a vessel to reinforce the external security of a particular state and its citizens. However, this traditional role of the military has largely been capped by international laws through the UN Charter that prohibits any state from aggressively exercising its military as an instrument to pursue and impose state powers both within and outside its territorial jurisdictions. In this context, the role of the military has largely been associated by deterrence and defence. However, the nature of the security environment has also significantly over time as state are also faced by new threats largely defined in terms of interstate conflicts with far reaching implications that could destabilise geographical regions, thereby, creating deep political and economic problems.

This thesis argues that military reforms occurs within a larger discourse of the security sector reforms (SSR) that is an evolutionary process, is governed by context, and has an entry point.

In a complex security environment that characterises the postmodern state, the role of the military is increasingly not predetermined neither is it unchangeable. Instead, the military can play varying roles as shaped by multiple flexible factors such as historical contexts of the military institution, the security environment of a state (such as ongoing conflicts), and the perception of the public and the political class. For Somalia, decades of conflicts and rooted clan competition over economic and political power has proved challenging for post-conflict emerging Somalia. In this regard, the military as a state instrument exercising the mandate to use force is therefore forced with a myriad of challenges, which if not carefully addressed can lead to greater instability for the country and the region at large. This thesis underlies that Somalia which is gradually emerging from a period of violent conflict should undertake critical reforms of the military ranging from issues of operational capacity, governance of the military, and sustainability of the military. The author argues that it is imperative that reforming the operational capacity of the military should be done in a manner that there can be a general capacity of the state to counter a large-scale military intervention by another aggressor. Secondly, that ensuring that governance of the military is delegated to a civilian and democratic control such that moving forward, institutional reforms including decision-making procedures and structures become self-reinforcing. Thirdly, that the reforms undertaken should be guarantee sustainability of the military in order for the government to gradually transcend from dependency on external actors for military funding. The size of the military should be sustained to levels appropriate for operational requirements and participation in other international peacekeeping operations. Collectively, undertaking key reforms in these sectors could provide Somalia with the necessary influence and stability to pursue and promote geopolitical and geo-economic interests.

1.7 Structure of the thesis

This thesis is divided into three chapters. In chapter one the thesis focuses on introduction of the study. It provides an in-depth introduction of the study by examining the background of instability in Somalia, the main arguments of the study, and the justification of the study, the methodology of study, research questions, and the significance of the study. In addition, the chapter focuses on the conceptual and theoretical framework of the study. In the conceptual framework, the research examines the key principles that characterise military reforms. In the theoretical framework, the study adopts the theory of realism and state building to contextualise the role of the Somali National Army.

In chapter two, the research examines the contemporary political dynamics in Somalia. Specifically, it provides a strong introductory background to different actors in Somalia, their competing interests, and how they contribute to the elusive peace in the country. The study also examines the SNA and how it has evolved between 1960 when Somalia got independence in the post-2008 era which marked a new era of efforts by domestic and international actors to revive the military. The chapter also focuses on the challenges facing the reform process of the SNA and identifies 10 factors.

In the chapter three, the thesis examines how the disintegration of the SNA has contributed to geopolitical and economic instability. And a consequence, in order to reverse that impact the study shows how and why security sector reforms is critical to revitalise the SNA and boost both domestic security in Somalia, which is an essential component of geopolitical and economic stability of the Horn and East Africa region. Chapter three also includes the conclusion of the study.

1.8 Research methodology

Given the unprecedented impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on both mobility and interactions, this has been designed as a desk study with an in-depth analysis of secondary

sources of data on Somalia. The author examined secondary data from various sources such as academic articles, reports by international organisations such as the African Union, United Nations, European Union, World Bank, and other government websites. The collected data was then examined through descriptive analysis with emphasis on thematic analyses that constitute the core concern of this research. This methodology is advantageous as it enabled the researcher to interpret and give contextualised meaning around the assessment of different themes. The findings were then presented as a qualitative narrative.

1.9 Literature review

Several studies have emerged to examine security sector reforms, some with a distinct focus on the military, while others have examined the whole institution being comprised of the military, the police, intelligence agencies, and other law enforcement agencies.

1.9.1 Security sector reforms and donor policies

Hendrickson and Karkoszka (2005) examined how donor policies can have an impact on SSR of states. The authors argued that donors support such reforms as part of a bigger agenda for the establishment of effective responses to pertinent security issues that are posed by the weakness of a particular state. In this regard, significant efforts are often directed towards the strengthening of security institutions, norms, and laws that govern the security sector in general in order to deter the outbreak of violent conflict. However, the success of such responses are also premised on how much they are integrated into the broader mechanisms of state-building and conflict prevention strategies in a manner that accounts for the unique and complex security challenges that post-conflict societies may be grappling with.

In several societies emerging from violent conflicts, the challenges to security can both be military and non-military in nature, thus, explained in terms of vulnerabilities and frailties which cannot be resolved through traditional military strategies. Many states are therefore faced with the responsibility of developing innovative and integrated responsive mechanisms

that strive to resolve underlying causes for insecurity. In this context, Hendrickson and Karkoszka (2005) argued that states may need to rethink the whole concept of security from state-centric paradigm to developing capacity of the individual.

In their study, the authors criticised donor policies for putting much emphasis on shaping the goals of security sector reforms and minimal focus has been directed toward developing an understanding of how institutions of security in societies transitioning from conflict work. In addition, the proposed models for security sector reforms by donor communities put priority on financial accountability and are largely designed to reflect Western experiences while local political and economic experiences that shape the efforts to provide security are disregarded. Cawthra and Luckman (2004) emphasised that understanding the local political and economic dynamics and integrating them into security sector reforms could offer an invaluable empirical foundation for the development of donor policies in the security sector.

1.9.2 African militaries and challenges to security sector reforms

A study by Williams (2005) examined the core issues involved in security reform programmes and the various attempts by African states to democratise their respective militaries and security sectors in general. Williams argued that although the emergence of complex and postmodern political systems have influenced a paradigm shift in the role of the military, yet the majority of African militaries are utilised based on the historical role of the military in secondary roles (roles outside the domain of direct deterrence or defence of the state) such as peace support operations, regional security, development, and police support. He attributes this observation to two critical factors. First, that the use of majority of African militaries today continue to be based on the classic modernist doctrine of the military as a defence force against external attacks held by national defence strategists as a result of the dominance of particular concepts in their minds and the influence of twentieth-century Western thinking on defence. Secondly, that this trend in the use of African militaries in

secondary roles is a reflection of their continuous involvement both in the historical context and in contemporary times, in the execution of secondary roles on a regular basis.

Williams (2005) thus emphasises on the essence of finding a balance between the primary and secondary roles of African militaries. First, such a balance could be reached by taking into account that although the military is maintained for the preservation of territorial integrity and sovereignty, this should be done through less expensive, and less technology-intensive forces, and more emphasis accorded on the establishment of reservist and part-time components of the military. Secondly, more attention can be placed on secondary roles of the military in defence policies and planning. It is important to note that the engagement of the military in secondary roles does not constitute the institution disregarding its primary mandate to safeguard its primary mandate, rather it entails fulfilling this mandate in more cost-effective manner that still enables the execute other responsibilities in the short, medium, and long-term basis.

Although since independence African states have undertaken key reforms in their respective militaries, there have been key lessons learned from such reform processes. First, that the scope of security sector reforms is expansive that often assumed because it transcends beyond traditional security institutions such as the military, police, and intelligence agencies to include presidential guards, coastguards, paramilitary organisations, political party militia groups, custodial services, and liberal armies. Secondly, that the success of the security sector reforms are also dependent on what extent they are considered as 'home grown' in order to reflect the dynamics of a country's military and national culture, financial resources available, and its force requirements. The imposition of non-home-grown models of security reforms in post-conflict societies could lead to the establishment of military institutions that lack legitimacy and are culturally detached from the government and the society they are mandated to protect. Lastly, security sector reforms are also embedded with the question of governance.

If success is to be recorded in security sector reforms, then it can only happen within the context of cohesion between various departments of government appropriate for the needs of the state; the reforms are affordability relative to the national budget; and there is accountability to civilian authorities. Collectively, these reforms also need the presence of strong, visionary, legitimate, and charismatic leadership with wide appeal from both the public and political spheres. Williams (2005) argued that reforms conducted with the main aim of pleasing external actors such as donors will yield unsatisfactory outcome.

1.9.3 Military training for post-conflict peacebuilding

Several studies (Gaub 2010; Guttieri 2004; Isturiz 2005) have examined the training of military for post-conflict peacebuilding. In post conflict societies, Isturiz (2005) argued that distinct training is necessary because the complex security scenarios found in post-conflict societies pose great challenges to the traditional military doctrines of warfare and training. In very fragile environments of post-conflicts transition military personnel are required to undergo special training in attitude management. This is because developing a highly aggressive or narrow-minded attitude could easily jeopardise and destabilise their operational environment and likely lead to additional conflicts. It is vital therefore for soldiers to develop an understanding the thin lines demonstrating restraint, energy, or arrogance.

According to a study by Ferreira (2017) military training programmes should be conducted through a sustained period in order to enhance asymmetric and conventional warfare training because failure to achieve this could lead to a decline in the quality of military force infrastructure. Ferreira suggested that such programmes should be broad in their scope and cover early warning training, intervention, conflict prevention, and peacebuilding.

1.10 Conceptual framework

Although this study has been designed to focus on the military aspect of the security sector, it is perhaps important to provide a general definition of what constitutes security sector and

security sector reforms in which the military exists and core component. According to a study by Groenwald and von Tangen Page (2002 pg. 1), the security sector connotes all those organisations "which have authority to use, or order the use of force, or threat of force, to protect the state and its citizens as well as those civil structures that are responsible for their management and oversight." Thus, the security sector is constituted of groups authorised to exercise tools of violence such as military, paramilitaries, and police; institutions monitoring the security sector such as parliaments, government ministries, and the civil society; and institutions mandated with the protection of the rule of law such as the judiciary, international human rights institutions, and the penal system (Hendrickson 1999 pg. 29).

In conducting security sector reforms, the primary aim is (the transformation of security institutions so that the play an effective, legitimate, and democratically accountable role in providing external and internal security for their citizens" (Groenwald and von Tangen Page (2002 pg. 2). In this context therefore, reforming the security sector necessitates widespread consultations to develop approaches that can enhance civilian oversight of the security sector, demilitarisation, peacebuilding, professionalization of the military and other security forces, and building respect for the rule of law.

Different countries across the world have been involved in security sector reforms with a focus on the military institution. But the concept of security sector has generally been used in contemporary discourses to reflect a broad scope of activities collectively put into a single term. In other words, the concept itself envisions the cooperation between different actors within the broad security realm in pursuing certain reform objectives such as modelling civil-military relations or enhancing the operational capacity and capabilities of security agencies. In many developing countries, particularly those coming out political instabilities, the security sector reform policy frameworks have often been developed and modelled by the international donor community such as European Union and great power states such as US, Russia,

Germany, and the UK. Increasingly, other emerging powers such as China and Turkey have also been involved in security sector reforms, especially in Africa. However, there has not been a crystal-clear strategy that stipulates how such reforms ought to be conducted neither has there been any methodological approaches that guide donors in embedding security sector reforms in their respective country assistance strategies. However, examining the different experiences of states that have undertaken security sector reforms point to certain distinct features that can be developed further into specific guidelines to meet the security sector reforms for specific countries in specific contexts. Some of these underlying features are discussed below.

1.10.1 Principles of security sector reforms

Certain principles such as respect for human rights and international humanitarian laws, good governance, and effective operational capacities have emerged as some of the common elements underlying security sector reforms in different countries across the world. According to Brzoska (2003), donor community often take into account that these principles are included in any security sector reform agenda of the partner state. In Rwanda and South Africa, following the traumatic experiences of the 1994 genocide and decades of apartheid rule respectively, Netherlands took a key role in advancing security sector reforms by providing financial assistance for activities channelled towards the development of capacity within the criminal justice systems which had been identified as being a central component of democratic consolidation for the two countries (Smith 2001). Additional aid was channelled towards construction of prisons after an assessment was conducted to quantify the security needs of the two states.

The principle on the respect for international humanitarian law has a direct connection with the military. Under security reforms, training of military personnel to on international humanitarian law especially for those militaries found in conflict-ridden society is very

crucial as it builds the knowledge with the military institutions about the role of international norms and rules that guide the conduct of military operations. The second principle on respecting human rights in security sector reforms also enhances better security practices. In Malawi, security sector reforms premised on the principle of respect for human rights transformed the police from being a 'force' into being a 'service' (Chirwa, 2016). The third key principle on effective operational capacity of security forces lays greater emphasis on improved performance in the security roles that contribute to the stability of a state.

1.10.2 Understanding the context

A general blueprint for security sector reforms has been elusive because different countries experience different security contexts and as such, no single model exists to demonstrate the specific areas that ought to be targeted in security sector reform initiatives (Donais 2009; Bryden et al. 2004; Schroeder and Chappius 2014). As consequence, understanding the context of a given state including the local and regional realities is imperative in order to undertake security sector reforms. Specifically, security actors, local conditions, human security needs, change agents, and existing institutional capacities are key in determining the success of reforms. For societies that are just emerging from a period of violent conflict, it is a common occurrence that security actors such as militaries or the police may have negative reputation for their role in human rights violations during periods of conflict. In such circumstances, developing a new positive image of the military may be vital even if it includes the establishment of a new military force through open and competitive recruitment. When security sector reforms fail to understand the context, then the outcome can be catastrophic.

Understanding the context of a state such as being in post-conflict phase, transitional phase, or violence prevention phase, as well as the type of conflict that a state in engaged in, be it political power struggle, ideological, ethnic, or resource-based conflict, provides a strong

foundation upon which experts can start thinking about the nature of security sector reforms needed. Equally, it is also essential to understand the potential impact of such reforms on the conflict dynamics of a given state (Schroeder and Chappius 2014). In cases where conflicts remain fundamentally unresolved there can be very limited opportunity for engaging in comprehensive security sector reforms. In the military, this sort of situation becomes even more fragile when conflict is ethnic in nature. Thus, the nature of reforms such as recruitment of new military personnel can be construed as a strategy by an influential group to gain an upper hand in acquiring force and dominating over other ethnic groups. This can accelerate conflict as was witnessed in the case of South Sudan civil war.

Finally, understanding the broader regional and international context is also key in security sector reform processes because security institutions such as the military not only take responsibility for internal affairs, but are also engaged in external security. As a consequence, regional and international security dynamics can have a significant influence on what is perceived as security threats and the institutional needs. The participation of troops in international peacekeeping missions for instance is done in a manner that certain basic standards for military personnel such as training are met. Conducting security sectors reforms thus must take into account such considerations.

1.10.3 Local ownership

Majority of the societies emerging out of long periods of violent conflicts often tend to lack the human and financial capacities to undertake any significant socioeconomic and political reforms. Thus, reforms such as those in the security sector tend to be dominated or influenced by the donor countries assisting in th post-conflict state reconstruction processes. Several studies (Donais 2008; Mobekk 2010; Nathan and de Leon 2007) emphasis that although external support is critical in stimulating and sustain security sector reforms, it must not constitute a substitution of local ownership of the processes which is also significant in

initiating, sustaining and legitimising the processes. But it is also a reality that peace processes that culminate into the establishment of peace agreements are usually driven by external influence, thus, making local ownership of the implementation of security sector reforms difficult. Such strong influence of external actors can even jeopardise reform initiatives (Boas and Stig, 2010). On the other hand, when the local influence is also very strong on security reform processes, then there can also be great reluctance to incorporate external actors in those processes. Indeed, in countries such as Russia, security sector reforms have largely been done through local ownership with very minimal or absent influence of external actors.

A balance in security sector reform can be built between the local and external actors. According to Nathan and da Leon (2007), various strategies can be built through facilitating local participation and shaping the security sector reforms around the needs and priorities of the state and local communities throughout the reform processes in order to enable feedback from the community and provide opportunities for adjustment in whenever such needs arise. This approach establishes a strong foundation for local ownership as local communities can feel that they are part and parcel of the reform processes through their mobilisation and empowerment.

In addition, other important considerations such as local political will and involvement of other actors such as civil society groups can have a huge impact on security reform processes. Evaluate the extent of political will amongst local leaders can act as a strong basis to identity the entrance points in security reform processes that correlate with the sectors where political will for reform is strongest (Hendrickson, 2001). Constant engagement between governments, external actors, and other actors involved in the security sector can provide the necessary drive for reforms and build more public support for such reforms throughout the country. According to Mobekk (2010), securing support for reforms within high-ranking government

officials is also key to achieve success in the implementation of security sector reforms. Similarly, the civil society groups focusing on the security sector can also provide an important platform for elevating security sectors reforms into a national discussion. This is even more important in countries that are emerging or experiencing conflicts and in which people have less access to and engagement with government. Civil societies can thus provide links between local communities and security sector reform actors. However, developing a partnership between civil society groups and various security forces require confidence-building and this may vary from one security actor to the next (Groenwald and von Tangen Page 2002). The perception of police as being corrupt or the military as being dangerous and violent thus reiterates the importance confidence-building which is crucial in strengthening local ownership.

1.10.4 Resources and sustainability

Security sector reforms also require sufficient availability and efficient allocation of resources. According to a study by Lala (2003), security sector reforms are long-term and therefore require commitment in the allocation and management of resources in order to enhance sustainability of the reforms. External partners can play a significant role in the provision of resources needed in security sector reform processes by making financial contributions and engaging in building of capacity for local security sector actors.

When sufficient resources are not available within the security sector, it can be a contributor to insecurity as underpaid soldiers, police officers, or border guards may become entangled in acts of extorting resources from the public or involvement in criminal activities. According to Wulf (2004), availing sufficient resources to the security sector can reduce the risks of security actors engaging in such criminal activities and significantly contribute towards the improvement of the relationship between security actors such as the military with the population. However, this approach is only as much efficient as a state is, and where reforms

are already existing or are at an advanced stage. In societies that are emerging from instability, and where the institutions of security are either completely destroyed or very fragile and need to be reconstructed, such an approach can be less sufficient. Groenwald and von Tangen Page (2002) drawing from the experience of Sierra Leone, highlighted the danger of insufficient resources in the sustainability of security sector reforms and the increased risks of reverting to armed conflict that states incur because of the failure of security sector reforms.

To achieve sustainable security sector reforms, some studies (Ebo 2007; Mobekk 2006) suggested the essence of identifying and building local capacities such as traditional institutions and supporting civil society groups instead of developing other parallel structures. Making use of available resources such as existing community existing initiatives, educational and training facilities can be vital in the reform processes through development of knowledge on security issues which then drives the momentum for security sector reforms. But even more important, ensuring sustainability cannot be wholly dependent on the assistance from external partners to the state. However, external actors can equally contribute by ensuring that security sector reform agenda continue to occupy a key position in the political agenda of partner states.

1.10.5 Attitudinal changes

The role of political will in driving security sector reforms cannot be emphasised any further, and as such, it is imperative that factors undermining or strengthening political will on security sector reforms be understood. Success of reform programmes are only as viable as the duration of positive attitude for reform exists amongst different security stakeholders. In societies transitioning from long periods of violent conflict, the success of security sector reforms depend on the dramatic change in the attitudes of security actors in order to enable for example, the subordination of the military to civilian authority. Attitudinal change is also

important amongst the local populations as it can establish an element of ownership of the reform processes and support the sustainability of the reforms. According to Boas and Stig (2010), identifying the change objectives through strong consultations with local actors as well as government enable the security reform programmes to be formulated in a manner that also supports the attitudinal change objectives needed to enhance the sustainability and success of security sector reforms. Engagement and assessment processes within and outside the security sector can enhance an clear understanding of those actors who support or reject reforms and their reasons for adopting such positions, thereby, also improving how the choice of strategy to be deployed for attitudinal change.

Assessing the security sector of a country seeking to undertake reforms by making an institutional appraisal of existing threats, size of the security sector, professionalism of the security forces, and how the security sector is constituted, establishes pragmatic and practical perceptions about the exact nature of reforms needed. If acceptable, then security sector reform programmes or activities can develop long-term strategies. Equally, the institutional culture of the security sector can also influence how security personnel evaluate their roles and their positions on issues such as corruption and ability to agree subordination to a civilian oversight (Evans 2003).

1.10.6 Engagement and entry points

The fundamental objective of security sector reforms is to enhance the capacity of the security sector in delivering on its mandate to protect the state and its citizens. As a consequence, any reform activities that can be construed as capable of weakening the security of the state or its control over the instruments of coercion can produce opposition to security sector reform initiatives (Friedrich and Luethold 2007; Ghimire 2016). In post-conflict societies, the sensitive political environments imply that the nature of security sector reforms can have significant effects on the kind of support that external support partners can provide.

Similarly, reforms should also be considered within the frameworks of already existing engagements such as military assistance programmes or the broader political agenda such as dialogue process seeking to introduce democratic social, political, and economic reforms to enable a state emerging from instability to acquire membership into regional or international organisations. According to Ghimire (2016), if security sector reforms are approached through a broad framework of sustainable development, then the entry points can include capacity building of institutions and support for good practices in public sector management. Within the institution of the military, such entry points can be found in fiscal management of military budgets. Scarce financial resources facing post-conflict societies thus imply that donor community such as donor governments and international financial institutions (International Monetary Fund and World Bank) can therefore act as entry points for security sector reforms. The involvement in military spending and financial oversight as an approach in security sector reforms can ease the processes of establishing civilian oversight of the military. In addition, civil society groups as well as the legislative arm of government can also develop better mechanisms to hold the military accountable based on the evaluations of military budgets and spending.

1.10.7 Coherence and coordination

The success of security sector reform and sustainability is dependent on the scope of coherence and coordination of the reforms. In post-conflict society, several donor governments often engage through bilateral frameworks in security sector reform initiatives. Given the broad scope of the security sector, some bilateral partnerships target umbrella themes such as democracy, legal assistance, good governance, or peacebuilding programmes. When conducted in this manner, coherence of the reform initiatives may be difficult to achieve even though it is very essential in enabling the effective and efficient use of resources (Brzoska 2003; Bryden et al 2004). Coordination and coherency in reforms can be reinforced

by evaluating the initiatives that have been or a being implemented and what they aim to achieve. Secondly, it can be reinforced by identifying the available competencies of both the government and the donor community and how both can be effectively utilised to achieve the objectives of security sector reforms. Thirdly, through open consultations with government, donors, and other stakeholders in the security sector on where, when, and how they can get involved in reform processes (Chalmers 2000).

1.11 Theory

Understanding the contemporary nature of politics can be challenging based on the huge number of resources or materials available. However, scholars have adopted theories that play very important roles in as far as discussing political processes are concerned. Theories form the basis upon which we can make sense of the world in international relations. They enable us to acquire an understanding of the world around us during various periods and the different or varying contexts. But because the world around is complex and changing from time to time, theories evolve in order to reflect new changes or new ones are formulated to account for the gaps not covered by a single theory in explaining a given phenomon. This thesis adopts two theories to explain the importance of the military and military reforms in geopolitical and geo-economics stability. These theories include realism and state building theory.

One of the most impactful drivers of transformation of states and the international system is war and conflict. Since the end of the Cold War, there have been several domestic and international conflicts such as the Gulf War, conflict in Somalia, Syria, Afghanistan, Kosovo, Libya, and war between Azerbaijan and Armenia. Even though conflicts are considered as an anomaly, they are a part and parcel of politics and international relations.

1.11.1 Offensive and defensive realism

Realism emerged as a dominant theoretical paradigm after World War II as an approach to both the study and practice of international politics. However, realist thought can be traced to early historians and philosophers such as Thucydides (430-400BC), Niccolò Machiavelli (1532), Thomas Hobbes (1651), Jean Rousseau (1750), E.H. Carr (1939) and Hans Morgenthau (1948). In a broad sense, realism offers an elaborate theory of international conflict, states and power because its main concern revolves around themes on national interests, war, and distribution of power. In examining the relevance of militaries, defensive and offensive realism provides insights on why funcitonal militaries are essential to the survival of state by maintaining order at the domestic and external levels.

The theory of offensive realism is closely associated with John Mearsheimer who coined five assumptions of the theory. Mearsheimer argued that the international system is anarchic because of the absence of superior state exercising absolute hegemony over other states (Mearsheimer 2001 pg. 30). Secondly, he assumed that states also possess offensive military capabilities which can be deployed to challenge other states. Third, that states are also not absolutely certain that other states will not deploy their offensive military capabilities against them. Fourth, that the primary goal of all states is to ensure their survival by securing their territorial integrity and domestic autonomy. Fifth, that states are also rational actors who reflect on both short-term and long-term implications of their actions and often act strategically in order to survive (Mearsheimer 2001 pg. 30-31).

The uncertainty that characterises the intention of states, the true military capabilities of other states, and whether states maintain bilateral relations would actually come to the rescue against other hostile states influenced Mearsheimer to argue that the best strategy for survival would be through developing offensive capabilities. In other words, that states should seek to pursue hegemony and maximise power. Whereas Mearsheimer's arguments were largely

premised on great power relations in which he argued that these uncertainties of security competition could lead to the "Tragedy of Great Power Politics", his arguments are equally relevant to states such as Somalia that exists in a region with a history on inter-state conflicts and conflicts over territorial integrity.

Kenneth Waltz on the other hand developed the theory of defensive realism in his text "Theory of International Politics" (1979) in which he deviated from Mearsheimer (2001) in the conclusions about the assumption on capabilities, uncertain intentions of states, survival of states, and the assumption on rationality of states. In his conclusion, Waltz (1979) coined the theory of balance of power in which weaker states align to balance stronger states and thus prevent states from attempting to pursue hegemony. For Waltz, states are not power maximisers but security maximisers such that when they have acquired enough power to guarantee their security, they become content and desist from seeking greater power that would only serve as a threat to their security. However, Mearsheimer (2001) rejected Waltz (1979) conclusion that states could be secure through balance of power and instead argued that states can only be secure when and if they maximise their power, and that states should not be contented with power.

Indeed, drawing from offensive and defensive realism it is crystal clear that the military is understood as a central component of security of states. In shifting this perspective to the case of Somalia, regional dynamics in the Horn of Africa and the greater Eastern Africa region reiterates why Somalia needs a strong military that can pursue and protect its national interests. At the regional level, Somalia has been involved in wars with Ethiopia during the Ogaden War in 1974 and a near outbreak of conflict with Kenya. A weak military led to its defeat in the Ogaden War and an assessment of the potential costs of war with Kenya also reiterated that it would suffer the highest number of casualties (Compagnon, 1995). On the domestic front, internal challenges have threatened the territorial integrity of Somalia. Groups

such as Al-Shaabab have challenged the authority of the state in the exercise of force thus emphasising why an effective and functional military for Somalia is imperative in defending the state against external threats in a fragile region, and internal threats against non-state actors challenging the territorial integrity of the state.

1.11.2 State building

In societies emerging from conflicts, the military can be a make-or-break factor in state building because its comparative advantages such as organisational superiority, monopoly over use of force, and its symbolic status embedded with nationalistic emotions, which it wields over civilian institutions (Finer, 2021). However, the contribution of the military in state-building is highly contested as reflected in literature on development and civil-military relations. There have been several arguments put forward regarding how coercive power can be managed within states, all of which have varying implications on state building (Tilly, 1985). In fragile societies, the military has been examined largely in the context of limiting or downsizing the military in security reforms which are often modelled to reflect the ideas and experiences of Western European states.

According to Tilly (1985), the success in state building in post-conflict societies is greatly pegged on the control of the monopoly of violence. In such fragile environments, taming violence and other complex problems relating to security institutions acquire great significance in state building processes (Janowitz 1977). Taming any possibilities of violence for post conflict societies can take varying forms such as establishment of police system, justice system, devolved governance systems, and a political intelligence system. With regard to the military, taming violence during state building processes connotes the bureaucratisation, centralisation, and institutionalisation of the military and although the military maintains its monopoly over coercion, it is exercised as a civilised form of coercion (Croissant et al. 2011).

Some studies such as Coleman and Brice (2015) argued that the military plays a positive role in the society particularly in promoting national unity in societies plagued with ethnic or clan divisions such as in Somalia. The military acts as a core source of organisational strength of a state that can be called upon or trusted to take over when there is a potential threat of total collapse of a political order. Other studies (Decalo 1976; Luckham 1974; Stepan 1973) have also considered the military as a huge burden for societies emerging out of conflict because of the financial implications attached to it that undermines other important needs of the state such as training human resource. However, even though studies such as Decalo (1976) reiterated that when militaries assume power they often end-up incapable of providing efficient and stable administration of the state, they can play an important and direct role in state building activities alongside a civilian administration. Some of such activities that are central to state building include provision of education such as vocational training, adult education, and citizen indoctrination; building national esteem through its participation in national ceremonies that foster nationalistic feelings; provision of logistics in managing transportation, sanitation, and other infrastructural development projects; enhancing national cohesion and solidarity by instilling a sense of common purpose among soldiers; contributing to modernisation; and acting as a deterrent against societal chaos when social order has been disrupted and there is need to establish set up or maintain public institutions before peace and order can be restored again (Pye 2015; Janowitz 1964; Rivkin 1969).

2 CHAPTER TWO

2.1 Background on contemporary political dynamics in Somalia

In 2021, an electoral dilemma threatening to spark a new wave of violence and a dire humanitarian crisis as a result of Coronavirus pandemic, drought, locust invasion, floods, food insecurity, and conflict with the al-Shaabab engulfed Somalia. Since the collapse of government in 1991, Somalia has been increasingly categorised as a hybrid political entity hosting a variety of actors ranging from state, state-like non-state actors, and other military, political, and social actors. According to Menkhaus (2006), these actors interact with each other both at the regional and national levels thereby creating a several forms of de facto governance structures in ungoverned spaces. Some of these actors are briefly discussed below:

2.1.1 The Federal Government of Somalia and Federal Member States

The Federal Government of Somalia represents the national political organ of Somalia that also represents the country in international organisations and institutions (Bryden 2013). Although as the representative organ of the state at the national level, its authority and influence is significantly limited with the capital city of Mogadishu and is largely dependent

on support from external state and non-state actors such as US, UK, Turkey, UAE, the UN and affiliate organisations, and the European Union. On the other hand, Federal Member States operate at the regional level and enjoy greater political legitimacy, have stronger control over their regional territories, and have distinctive clan affiliations. These FMS include Puntland, Jubaland, South-West, Benadir, Galmudug, and Hirshabelle and each possess different administrative capacities, territorial control, and security. This complex arrangement forms the first basis of instability emanating from stiff competition between the FGS and FMS for monopoly over violence, natural resources, political power, control over territories, and legitimacy.

2.1.2 Intra-clan and inter-clan rivalry

Conflicts and rivalries between and within different clans in Somalia have contributed to contemporary instabilities in the country. The political structures and political culture of Somalia was founded and rooted in the clan system, and this has enabled the four dominant clans that are comprised of the Darood, Hawiye, Dir, and Rahanweyn to dominate other minorities clans (Gundel, 2009). These clans and their constituent sub-clans spread within and beyond the territorial borders of Somalia exists as political, territorial, identity, and military units and are involved in competition both with themselves as well as against the Federal Government of Somalia and the Federal Member States by establishing alliances that support their interests in acquiring political, territorial, and resource control (de Waal 2018).

2.1.3 Al-Shaabab and anti-Al-Shaabab conflict

Al-Shaabab which is a designated terrorist group has engaged Somalia in a vicious cycle of conflict for over a decade. The presence and its reign of terror has attracted other actors such as the Africa Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), US African Command (AFRICOM), the Federal Government of Somalia, the Federal Members States, several clans, and Darwish militias (Felbab-Brown 2020) who are engaged in direct war with the terrorist organisation.

Established in early 2000s as an Islamist Sunni Salafi jihadist armed organisation, Al-Shaabab has been seeking to establish an Islamic caliphate in Somalia and towards this agenda, it has carried out several punitive attacks both within and beyond Somalia in countries such as Kenya (Harper 2019; Marsai 2020).

However, in the recent times, as a result of the several military operations launched by the Somalia National Army and other actors against the group, it has gradually lost control over its areas of influence in the past such as Mogadishu, several urban centres, and is now largely based in the rural central, western, and southern regions of Somalia (Weiss 2019; Felbab-Brown 2020). In South-Central region of Somalia, the presence of Al-Shaabab fighters extend beyond the rural areas to cover vital supply routes to urban areas, thus, although those cities are not under direct Al-Shaabab's military control, they are besieged by the group. In addition, the group has been able to collect taxes in most parts of the country through checkpoint taxations, business taxation, import taxation at major seaports, real estate development and sale of land, and livestock, agricultural production and irrigation taxes (Maruf and Joseph 2018; Keating and Waldman 2019). In addition, Al-Shaabab has made several attempts at to introduce its own educational curriculum in regions where it has not control like Kismayo and Mogadishu and has been persistent in carrying out attacks against government and civilians despite the consistent military operations by the Somali National Army and international peacekeeping forces in South-Central Somalia (Felbab-Brown, 2020).

2.1.4 Puntland-Somaliland territorial rivalry

Somaliland is region in the larger Somali territory that proclaimed its autonomy in 1991 from Somalia while Puntland is one of the Federal Member States established in 1998 (Hoyle 2000). Between these two regions, there has been a huge territorial dispute in the region known as Sool, Sanaag and Ayn. According to the Anglo-Italian border and protocol of 1894, the region fall under the administration of Somaliland, however, according to the genealogy

of the clans that occupy the region, the dominant Warsangeli and Dhulbahante constitute the core clan found in Puntland (Mahmood 2019). In other words, the territorial conflict between Puntland and Somaliland is premised on genealogical and territorial logics, respectively (Hoehne 2015).

2.1.5 Tensions between the FGS and Somaliland

Although Somaliland declared independence in 1991, this declaration has never been recognised by the Federal Government of Somalia. Having declared its autonomy at the beginning of the civil war, Somaliland henceforth embarked on building of institutions of governance and initiating processes of democratisation and democratic consolidation that integrated a hybrid mixture of traditional and modern forms of governance (Hersi 2018; Walls 2009). These dynamics embodied by a comparatively higher level of stability to the rest of Somalia has influenced the international community to be more open to dealing with Somaliland at both diplomatic and business levels even in the absence of international recognition of Somaliland as an independent state at the United Nations or other international institutions. These tensions have had a big impact in the initiation of reconciliation talks between the Federal Government of Somalia and the Somaliland administration.

2.1.6 External influence on FGS and FMSs

The strategic location of Somalia at the Horn of Africa, receding violence, and massive natural resources in its exclusive economic area in the Indian Ocean has attracted a plethora of foreign state actors to Somalia, each seeking to establish influence either over the FGS, the FMSs or both. The Gulf states such as Qatar and the United Arab Emirates have been involved in a competition between themselves over the establishment of political influence in Somalia. According to Telci (2018) both UAE and Qatar have at one point, or another provided significant weapons and training for the military to different factions in order to establish influence and gain rights to exploit resources such as natural gas or manage ports in

Somalia. In addition, the Somalia coastline has been identified as of great strategic importance for Saudi Arabia and UAE that consider is as the western security front whereas Turkey has been involved in massive infrastructural and business development in urban areas such as Mogadishu (Ogunnoiki 2020; Abdi 2017). Other regional countries such as Kenya, Eritrean, and Ethiopia have also been accused of meddling in the internal affairs of Somalia especially with other Federal Member States such as Jubaland which Kenya sees as a vital security partner in deterring the threat of Al-Shaabab (Majid and Abdirahman 2021). Ethiopia has equally been accused of meddling in South-West state, Gedo region, and in the Federal Government of Somalia (Majid and Abdirahman 2021).

2.2 The Somali National Army: 1960-2008

Nearly a decade after the collapse of the central government in 1991, several efforts were made to establish a national army for Somalia in the years 2000, 2004, and 2009. In 2000 and 2004, entrenched influence of clan militias acted as setbacks to this vision. Establishing a national army was identified as a vital component for the revival of a functional state that could not only provide stability for the country, but also offer protection for the citizens especially from the threat of Al-Shaabab (Williams and Hashi 2016). Secondly, the existence of a national army was also essential in providing an exit strategy for AMISOM. This agenda aimed at establishing a national army that was effective, affordable, cohesive, sustainable, accountable, legitimate, professional, and inclusive. However, as will be demonstrated in this study, these goals are yet to be realised.

However, to gain a better understanding of the contemporary Somali National Army, it is vital to briefly examine the history of the army itself. According to a study by Robinson (2016) Somalia had its armed forces in 1960 after the merger of the mobile security forces of the imperial British and Italy and were estimated to be between 2000-5000 soldiers. In the following two decades under the regime of Siad Barre, the army was used to pursue a Pan-

Somali agenda that sought to unite all Somalis spread across the Horn of Africa region in countries such as Ethiopia and Kenya, under one grand state of Somalia (Osman Haji 2001).

According to a study by Mohamoud (2002) Somalia initiated negotiations for military support with the Soviet Union in 1962 and a loan facility of USD 32 million was approved to help Somalia build an army of 10, 000 personnel. In addition, Somalia rejected a proposal by United States, Italy and Germany to provide USD 10 million in aid and provide training for approximately 6,000 soldiers who would contribute to maintaining internal stability and participate in the civil developmental initiatives that could require input from the military. Instead, Somalia requested for support to establish a force of 20,000 military personnel from the United States which was ultimately declined. At the time, US is argued to have laid more preference for its relationship with Ethiopia and Kenya who were threatened by the grand Pan-Somali agenda of Siad Barre. Data from Africa Report indicated that Somali had 4600 military personnel by 1965 (Mohamoud 2002).

In Ethiopia, the decision by Emperor Haile Selassie to deny ethnic Somalis living in the Ogaden region the chance of self-government in 1963 led to the emergence of the first border conflict with Somalia by 1964 (Kaplan et al. 1964). The previous successes of Somalia in the conflict through its strategy on guerrilla warfare and subsequent air raids by Somalia influenced Ethiopia to reinforce its troops in the Ogaden and more attacks on Somalia border posts until a temporary ceasefire was achieved in 1964 (Kaplan et al. 1964). Increasing domestic pressures on the Somali government led to an attempted coup on 21 October 1969 and this changed the trajectory of the Somali armed forces the Somalia itself.

While this study is not focused on the events that led to the coup, existing literature suggest that the military had been ‘angered’ by the extent which civilian politics had deteriorated (Laitin 1976). According to Balthasar (2014 pg. 3), the “National Assembly had turned into a marketplace where deputies traded their votes for personal reward with scant regard for the

interest for their constituents." In addition, the closure of the Suez Canal in 1967 impacted the government financial resources thereby putting it under more pressure and the military angered by the decision of the government to engage with Ethiopia in a reconciliatory manner (Mubarak 1996). These events led to the attempted military in 1969 which was nonetheless thwarted. According to a study by Payton (1980), the decision by the Soviet Union to decline re-scheduling of debt repayment and the economic impact created by the closure of Suez Canal contributed to the destabilisation of the government and the decision by the military to revolt.

The 1969 coup provided the military with the opportunity to acquire control and reembark on an agenda of acquiring 'lost territories.' This was reflected in the increased military budget and the size of its personnel. By 1970, the military personnel had increased to 12,000 and further to an approximated 35,000-37,000 military personnel in 1977 following the allocation of huge amounts of military aid by the Soviet Union. In sub-Sahara Africa, the Soviet Union provided Somalia with the largest tank force and combat aircrafts that included 52 combat aircrafts, 24 of which were supersonic MiG-21 fighter jets, against Ethiopia's capacity of only 16 fighter jets (Mohamoud 2002; Tareke 2000; Metz 1992).

By the late 1970s, an opportunity for Somalia to reclaim Ogaden through military force presented itself when rebellion emerged against the administration of Emperor Haile Selassie. In June 1977, Somali seized this opportunity and launched a military invasion into Ethiopia having been boosted by superior weapons and military personnel capacity than Ethiopia which in the initial phase of the conflict lost significant territory (Tareke 2000). However, these gains were quickly reversed when the Soviet Union withdrew support from Somalia and rechannelled it to Ethiopia. According to Tareke (2000), about 18000 Cuban troops were mobilised by the Soviet Union from Angola and other regions to support Ethiopia in its war

with Somalia and by 1978, Somali military troops had been pushed back from Ethiopia bringing the war to an end.

The defeat of the Somali military in the Ogaden war marked the onset of the collapse of the state of Somalia as the Pan-Somali agenda that had acted as a bond between the people, military, and the civilian government had been exposed as unachievable and opposition against the government begun to accelerate. Moreover, another attempt coup in 1978 transformed the perception of the military from an institution meant to guarantee domestic stability and sovereignty, to an institution representing a threat. The outcome of the expansionist agenda and attempted coups meant that the Somali armed forces became highly politicised, and its professionalism and competency subsequently distorted by the biased promotion of officers by Siad Barre from his clan and the transfer of other military personnel from other clans to civil administration (Robinson 2016). The personalisation of the military by Siad Barre by promoting military officers from clans he trusted such that all the five vital brigades stationed in Mogadishu and Hargeisa became under the command of Marehan officers from his tribe meant that by the beginning of the civil war in 1987, the army was already experiencing deep disintegration. According to Compagnon (1992 pg. 9) "colonels and generals were part of the President's personal patronage network; they had to remain loyal to him and his relatives, whether they had command of were temporarily in the cabinet." It is this favouritism that ultimately destroyed the credibility of the military as a national institution.

With a civil war taking hold in the country beginning 1987, early signs of the ultimate collapse of the state became more prominent as the public service was on the verge of total collapse and the government facing paralysis from succession politics and rebellion outside the government (Compagnon 1992). The rapid disintegration of the military also meant that the government begun losing its control over territory through the country until 1991 when

the government completely collapsed (Mohamoud 2002). Henceforth, the politics of Somalia has been overshadowed by the stiff competition mainly between Hawiye and Darod clans and sub-clans as well as other non-state actors for control of resources and the monopoly of violence. Despite earlier attempted interventions by international peacekeeping forces under the United Nations banner, and a failed US military intervention codenamed the Black Hawk Operation, spelt the beginning of a tumultuous time for Somalia as all foreign military forces withdrew by 1995.

Several attempts were made to re-constitute a central government in the 1990s but struggles between warlords thwarted such efforts until the Djibouti peace conference in 2000 that established a Transitional National Government. However, in during the four years period that it existed, it was administered by three Prime Ministers who only maintained partial control in the capital Mogadishu. This Transitional National Government was succeeded by another Transitional Federal Government established in 2004, and similar to the TNG, also maintained very limited control of territory because of its failure to consolidate its authority largely because of infighting between representatives of the Hawiye clan in Mogadishu and other groups in government supported by Ethiopia. According to a study by Bryden and Brickhill (2010), a contentious intervention of the Ethiopian military in Mogadishu influenced President Abdullahi Yusuf to attempt reconstituting a military in 2007. However, distrust of the Transitional Federal Government which was largely interpreted as an instrument of serving the personal ambition of the President, as well as growing distrust of the Ethiopian military ultimately contributed to the dissolution of the First and Third Brigades of the TFG in Kismayo in 2007 (Hansen 2013). By 2008, the remaining military forces of the TFG were fragmenting even further and military commanders began reinforcing their forces with militia groups outside the chain command of government (Ewing 2008). With increased pressure from the Al-Shaabab, infighting in the TFG, growing economic problems, and the

intervention of AMISOM in 2007, led to the loss of public support for the TFG thus pushing the government to participate in the 2008 Arta peace talks held in Djibouti (Nyadera et al. 2019).

2.3 Towards reconstruction of a new military force in post 2008 era

The establishment of the Arta Agreement in 2008, marked the beginning of a new era of sustained efforts to establish a national army with the support of international donors such as the African Union, Ethiopia, European Union, US, Italy, Turkey, UAE, and the United Nations (Williams 2020). The Arta Agreement paved the merger between the Transitional federal Government and Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia, thereby, bringing together members of the national army who had served the nation between 1960-90 who were still in Mogadishu, warlord militias, as well as the militia arm of the defunct Islamic Courts (Robinson, 2019). At the time, the total force numbered approximately 5000 soldiers grouped into battalions that were constituted of 450 men each and organised into three brigades.

Since the post-2008 era, ascertaining the precise military personnel of the Somali National Army has been challenging. In 2009, the process of implementing an agreement reached with the AMISOM for the incorporation of the both the TFG military personnel and the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia exposed the difficulties in identifying an quantifying the size of the Somali National Army. This is because the decision by AMISOM to scrutinise the personnel before being admitted to the Joint Security Force by checking the list of names on a case-by-case bases and verify them only produced an estimated 800 verified identifications in a period of seven months (Williams 2020). In addition, it became quite challenging to correctly identify genuine fighters from freelance fighters characterised by the United Nations Monitoring Group as being “on call” whenever needed to provide their services, but always available when it was time to collect salaries and stipends. Below, are some of the estimated personnel military capacity of the Somali National Army between 1963 and 2017.

Table 1: SNA military personnel capacity between 1963-2017

Period	**Approximated personnel capacity**
1963	4000
1965	4600
1970	12000
2009 (May)	6700
2009 (November)	6400 plus an additional 6270 aligned militia
2010	8000
2011 (May)	10106
2011 (November)	10299
2012	11200
2013 (September)	20000 including aligned militia
2013 (October)	12000
2014	22714
2017 (January)	19440
2017 (March)	24684 including aligned militia
2017 (May)	24820 plus 4569 recipients of benefits

Source: Adopted from Williams (2018)

In 2009, the United Nations Monitoring Group gave an estimate of 2900 competent military personnel and an addition 3500 who were yet to be vetted, trained, and registered. In addition,

clan militias most of whom had served as military personnel during the reign of Siad Barre and were aligned with the government were also identified to be approximately 6270. To boost its military capacity, the TFG also signed an agreement with the Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a (ASWJ),- a military organisation with approximately 12,000 members including 3000 stationed in Mogadishu. The partnership involved provision of military and logistical support to the organisation as well as open channels for administrative consultations in regions that were under the influence of ASWJ.

Another assessment of military personnel of the Somali National Army was conducted in 2011 in which 10,106 military personnel were identified excluding all the militia groups that were in alliance with the government such as the ASWJ. However, the report also uncovered deep challenges facing the SNA such as nepotism, poor records of personnel and military equipment, and corruption and recommended the installation of a biometric system of identification not only within the military but across the entire Somali security sector.

Another appraisal was done by the African Union Mission in Somalia at the end of 2011 in which AMISOM identified that the SNA was constituted of approximately 10,300 military personnel and backed by another 10,000 fighters drawn from different militia groups supporting the Transitional Federal Government. According to Williams (2019 pg. 7), "the AU concluded that the SNA was a fragmented disparate group whose strong prevalence of clan identity is the stumbling block to all efforts in organising a national military force." Additionally, the Union also pointed out that individuals who had defected from the Al-Shaabab were also casually integrated into the military without significant verification and rehabilitation. The AU in a later assessment of the Somali military in the same year, estimated that about 11,200 military personnel were stationed in Mogadishu and an additional 11,000 constituted of SNA military and militia groups such as ASWJ were involved in military

operations against the Al-Shaabab in different parts of the country even though none of the two groups of forces had the requisite ability to either support or sustain their logistic needs.

Efforts to reform the SNA by improving its capacity culminated in the establishment of a sixth brigade in 2014 and more efforts put toward aligning the SNA with military operations of AMISOM and other international partners. The government also developed the Guulwade (victory) Plan to revamp the Somali military through support from international donors that would include approximately 10,000 military personnel who were not included as part of the United Nations Support Office for Somalia (UNSOS) package (Robinson 2019). This 'Victory Plan' was deemed crucial part of the long-term Somali military reforms because to establish an efficient and an effective army, there was need for better organisation, equipment, morale, and infrastructure while on the short-term, it could enhance mobility and operational capacity of the military against terrorist organisations in the country. Collectively, the Victory Plan had estimated a budget requirement of USD 85 million to meet the gaps of light weapons, vehicles, training bases, and barracks that were facing the Somali National Army. It is important to highlight that these figure was way below the contribution that had been made by external partners such as the United States alone in the 2015/16 financial year alone. According to a study by Reno (2018), critics of the Victory Plan voiced the inequitable clan composition in the 10,900 Somali National Army personnel which had been alleged to be dominated by the Hawiye clan. In addition, some elements within the TFG raised concerns that the Plan would only focus on the SNA personnel that supported under the UNSOS package and not the total military personnel of the force.

Data by 2017 indicated that in total, the Somali National Army was constituted of approximately 18,700 soldiers and non-commissioned officers, about 2100 officers, and 3900 disable and retired military personnel. In addition, the SNA was organised into 12 brigades and more than 30 battalions as well as various specialised units such as the presidential

guards, military police, health unit, and Danab advanced military infantry. Table 2 demonstrates the distribution of the 10,900 SNA military personnel involved in joint military operations (excluding aligned militias) by 2015.

Table 2: Military personnel distribution in 2015

Region	**AMISOM Sector**	**Guulwade Plan**	**Human Rights Trained**	**Training in Human Rights required**
Banadir, Middle Shabelle	1 and 5	3000	3139	0
Bay, Gedo, Bakool	3	2570	3495	0
Galgaduud, Hiraan	4	2000	2137	0
Middle Juba, Gedo	2	2880	0	2880
Danab Battalion	Baledogle	450	300	150
	Total	**10,900**	**8771**	**3030**

Source: Guulwade/ Victory Plan

The Danab Battalion requires a special mention as a fully functioning unit of the Somali National Army. In 2011, increased threat by Al-Shaabab triggered the decision of AMISOM to advance beyond Mogadishu, thus, it also required a credible local actor force that was not only disciplined, but also could demonstrate awareness about accountability and respect for international laws and norms on military operations. As one of the leading external partners in Somalia, United States contracted Bancroft Global Development- not for profit non-governmental organization that had already established base of operations in Somalia to oversee the establishment of a special unit of the SNA to act as proof of concept that later

became the Danab Battalion. The success of this program led to its expansion and Bancroft became instrumental in providing mentoring and training. In addition, other private contractors such as PricewaterhouseCoopers were brough on board to support the TFG with payment of military personnel and management of other vital financial issues. By 2014, the first Danab military company that was fully operational graduated and was deployed alongside AMISOM forces in Operation Indian Ocean (Cordesman et al. 2016) which targeted the clearing of Al-Shaabab strongholds in south-central Somalia. The special attention given to the Danab Battalion and good practices such as payment of salaries and stipend on time, recruitment processes based on merit, inclusivity of clans across Somalia, operational capacity and effectiveness represent the desired standards of a professional Somali National Army. Indeed, to maintain its distinction as an elite and professional military unit of the SNA, it has always been kept separate from the rest of the SNA units.

2.4 Challenges of rebuilding the Somali National Army

Nearly a decade after the established of the Somali National Army, achieving professionalism and competency within the military has continued to remain elusive. This section examines they key challenges that have deterred effective reforms of the military.

2.4.1 The clan dilemma

In very few societies does clan loyalty override loyalty to the central government like it is in the case of Somalia. According to a study by Hills (2014), most Somalis perceive the clan unit as the only guarantee they can depend on for security and protection. This assumption has also been transferred to the military in which members of the armed forces also tend to be split along clan affiliations partly because the composition of the army is inclusive of previous armed militia who are yet to acquire training on professional military conduct. The existing links between malitia groups and the SNA have hindered the development of appropriate bureaucratic structures within the military command, thereby, deterring the formation of an

effective national army. This process of embedding clan identity within the military emerged during the regime of Siad Barre who for political security and consolidation of power for his regime facilitated the recruitment and promotion to higher ranks those military officers from his favoured clans during the 1980s. In the subsequent civil war, any remnants of nationalistic sentiments or loyalty amongst different individuals to the state of Somalia was significantly weakened and replaced by clan loyalty.

Assessments conducted by the UN Monitoring Group in Somalia uncovered that clan identities are so deeply embedded within the military such that if a commander is in-charge of a platoon constituted of personnel not of then his same clan, his authority within the platoon becomes very limited. The command structure can only be effective as far as the military is involved in ceremonial functions whereas clan loyalties tend to trump over other activities such as business interests. Although the effectiveness of military units have often been linked to the capabilities of a commander who is both trained and motivated to provide strong leadership for efficient combat operation, in Somalia, there is a general dependency on single leaders instead of institutionalised competence of the entire army.

This is reflected in instances when the command structure may wield authority in certain activities but during fighting, military personnel tend to revert to their respective clan mindsets and make decisions premised on the implications it may have on the clan (Robinson 2016). Robinson (2016) documents that in some of the interviews that he conducted, the responses from the interviewers indicated that some good officers have often been killed in combat partly because fighting was intense, and that the unit having been composed of troops from different clans were easily isolated and killed. Indeed, since the re-establishment of the new military, several soldiers have been exposed to training including in overseas countries but have often failed to operate effectively because the troops they are put in-charge to lead are often from different clans or sub-clans.

2.4.2 Existence of auxiliary 'forces' outside SNA

The absence of a competent government to provide security to Somali citizens for decades contributed to the emergence of auxiliary groups and militias who have continued to exist in the post-2008 era because of the deep distrust of the state by local communities, politicians, sub-federal governments, and regional and global powers. The distrust has led to the informal legitimisation of militia groups as key actors in both provision of protection to being involved in issues of governance. In other words, some militia and auxiliary groups have emerged as indispensable actors in Somalia's social, political and economic landscape. According to Cassanelli (2018) some militia and auxiliary forces provide the crucial support to fill the gaps of inadequate capacities of the SNA in terms of equipment and troops; they are percieved as more reliable, determined, and capable than the SNA; they have access to their own weaponry from their respective clan bases; they possess deeper knowledge on localities and intelligence on Al-Shaabab operational dynamics; and in unique circumstances, create provide self-defence for local communities against Al-Shaabab.

Paramilitary forces such as the darwish paramilitary, which is a militia force executing both military and police functions in Somalia, operates autonomously from the SNA and are under the control of the presidents of the various federal member states (Menkhaus 2016). Often, darwish forces provide protection and threat of violence for the regional political elites against rivals and due to the fact that it is unconstitutional for any federal member state to have its own army, these forces are named as 'special police'. Their ability to operate independently has also meant that frequently, their activities undermine the legitimacy of the Somali National Army especially in circumstances where they are used to provide protection against the Al-Shaabab. Although foreign actors in Somalia are increasingly recognising the potential of the darwish forces to counter the threat of Al-Shaabab, developing such kind of public

perception about the effectiveness of the darwish forces over the SNA significantly erodes the already limited legitimacy that the SNA enjoys.

2.4.3 Sustained links and cooperation between SNA and militia groups

When the state collapsed in 1991, militias became a common feature of Somalia's landscape, often executing functions that serve the interests of their respective warlords throughout the 1990s, and in the process, leading to the emergence of radical Islamist groups that have continued to challenge not only the authority, but also the existence of the state. While in the post-2008 era some efforts have been made towards integrating these militia groups into the SNA, majority still exist as independent units serving the economic and political goals of their sponsors such as reinforcing political influence, intimidating opposition, and engaging in rent seeking activities. However, on a number of limited occassions, they also cooperate with the state. But the ability of some militias to step into the role of providing security to vulnerable civilian communities have granted them attraction from large sections of the members of the public and this has equally undermined the public image and trust on the SNA. More importantly, both the militia groups that cooperate with state and those that antagonise the state directly and indirectly undermine and detract the efforts that are being put towards the establishment of a Somali National Army by capturing best recruits and amassing resources needed for the reform processes of the Somali military. Even those who are recruited by the SNA from militia groups still project great concerns for the government in terms of the risk of defection from the military in the wake of other challenges such as poor renumeration. For several members of the SNA who are poorly renumerated, the benefits of lucrative but illicit renumerations offered by the militia groups poses a significant threat to building a competent and professional national army.

2.4.4 The Al-Shaabab factor

Of all the radical groups operating in the Horn of Africa region, Al-Shaabab has proved to be one of the most resilient of them all. This resilience has partly been aided by the constant political infighting that has enabled the organisation to expand its influence in vast parts of the country that is reflected by its ability to provide security, deliver justice, and implement taxation schemes (Le Sage 2005). This acquired legitimacy has enable the group whose membership cuts across different clans to engage in dispute mediation amongst clans competing over water and pasture.

With its influence cutting across different regions, the organisation has become deeply embedded in the political economy of Somalia by wielding influence over vast sections of the community. Often, powerbrokers in Somalia are dependent on the Al-Shaabab to provide security and safeguard their economic interests in exchange of payments which the Al-Shaabab refer to as zakat or Jihad contribution. As a consequence, many businesses and enterprises are reluctant to pay any additional tax to the government which is crucial for building and reforming security institutions such as the military that have huge financial implications attached to the reform processes. According to a study by Day et al. (2020), in regions such as South-West the daily income for Al-Shaabab is estimated at USD 70,000 from only taxing roads, and more than USD 20 million annually. For a fragile state, this amount of revenue loss for the government hampers any government efforts to not only build and reform its security architecture, but also provide development and essential public services to communities.

The organisational structure of Al-Shaabab has been highlighted as providing not only consistent, but also feasible security arrangement than the SNA. Weak discipline within the military has produced allegations against the SNA of grave human rights violations including unwarranted killing at road checkpoints where road fees are also collected. This is unlike the

experience provided by Al-Shaabab to road users who pay such taxes. The organisation not only provides receipts for the payments, but also, the amount charged for using roads are uniform- nearly five times as low as the charges by SNA personnel at checkpoints, and protection against robbery is guaranteed in al-Shaabab controlled regions ((Sage 2005).

2.4.5 Fractured political system

Undertaking military reforms in a fractured political system poses great challenges and threatens the whole process. For Somalia, more than the military, the political environment is deeply fractured across the federal, state, and clan levels (Biddle 2019). At the federal and state level rivalry over control of territory, resources, and armed forces have thwarted military reform processes in Somali. Key among these disputes are with regard to the distribution of military forces. In 2017 for instance, a national security architecture arrived at with consultation between the government, federal member states, and international partners put a cap on the number of military personnel of the SNA at 18,000 officers and 30,000 personnel of the Somali National police. However, the military, the 18,000 cap has already been surpassed by the current level of 23,000-27,000 personnel by 2020 statistics (Day et al. 2020). The establishment of this model also recognised that some militia groups, specifically the state level darwish would also be integrated into the SNA to executes duties such as border patrols and assist in national emergencies.

However, despite this proposal on how military personnel during reforms should be distributed, federal member states have been very reluctant to hand over or disband their darwish forces so that that they can be integrated in the national army. Indeed, it was this opposition to either hand over or disband the darwish forces that influenced their renaming as ‘special police’ by the federal member states who use it to wade off any attempts by the central government to ‘consolidate power’ and also as protection for their interests at the state level. More importantly, their identity whether as special police or darwish is not recognised

by national constitution and the international partners in Somalia. This means that financial support which they could attract had they been integrated into the SNA is therefore also forfeited thereby piling more pressure on scarce financial resources needed for military reforms of the SNA.

The tensions that are associated with the federal government and federal state rivalries about the distribution of military personnel was reflected in the failure of the Somali National Security Council to meet between June 2018 and 2020. Instead, federal member states withdrew from the Council and rejected any decisions made by the federal government and sought to pursue autonomous policies on security issues as well as with their engagement with international community involved in Somalia (Maqsood 2020). According to Day et al. (2020) state-level armed forces and intelligence agencies have also refused to cooperate with their counterparts at the level of federal government. These tensions created by the federal-state level rivalry have fed directly into the affairs of the Somali National Army. For instance, President Farmajo since assuming power, changed the top SNA and National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) commanders and their deputies for a record five times each and the top commissioner of police four times by 2020 (ibid).

It is important to note that political infighting has also nurtured a culture in which those leaders expected to play vital roles in building an effective national army, are also the similar leaders deeply embedded in the activities that and behaviour that reform programmes seek to change. This dysfunctional political environment has enabled elites to thrive and retain their status quo as political and economic elites largely because of the status of insecurity facing Somalia. Indeed, reforming the military to make it more effective serves to threaten their interests. This was clearly manifested by the findings of a report released by the International Crisis Group titled “Somalia and the Gulf Crisis” published in 2018. According to the Report several federsl member states and members of parliament took bribes from the UAE to

undermine the authority of the President. In other words, the fractured political system characterised by competing interests amongst political leaders have left political elites uninterested in tackling vices such as corruption and strengthening the federal government through the establishment of an effective and efficient SNA.

2.4.6 Inadequate focus on institutions

The restoration of the Somali National Army has been initiated with limited focus on the development of institutions which are crucial in not only developing a strategic vision for the military, but also in creating a structure for the military through which tasks are identified and assigned, manage the welfare of the military personnel and their dependants, facilitate training opportunities, and provide safety net for sustainable procurement and allocation of logistical support (Reno 2018). Williams (2020) noted that until 2017, there had not been any progress recorded in the establishment of fundamental constitutive blocks resembling some sort of national security architecture, military doctrine, security strategy, and educational of procurement institutions that could facilitate the integration of new SNA recruits. This institutional vacuum was epitomised for instance, by the existence of only 60 formal and support civilian personnel in the Ministry of Defence in Somalia by 2017. With such a low capacity of human resource, coordinating support from international partners leave alone the management of a national army is conspicuously doubtful. As such, regardless of the training and equipping that SNA troops received from international partners such as the US, Qatar, or Turkey, the lack of institutional infrastructure to manage, allocate, and facilitate preparations for field operations undermine the effectiveness of the military in the absence of critical institutions.

2.4.7 Several partners, weak coordination

Since the beginning of the efforts to revive the SNA, there have been several regional and international partners seeking to provide assistance to the military. However, weak

coordination has characterised the relationship between the SNA and its external partners. Although these partners tend to follow a near similar doctrine in providing support to the security forces such as training and maintenance of equipment, provision of interoperable equipment, and use of standardised training programmes and materials, coordination has remained minimal. It is of little surprise that even the Federal Government acknowledged this challenge and implored the security partners to the SNA to establish a singular platform through which they can be able to effectively coordinate their activities in 2012. However, in spite of this call, the SNA has continued to receive uncoordinated support for over a decade.[1]

Instead, the security force assistance provided to SNA by the external partners has been to a large extent modelled alongside the strategic interests of the partner state. Indeed, this can be said by the security support that Somalia has received from regional neighbours such as Ethiopia and Kenya and the United States. However, Somali political elites have also played a role in the lack of security support coordination because of their failure to agree on a shared vision and doctrine for the SNA that could lay the foundation for the external partners to direct their assistance towards. Even though to some extent it can be said that the support provided by the United States, United Kingdom, and European Union converge, those of Ethiopia, Kenya, and UAE do not, while Turkey which is a key actor in Somalia has often preferred to conduct its own autonomous and disconnected projects from those of other states. A programme dubbed 'S6' which was established in 2016 to converge initiatives instigated by Turkey, UK, UN, EU, UAE and US was quickly abandoned without much success and another programme called the Comprehensive Approach to Security was established (Kujeke et al. 2020). This approach sought to build an effective channels of coordination; counter and

[1]Letter dated 19 April 2013 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council' (S/2013/239, 19 April 2013) Annex §43

prevent extremism; develop and reinforce institutions of security; support AMISOM activities; and facilitate stabilisation measures (Ingiriis 2020).

The training programmes for instance, provide an explicit example of the impact of uncoordinated programmes in establishing an effective SNA. Different external actors have offered training programmes to the SNA through varying languages such as Arabic, Turkish, English, Swahili, and French as well as using different military doctrines and skills. But even more importantly, poor record keeping and sharing amongst the different supporting partners of their trainees, and this has led to large estimations of approximately 100,000 military personnel who have received training- majority of whom have probably received training several times over (Williams 2019). A study by Carstens (2013) concluded that n-most military troops were 'trained defected' and that in 2013, inadequate sanitation, bullets, and spaces for exercise leading to some recruits to abandon the main training facility in located in Mogadishu.

2.4.8 Reforming while fighting non-state actors

In places where security sector reforms have been successful such as in Liberia and Sierra Leone, security sector reforms occurred after the war had ended or when the peacebuilding processes are ongoing following the establishment of a political settlement. For Somalia, this process is largely occurring under the context of an ongoing war, and a very fragile peace process where a united idea or vision of a national security architecture, force structure, or strategy remains elusive. As a consequence, undertaking reforms while at the same time combating armed groups in the country have often created the dilemma between pulling soldiers from the field of battle for training. In other words, even the basic standards of the security sector reforms have come under scrutiny with regard to their applicability to Somalia.

The United States Department of Defense in its security sector reforms policy guidelines reiterate that conducting security sector reforms during instability and more importantly when

there is no national unity on a stable way forward for the country, then security sector reforms are highly likely to fail. Thus, even in the presence of security reform assistance, the cumulative outcome is that they may end up being wasted and counterproductive. Notably for Somali, there had been a rough strategy to lay the foundation and shape the nature of security sector reforms. The SNA was envisioned to foremost counter the threat post by radical and terrorist groups like Al-Shaabab then proceed to implementation of security sector reforms with the support of international actors who would put greater emphasis on professionalising the army. However, by 2021, Al-Shaabab is yet to defeated and uncoordinated reforms continue to characterise the whole process. Actors such as the United States focused on establishing the Danab Battalion, Kenya continued to maintain operations in Jubaland, Ethiopia focused on the Hiraan, Gedo, and Bakool areas, while the EU, Turkey, and UAE maintained their focus on Mogadishu and some of the member states.

But even during fighting, several operational challenges faced the SNA. For instance, at the beginning of sustained military operations against Al-Shaabab in 2009, both the SNA and AMISOM lacked basic weaponry to engage Al-Shaabab fighters in Mogadishu and there were legitimate concerns that were raised by AMISOM over the challenges of identifying non-uniformed SNA troops and their allied militias in the battlefield from other combatants (Camacho and Mohamed 2017). Similarly, at the heart of battle for Mogadishu between SNA forces, AMISOM, and Al-Shaabab, lack of adequate communication gadgets and skills on the side of the SNA led to very limited coordination and difficulties in planning joint-operations between SNA and AMISOM forces. According to Licklider (2014) conducting security sector reforms while the SNA is involved in fighting is challenging if not nearly an impossible endeavour because Somalia is a distributed battlefield that is characterised by small troops and a large terrain where success against groups such as Al-Shaabab would demand the skills to operate in small military units supported by mobile strike teams, air support, and simplified

logistics. However, these are skills that are not easily acquired and require training over a long period of time and resources which are not adequately at the disposal of the SNA.

2.4.9 Limited capability

The SNA is facing deep capability gaps that undermine its operational capabilities. Camacho and Mohamed (2017) in their study argued that after more than two decades of conflict, when active processes commenced to revive the SNA, so bad were the conditions of the military that it had to be reconstructed from its foundation. The government reinforced this view during the launch of the Victory Plan in 2015 when it acknowledged the far-reaching infrastructural as well as technical challenges facing the SNA (Albrecht and Haenlein 2016). These capability challenges were identified by the lack of adequate armoured vehicles, communication equipment, specialist vehicles, ammunition, fuel bowsers, troop mobility trucks, water trucks, small arms and light weapons, IED expertise, and ambulances (UN 2013). Although Somalia was under an arms embargo until 2015 when it was finally uplifted the allocation of approximately 17,500 weapons to the federal government did not meet the demand as evidenced by a Operational Readiness Assessment Report of the SNA published in 2017 that revealed only about 70 percent of the SNA troops owned any weapon, and an average of 195 rifles were available for each battalion. The collective effect of these challenges of capacity is that they undermine the effectiveness of the SNA by reducing the morale of military personnel.

2.4.10 Renumerations

Security sector reforms without proper renumeration of military personnel is counterproductive, as facilitates the urge for military personnel, especially new recruits to desert the military. This becomes even much more serious issue if it involves military personnel who have received advanced training either abroad or domestically. Byden (2013)

emphasised that indeed, proper renumeration of military personnel is ultimately more essential in reconstructing a military than acquisition of weapons.

Assessments by Transparency International have highlight government corruption which is ranked amongst the highest globally for contributing to the problems of personnel renumeration within the SNA. In fact, the Al-Shaabab have often used the corruption as core recruiting tool for fighters against the government. External partners such as the United States that has often been involved in the provision of stipends and salaries to SNA soldiers have at some points such as in 2017, forced to suspend payments to the SNA citing corruption and gross violations of human rights. These challenges of renumeration have left many SNA personnel poorly paid the impact of this was witnessed for example in 2017 when government soldiers abandoned strategic areas in the Shabelle river valley as a sign of protest for failure of payments for over four months while renumeration was ongoing. After the first phase of the reform at least of the problem is sorted out. Unfortunately, the reform has never been completed.

3 CHAPTER THREE

3.1 Somalia and geopolitical and economic stability

The Horn of Africa and the greater Eastern African region is characterised by population that are engaged in different social, economic, and political activities. Pastoralists for instance, are often involved in cross-border movement between the neighbouring countries in search for water and pasture (Smidt 2010). But even of greater significance is that a majority of the populations living across the different borders share the same ethnic and sometimes clan relations. According to Johnson (2010), the dynamics involving the region are so much intertwined such that it is of mutual benefit that peaceful and porous open borders be facilitated in order to encourage easy mobility of both people and goods in the region. However, the instability that has been plaguing Somalia has meant that regional trade has been greatly affected and security roles of member other regional states in Somalia have created dilemmas and complications in the geopolitical relations as will be demonstrated further in this chapter.

3.1.1 Cross-border insecurity

One of the major impacts of the collapse of the state of Somalia is that lawlessness and violence became part and parcel of the Kenya-Somalia, Somalia-Ethiopia borders. In the past, economic and social interactions that occurred along and across the border became disrupted partly because of displacement of communities by the war in Somalia. For the warlords and militia groups operating in Somalia, the absence of government, a national military force, or a national police service for over two decades created the perfect conditions in which they could exploit the insecurity to pursue their respective interests.

3.1.2 Refugee crisis

One of the biggest challenges facing the Horn of Africa and Eastern Africa region is the crisis of refugees and internally displaced persons. In neighbouring countries such as Kenya,

refugees from Somalia account for over 54 percent of the total refugees in the country (UNHCR May 2021). According to a study by Odhiambo-Abuya (2004), argued that the collapse of all critical state institutions in Somalia contributed to the emergence of a refugee crisis in the region and which has continued to plague the region due to the continued instability in Somalia. Although the refugees themselves are already vulnerable groups, they have also been a source of great geopolitical tensions between regional member states, particularly in the bilateral relations between Kenya and Somalia. According to a study by Voppen (2017), when a government of a refugee hosting or sending state have diverging security, economic, or political interests, then tensions regarding the treatment of refugees can arise. In East Africa, these tensions were epitomised by the frequent closure of borders between Kenya and Somalia over growing concerns of insecurity especially after allegations had emerged about radicalization taking place in refugee camps such as Dadaab Camp which is largely occupied by Somali refugees (Balakian 2016).

3.1.3 Terrorism

Perhaps the biggest imprint that the collapse of Somalia has had in the geopolitical and economic dynamics of the Horn of African and Eastern Africa is the threat of terrorism primarily by the al-Shaabab terrorist organisation. The collapse of government and its security institutions provided an ideal platform for the emergence of radical groups such as Al-Shaabab which gradually evolved into a terrorist organisation conducting terror activities in the region including in Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Uganda.

The incursion of Kenya into Somalia to counter the threat of al-Shaabab has since evolved into bilateral tensions between Kenya and Somalia. Kenya's insistence on the threat of terrorism to its security, and the subsequent strategic decision to cooperate with the member state of Jubaland has become a key source of regional tension between Kenya and the Federal Government of Somalia which considers close cooperation with Jubaland as undermining its

state sovereignty (Thompson 2015). During the 2019 elections in Jubba, Kenya backed the administration of Jubbaland against the federal government candidate who was also backed by Ethiopia. In 2020, Somalia's accusations against Kenya for meddling in its affairs exacerbated regional tensions between Kenya, Somalia, Djibouti. After both Kenya and Somalia recalled their ambassadors, the Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) initiated a fact-finding mission headed by Djibouti to examine the allegations labelled against Kenya. When the mission revealed there was no evidence to support the claims, Somalia accused Djibouti of being influenced by Kenya, thus, such findings were impartial (Institute of Security Studies 2021).

3.1.4 Piracy

Instability in Somalia destabilised the regional stability of the Eastern African coastline particularly in the years between 2008 and 2012 when piracy in the Indian Ocean increased significantly. According to Cordesman et al. (2016) Somali pirates hijacked fishing vessels way offshore into the Indian Ocean as far as offshore the coastlines of Kenya, Madagascar, Tanzania, and Mozambique. As indicated in Table 3, pirates conducted several attacks on merchant ships and by the end of 2012, over 250 people had been taken hostage in approximately 62 attacks. Moreover, 8 vessels and 104 crew members were also held hostage for ransom (ICC Commercial Crime Services 2013).

Table 3: Piracy in the Horn and East Africa

	2008	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**

Hijacks	8	26	26	4	2
Attacks	11	58	58	52	7
Disruptions	N/A	15	88	52	19

Source: Operation Ocean Shield Factsheet, NATO

The collapse of Somalia significantly hindered any efforts to effectively deal with the problem of piracy especially given that Somalia also has the longest coastline in the region and second in Africa. In many regards, piracy in the Horn and East Africa has been the direct outcome of weak national navy forces especially on the part of Somalia which for decades has enabled pirates to commit crimes and find a safe haven in the Somali ocenan waters where an absence of a military force transformed the region into a safe place.

Collectively, cross border insecurity, terrorism, piracy, and refugee crisis have led to deep geopolitical and economic instability in the Horn and East Africa region. And although these challenges can be generally attributed to the collapse of the state of Somalia in 1991, the more specific reason has been the disintegration of the SNA. Somalia's inability to resolve the domestic threats posed by militia and terrorist groups meant that often Kenya and Ethiopia had to intervene in Somalia- at times leading to very tensed relations with the federal government. The absence of a professionalised military also led to increased crime and insecurity, both of which have direct impacts on the geopolitical and economic stability, As a consequence, and in light of these challenges posed by the absence or whenever present, the weak operationalisation capacity of the army, this thesis suggests a few recommendations that may prove vital in expanding the capability, capacity, and effectiveness of the SNA to restore domestic stability of Somalia, and thus also contribute to the restoration of regional stability.

3.2 Recommendations on military reforms

3.2.1 Establishing civilian oversight over the military

Civilian oversight of armed forces has been identified as one of the practices of good governance in democratic societies. Indeed, it is vital for states to have strong armies to protect both its sovereignty and territorial integrity. However, there is also a legitimate danger that having a very powerful army could also pose a huge threat to civilian leadership especially in societies that are emerging from periods of conflicts or those that are involved in consolidation of democracy. The ability of the army to enjoy its symbolic status in the society, its greater political advantage relative to the executive, superior organisational structure, and monopoly over the use of arms can make the military less incentivised to obey civilian authority (Eldem 2019).

Importantly, civilian oversight of the military is not in order to undermine the effectiveness of the military but rather, to ensure that the military operates within a framework of accepted laws as defined with various constitutional dispensations while at the same time minimising the dangers of the military becoming politicised and bipartisan in national politics, which is in itself, receipt for chaos and instability. Instead, civilian oversight of the military seeks to eliminate the threats of coups, include the input of civilians in critical decision-making processes, and reduce the opportunities and gaps that the military can exploit to subvert the will of the people.

For Somalia, the weak civilian oversight over the military since Siad Barre came to power through a military coup, to a great extent contributed to the disintegration of the SNA. More importantly, there is symbolic civilian oversight but with minimal efficiency. Thus, in the absence of a civilian oversight, issues such as the use of budgetary allocations by the military if not properly scrutinised and audited can become open channels through which some high-ranking military officials can subvert public funds through irregular tender allocations or

become engaged in biased military recruitment. As a consequence, for a fragile state like Somalia that finds itself in the early transitional phase of post-conflict peacebuilding, incorporating structures that lay the foundation for a strong framework of military oversight constitutes one of the most vital developments in military reforms.

3.2.2 Coordinating transitional processes

Although Somalia is still experiencing conflicts within its boundaries, it is nonetheless in a transitionary period and the role of the SNA going forward will need greater coordination in terms of its reform initiatives. The lack of a common vision for the SNA as well as other security sector actors demands that all the relevant stakeholders involved in security sector reforms begin to consider on supporting priority military operations against al-Shaabab in priority locations as well as allocation of adequate resources. These priority locations should not be based on the national interests or where international organizations have ongoing projects, rather based on the overall strategic advantage that a particular region recaptured from militia control or al-Shaabab can have on the overall security and stability of the country.

Coordinating such efforts would require greater transparency which has historically been elusive as some external partners to Somalia choose to remain secretive on the exact nature and extent of their security assistance. The proposition here is not to establish parallel frameworks to disperse, track or monitor support, but rather it is to facilitate the ability of the state and its institutions to disperse, track and monitor the security support it receives. Increasingly better mechanisms should be established to channel resources through national systems while at the same time more internal capacity is built to monitoring prevent corruption and increase civilian oversight over institutions such as SNA. Importantly, the ability of the federal government to channel such resources also requires that it has a complete knowledge of what and from whom support to the SNA is provided. In this regard

coordinated assistance from Somalia's international partners can enhance better and regular payment of military personnel, aligned training, and acquisition of integrate-able equipment and weapon systems.

These processes are essential to building the capacity of the SNA to a level where it can take responsibility of providing stability with the country and revert back to the state, the monopoly over the exercise of violence. To become operationally ready, coordinated support towards equipping, restructuring, and professionalization to enable it take over from AMISOM must be paramount.

3.2.3 Institutional capacity building

There is evidence that some progress has been realized in security sector reform process in Somalia even though there still lacks an inclusive political settlement. Part of these progress are the periodical operational assessment of the security agencies particularly the SNA and its operational readiness as well as identifying the challenges facing the institution. Indeed, one of the key findings has been that the SNA had been a conduit for elite politicians and military commanders to divert resources for personal gain. Consequently, in order to enhance the role of the SNA, reforms in institutional capacity building is vital to further consolidate the achievements in assuring that soldiers for instance receive their dues in terms of payments, food rations, and ammunition used during combat.

The introduction of the biometric registration of SNA military personnel represents one of vital reforms modelled to build the capacity of the military and transition it into a more professional institution as soldiers will less likely be involved in extortion of civilians in road checkpoints because of the problems in delayed payments of salaries. Similarly, it also enhanced the capacity of the military to regularly allocate weapons and ammunitions. However, improvement can still be made in the recruitment processes.

Even though in 2019 Somali's Prime Minister was personally involved in conducting a competitive interview process for applicants to the vital positions of finance and logistics in the SNA, such an activity should be delegated to a professional institution under a civilian oversight in order to guarantee that the recruitment is entire based on merit of the best qualified candidates. Building capacity for professional recruitment of military personnel contributes significantly to the destruction of personal relationships as the basis of employment within the military. Indeed, it should be remembered that this is one of the factors that contributed to the disintegration of the SNA during the regime of Siad Barre. Effective institutions are mandatory to develop accountability and oversight mechanisms that also scrutinizes the allocation of government contracts as part of a wider public management reforms. Building institutional capacity within the SNA not only combats corruption but also increases public trust and contributes towards the effectiveness of SNA in tackling insecurity in the country.

3.2.4 Punishing misbehaviour and supporting militias integrated into SNA

The SNA has been working closely with certain militia groups working closely with the federal government as well as with other foreign actors such as the United States or the UAE. However, the federal government must be able to develop its internal capacities within the SNA to be able to neutralise or punish militia members who engage in at least grave atrocities such as extrajudicial killings, rape, and egregious forms of extortion through suspending their payments, and judicial prosecution in order to send a strong public message that such forms of behaviour is not tolerated regardless of who or to which powerful militias that an individual is linked to.

On the other hand, militia members who have integrated into the SNA should be supported as this is a vital component of any future integration processes in the SNA. Specifically, adequate payment of their stipends through the biometric system is critical for both

accountability as well as proofing any potential theft of financial incentives granted to militias that have been integrated into the SNA. Achieving this will require additional support of the international community and government commitment to the reform processes in the SNA. More importantly, given that these militias become part of the state or international support payroll, it is critical that their integration into the SNA is conducted in a manner that improves their capacity to fight Al-Shaabab and minimise abusive behaviours they might have acquired earlier from not operating as a professionalised force with responsibility of public accountability. Towards this end, thorough vetting of militias for any previous violations of human rights is imperative, while those who fail to demonstrate adequate awareness on human rights, given the opportunity to undergo training. Similarly, the SNA should be able to develop programmes or post-training monitoring.

3.3 Conclusion

This study identified three research questions as the key pillars of its inquiry. How has the SNA evolved between 1960 and in the post-2008 era? With regard to this question, the study concludes that there have been significant changes in the SNA between the two periods. At independence in the 1960s, the SNA was relatively modest in its size having been previously established from the unification of the imperial British and Italy soldiers who were estimated to be between 2000-5000 soldiers. However, the attempt by Siad Barre to pursue a Pan-Somali agenda that sought to unite all Somalis under one grand state of Somalia who were spread across the Horn of Africa region in countries such as Ethiopia and Kenya led to a rapid expansion of the military in the following two consecutive decades. By 1970, the military personnel had increased to 12,000 and further to an approximated 35,000-37,000 military personnel by 1977. However, growing pressure in domestic politics, influenced the personalisation of the military by Siad Barre by promoting military officers from clans he trusted. This ultimately led to the collapse of the military after 1991 and the outbreak of violence across the country for the next three decades. In post-2008 era, the SNA has largely remained an institution undergoing reconstruction. Most of its fighter personnel are largely drawn from militia groups while the absence of strong government has meant that the reconstruction of the SNA is mainly undertaken at the behest and by the support of foreign powers such as the EU, UK, Qatar, Turkey, and the US. Given that there have been other new security threats facing Somalia such as al-Shaabab, the size of the SNA personnel has also increased with estimates putting the number of soldiers and non-commissioned officers to be slightly below 19,000 by 2017.

The second question: what are the key challenges facing the SNA and operationalisation capacity? This study concludes that there have been several challenges that have continued to face the SNA. These challenges include: the clan dilemma; existence of auxiliary ‘forces’

outside SNA; sustained links and cooperation between SNA and militia groups; the Al-Shaabab factor; fractured political system; inadequate focus on institutions; several partners, weak coordination; reforming while fighting non-state actors; limited capability; and problems of personnel renumerations. Collectively, these problems have undermined the morale of soldiers especially on issues of personnel welfare such as renumeration, and the operational capacity of the SNA. As a consequence, the existence of the weak capacity has emboldened other non-state actors such as al-Shahab and several militia groups to continue challenging the state's monopoly over the use of violence. Equally important, the embedment of clannism within the social, political, and economic structures has meant that pursuing collective national goals such as establishing a national army and national political culture has been greatly eroded.

The third research question sort to explore how can military reforms in Somalia contribute to geopolitical and geo-economic stability? This study concluded that regional stability in the Horn of Africa and indeed, the greater Eastern African region cannot be achieved without peace and stability in Ethiopia. The study emphasizes that reforming the SNA therefore forms part of the fundamental solutions to geopolitical and geo-economic stability. This is because stability in Somalia is intricately linked with the challenges of cross-border insecurity, refugee crisis, terrorism, and piracy in the Indian Ocean. These challenges have constituted the bedrock of tensions among regional countries such as Kenya and Somalia, as well as Ethiopia and Somalia. In this regard, reforming and professionalizing the SNA in such a manner that it can facilitate stability within Somalia can be critical in alleviating some of the regional tensions between member states and promote the principles of good neighbourliness.

In this thesis, it is also sought out to examine why security sector reforms, particularly, that of the military is key in geopolitical and economic stability. The study has emphasised on the relevance of an operational and effective military in countering the threat of Al-Shahab and

laying the foundation upon which other external forces operating in Somalia can formulate an exit strategy. However, in as much as some progress have been made in trying to revitalise the SNA, several challenges continue to face the process and which if not resolve on time, could potentially lead to even greater domestic and regional instability. Clan dynamics, militia groups, resources, support coordination, and weak institutional capacities just to mention a few continue to stand in the way of establishing and an effective national army. However, with greater collaboration between different donors in Somalia, greater political will, and a greater unity of purpose both among the elites and the citizens of Somalia, then the efforts to rebuild an inclusive national army is achievable. With such as an army, Somalia would have laid perhaps one of the most important steps into the future. A professional army would not only guarantee better security against radical and terrorist groups like Al-Shahab but would also contribute to the regional stability. Once again, there can be possibilities of cross-border trade and movement of people without so many factors undermining such interactions.

During the last decade since 2008, Somalia has received significant support from international partners for it to develop its security and judicial institutions and now the country is gradually transitioning into a more critical phase where more emphasis is being put on stabilization and transformation of the country. The establishment of the National Security Architecture and a provisional constitution and efforts to organize national elections for the first time since the state collapsed in the 1990s are reflective of the positive developments and opportunities that can thrust Somalia into a new era of stability. However, this can only be supported if the existing tensions between federal government and federal member states such as Puntland, Somaliland are resolved while the treat of the Al-Shahab terrorist group is effectively brought under control. Indeed, the international community has played a significant role in Somalia over the years as a result of their financial, material, and military personnel contributions. However, it is perhaps time that the conspicuous presence of international military personnel

be reduced and instead replaced by Somali National Army personnel. This is not only critical in building the legitimacy of SNA but also, enhances its ability to rapidly respond to its operational capabilities and responsibilities.

Moving forward, the long-term security sector reforms within the Somali National Army should be modelled in a manner that is sustainable to available financial capacity from local resources; flexible to adapt to the changing circumstances; focus on achieving popular support for the development of national security institutions; enhance and facilitate local ownership through consultative processes; promote greater donor coordination; and create mechanisms through which genuine supporters and sceptics of reform processes can be identified in order to engage them further on how to move forward by deliberating on the points of disagreements.

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