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Review Article

Inter-state and Intra-state Wars and Conflicts in the Horn of Africa

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Abstract: For the last five decades, there have been extensive, continuous, and challenging intra- and inter-state wars and conflicts in the Horn of Africa. As a result, the peace and stability of the region as well as the socioeconomic development and livelihood of the population have suffered greatly. This study explores the reasons for the frequent conflicts in the region, analyzing the different types of conflict that frequently take place in the region. On the basis of a systematic probe of individual studies the conflicts in the region are categorized as state-society conflicts, state-state conflicts, and society-society conflicts. In addition, regardless of how the stake-holders of the region perceive the situation, intra-state and inter-state conflicts in the region have their roots in the long and complex history of state formation processes and struggles, identity conflicts, political economy, competition for scarce resources, and external intervention.

Keywords: Horn of Africa, wars, conflicts, identity conflicts, external intervention.

INTRODUCTION

In a geographic sense, the Horn of Africa refers to the East-periphery toward the north of the continent that extends into the Red Sea, bordered on the north by the Gulf of Aden and exposed on the southeast to the open Indian Ocean (Henze, 1991). In the 1990s, the term used to refer only to four countries, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, and Djibouti. These countries are referred to as the "core Horn" as opposed to the "Greater Horn," which includes Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania. At the periphery of this Greater Horn of Africa are Rwanda and Burundi.

Figure 1: Political Map of the Horn of Africa region

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The Horn of Africa region shares cultural characteristics, historical connections, political entanglements, and conventional economic ties (Henze, 1991). Based on historical, demographic, geographic, cultural, and geopolitical characteristics, the entities of the sub-region are regarded different (Bereketeab, 2013). Characteristics used to identify regional sub-systems frequently consider geographic proximity, regularity and intensity of interaction between actors internal and external recognition of a group of states as a distinctive area, which often consists two or more countries (Ayoob, 1978). Having said that, conflict and war in the region occur at different levels, and scale, so they can be categorized as pertaining to local, national, and international levels, having each their own reasons for the conflict. National conflicts occur as different stake holders compete for state authority, while local conflicts frequently arise between identity-based groups and are motivated by competition for scarce resources. And international conflicts arise between sovereign governments and have different goals and dynamics in the political, military, diplomatic, and economic spheres (McWhinney, 2007). In this context, war, conflicts, and instability in the region have their roots in a long and complex history of political economy, state formation processes and struggles, international intervention, identity conflicts, and environmental change, regardless of whether they are viewed through the lens of state, intra-state, or inter-state conflicts (Bereketeab, 2013). Furthermore, political Islam, ideological, and strategic differences have been significant sources of conflict. As such, untangling the intricate web of the conflicts and comprehending the connections at the local, sub-national, national, regional, and global levels; as well as engaging in deeper reflections, and offering workable solutions that promote participatory, sustainable, people-centered peace and development in the region remains a challenging duty (Bereketeab, 2013).

This study explores what types of conflicts frequently take place in the region, and aims to further explain and discuss the reason for the frequent conflict in the region. By bringing together findings from numerous specific analysis, this study seeks to uncover the broad outlines of underlying dynamics, filling a gap in the existing knowledge. Obviously, conflicts occur for a variety of reasons all around the world. They also play a role in the creation of social identities, interactions with intra- and international actors, historical and socioeconomic experiences, as well as local, national, and regional configurations. And due to this diversity of causative settings the conflicts in the Horn of Africa cannot be explained by one single factor (Bereketeab, 2013). Rather, the historical context shows a well-diversified set of factors since ancient time. In this context, conflicts in the region are a result of a wide range of internal and external reasons, involving international, regional, national, and local actors and networks with social, economic, political, and military components (Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, 2008).

BACKGROUND HISTORY OF THE CONFLICT IN THE PRE-COLONIAL PERIOD

Though accumulating in recent times, many of the conflicts have long roots in the history of the region, it traced back to pre-colonial period having its own respective causes. The Aksumite civilization, which flourished in what is now Eritrea and Norther Ethiopia from 1 to 7 A.D., was based in the Horn of Africa region. It maintained contact and economic links with the outside world, including the Byzantine and Persian Empires. Thereby, the region has long known socioeconomic exchanges as well as competitions for resources and territorial expansion. One strand of conflicts has religious roots. Christianity and Islam were both introduced into the region in the 4th and 7th centuries A.D, and for centuries the region was known for its peaceful coexistence among these two big religions. Gradually, the Kingdom of Adal, which was located in Eastern Ethiopia, dominated the Muslim states from where the kingdom penetrated and expanded in to Ethiopian highland including some parts of present-day Eritrea. Tensions turned into intense warfare in the 16th century, when Ahmad Gragn, a military leader in the Adal Kingdom clashed with the Christian highlander Ethiopians under the king of Lebene Dengl. Afars, Adares, Somalis, and some Arabs made up Gragn's army, their shared and common language was Arabic, and they all shared Islam as their religion (Henze, 1991). Although Gragn's exact place of origin remains quite controversial, some contemporary Somali nationalist have attempted to portray him as a Somali hero. It is necessary to remember that the Somali tribes were constantly moving into the region they now occupy, and although sharing the same language, culture, religion, and ancestors, they had yet to develop a sense of collective identity (Henze, 1991).

This conflict marks the first time that external forces were invited into in the region. As the attrition battle raged on, both parties requested assistance from Portugal and Ottoman Turkey, with Ottoman Turkey supporting Gragn and Portugal supporting Ethiopia, with approximately 400 Portuguese soldiers and heavy weapons landing in Ethiopia. In 1541, the amount and value of Portuguese's help to Ethiopians was greater than that of Ottoman assistance to Gragn, causing a significant shift in the balance of power. The severely wounded Ethiopian state was eventually able to recuperate, gain the fortitude to endure, and take part in the European race for Africa in the nineteenth century. And by the end of 19th century, little was left of Adal—the city state of Harar, which slowly began to deteriorate and was eventually conquered by Ethiopian and then Egyptian forces (Henze, 1991).

Another line of conflict ran between the Abyssinian Empire and the Mahdiyya in Sudan, were two of the region's major precolonial empires. The tension between the two empires was visible even in the late 19th century, particularly following the assassination of King Yohannes of Abyssinia by the Mahdist of Sudan on March 10, 1889 at the Battle of Mettema, a border area between Sudan and Ethiopia. The legacy of both empires continues to have an impact on local conflicts in the border area, where Feshega, a vast fertile agricultural area is one of the most problematic contested areas between Sudan and Ethiopia. By enlarging its territory in the 1850s and defending itself against colonialism, the Abyssinian Empire is acknowledged for founding the modern-day state of Ethiopia (Bereketeab, 2013). However, this process involved deep discrepancies in citizenship rights inside the nation along with issues with interstate boundaries, and during and after the southern regions of the country were brought into the empire, the population were decimated by slave raids, plundering, and, in many cases, extensive land expropriations (Bereketeab, 2013). Slavery was practiced in Ethiopia from ancient times until 1942, when Emperor Haileslasie declared it illegal. The majority of the slaves came from the periphery, specifically the Nilotic population in the southern region and including some parts of the Oromia region. Although numerous internal and external actors were involved in the activities, the principal actors were from northern highland who dominated Ethiopian politics for centuries. And they were also the traditional landowners. Landless tenants who worked the land for northern landowners replaced those who lost their land, and in the newly annexed lands, non-Abyssinian cultures were positioned in lower strata in the Empire's constructed cultural hierarchy (Mengisteab, 2011). As a result, such feudal state structure and other prolonged and accumulated problems later led to ethnic and social tensions in modern Ethiopia.

In 1974, the Derg, a group of military junta who followed Marxism-Leninism ideology, toppled Emperor Haile Selassie. This new government in Ethiopia formed by the Derg introduced a number of reforms. The most important was the 1975 land reform, which enacted the so-called "land for the tiller" policies and eliminated the landlord-tenant relationship, which effectively killed feudalism and the feudal aristocracy of the emperor's land system that thrived on it (Mengisteab, 2011). Almost immediately, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), dominated by the Tigray Peoples Liberation Front began fighting the Derg, and in 1991, it overthrew the Derg regime and assumed power. The participation of Eritrean People's Liberation Front's (EPLF) mechanized and ground forces on the battlefield in support of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic (EPRDF) Front was significant in defeating the Derg regime in Ethiopia in 1991. In 1994, the EPRDF government amended the country's constitution to include an ethnic-based federation, which was designed to lessen the cultural differences in the country (Mengisteab, 2011). This was done in an effort to learn from prior regimes and solve the long-standing problem of ethno-polarization. However, their policies were hampered by the uprisings of several opposition groups, including the Oromo Liberation Front, a political movement seek for the liberation of Oromo people, and the Ogaden National Liberation Front, a secessionist movement of Somali ethnic group aimed to separate the Ogaden region from Ethiopia. These and other groups demonstrated that unequal access to political and economic power remains a major source of conflict in a country where the EPRDF held key political, military, and economic positions until 2018. Similarly, in Sudan's Mahdiyya state, which claimed Arab identity and was supported by slave-raiding clans, inter-identity relations, especially between northern and southern identity groups, have left deep wounds in the country that have pushed the country dangerously close to disintegration (Mengisteab, 2011).

INTRA-STATE AND INTER-STATE WARS AND CONFLICTS

Prioritizing military means to resolve conflicts has had a damaging impact on economic growth in the three core Horn countries (Ethiopia, Sudan, and Somalia), an effect that was noticeable in the 1960s and became more pronounced in the 1970s and 1980s. In addition, in the mid-1980s, it became glaringly obvious that these countries had compromised their ability to feed their populations by the diverting of resources for military objectives (Henze, 1991). Continuous engagement in military actions intended to quell internal unrest and to prepare potential war from neighbor countries which finally led to widespread famine (Henze, 1991). The horrific drought and famine in Ethiopia and Somalia in the 1980s, which killed hundreds of thousands and starved millions, was recognized as the worst disaster in the region's history. This is attributable to the weak economy and the disproportionate budgeting of national funds for military purposes over social services. Despite the Ethiopian government under Prime Minister Meles claim of double-digit GDP growth for nearly a decade, starvation is frequently seen in the parched land of Somalia and Afar. Furthermore, the ongoing conflicts in Somalia makes the situation worse.

War and violence have plagued the region for decades, making it insecure. Inter-state wars, which occur at different times and to differing degrees of intensity, have frequently been exacerbated by disputes within specific nations of the region (Bereketeab 2013). These political challenges have both contributed to and been exacerbated by environmental disasters striking during the period. Thus, widespread poverty, internal displacement, and refugee flows—all of which were a defining feature of the region in the 1970s, 1980s, and

later—were manifestations of ongoing droughts that resulted in famine as well as other problems, including environmental degradation and economic hardship. In addition, devastating intra- and interstate warfare, state failure and breakdown, the increase in the flow of small guns, and people trafficking are only a few of the key expressions of the crisis (Bereketeab, 2013). As a result, the Horn of Africa region is commonly considered as the site of regional combat that has resulted in the largest number of deaths, casualties, civilian displacement, and destruction of infrastructure and social service facilities in Africa. The ongoing destructive civil wars in Ethiopia and Sudan are obvious and are deteriorating instead of improving. The intra-state war between the Federal government and the Tigray Regional government, which began in 2020 and ended in November 2022 killed hundreds of thousands of people and subjected the country to additional socioeconomic disasters. In May 2023, the Ethiopian finance minister appeared before the house of peoples' representatives and delivered a report on the financial and material expenses of the two-year destructive war, which cost more than $20 billion, while the Tigray regional government also incurred significant material costs and lost thousands of human lives in this meaningless war against the central government. Similarly, the ongoing civil war, which erupted in Sudan on 15 April 2023, fought between two powerful military generals, has driven millions of innocent civilians to flee to neighboring countries following devastating urban combat in major towns, including Khartoum the capital city of Sudan. It is absurd to seek international aid after engaging in such a useless and costly disastrous war, which has cost tens of billions of dollars, rather than compromising and minimizing difference, and struggle to provide national development projects such as alleviating poverty, providing basic social services such as education and health care.

For five decades, the region has been experiencing protracted and complicated intra- and inter-state conflicts; which can be divided into three main categories: state-society conflicts, state-state conflicts, and society-society conflicts (Cliffe, 1999). State-state conflicts are disputes between sovereign states, whereas state-society conflicts are related to civil wars. In addition, the third category, society-society, deals with intra-communal and inter-communal conflicts that occur in the background of the state (Bereketeab, 2013). Though, all types of conflict are to some extent caused by an unstable or crisis-ridden state (Bereketeab, 2013), it nevertheless makes analytical sense to look at each category separately.

Intra-state conflict
Intra-state conflicts are the most destructive type and come in three categories: The first category is inter-communal conflicts, which are fought between groups of people who belong to the same ethnicity,

clan, or occupation, a conflict between pastoralists and sedentary farmers, which is the most common and destructive in the region. And these types of conflicts frequently involve groups fighting over land, water, and grazing areas for livestock, and are triggered by competition for scarce resources as a result of a fast-degrading environment and rapidly rising populations (Bereketeab 2013). Due to the Horn of Africa's arid and semi-arid climate, resource-based violence has been prevalent for a long time. This is especially pronounced during drought seasons, when pastoralists move from one place to another in search of pasture and water. This kind of conflict is particularly frequent in Somalia. The second category is one-sided, where government forces and rebel groups commit atrocities against defenseless civilians for a variety of causes. And the third category is civil wars and hostilities between the state and organized political groups, many of which have ethnic or regional roots, and this kind of conflict is possibly the worst form of intra-state conflict the region has ever seen (Bereketeab, 2013). Examples are the situations of Gambella in Ethiopia and Darfur in Sudan in 2002.

In addition, governments frequently intervene in communal conflicts by backing opposing identity groups if some identity groups rebel or oppose governmental efforts. And, in other situations, intercommunal rivalry over resources may escalate into lethal confrontations due to the government's failure to address such problems promptly Numerous intercommunal clashes, which frequently grew worse as small guns became more accessible, have exacerbated the region's instability that led to the disruption of its economy (Mengisteab, 2011). Peaceful redefinitions of social and ethnonational relations in the region has been unachievable due to the interests of the states and the colonial interstate system, and in these circumstances, the state serves as a tool of the ruling class by denying the general populace and ethnonational groups' political representation in the decision-making process (Sorenson John and Thomas Leiper 1995). This has been a recurrent issue in the region since pre-colonial period. Whether the ruling class came to power through a fraudulent election or a military coup, they use the state as a tool to materialize their greatest interests and ambitions, and in order to consolidate their power, they give more privileges in the educational, economic, and political sectors to their respective ethnic group at the expense of other ethnic groups. This kind of scenario was prevalent during Somalia's rule of Said barre in the 1970s and 1980s, while in Sudan, successive administrations provided people of Arab origin economic privileges as well as significant political and security positions. Similarly, in Ethiopia during the reign of Emperor Haileslasie in 1940th until the mid of 1970th, the Amhara ethnic group were more privileges in every sector. Moreover, the Tigrian ruling elite dominated the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) government (1991-2018)

where they held most of the political, security, and military key positions. Here as elsewhere, when subordinated classes, groups, and ethnonations have been denied political and economic rights, the result has been war, economic crisis, and underdevelopment (John and Leiper, 1995).

Complex and numerous inter-society and state-society disputes plague the Sudan. Since its independence in 1956, marginalization, alienation, and discrimination by the center against the peripheries have kept Sudan in a constant state of war (Deng, 2010). Both state-society and society-society conflicts share traits with the North-South division (Bereketeab 2013). It falls under the social category since it involves African Christian Animism (south) and Arab Muslims (North), and it also has a state-society dimension because the Arab origin group controls the state, giving the impression that the state is at war with a certain segment of society (Bereketeab, 2013). However, such a prolonged biased and discriminatory state policy approach resulted in state instability that ultimately drove South Sudan independence in 2011, and many other ethnic-related and regional conflicts has been ongoing in Darfur, Nuba, and Eastern Sudan. Since Sudanese of Arab descent have privileges over other ethnic groups due to long-standing political and economic marginalization, this has made the situation in Sudan worse. Additionally, access to social services like education and healthcare is not distributed fairly across the nation, with greater access and opportunity in the Arab settlement areas.

The Beja people in the East have to deal with the reality of being on the periphery of Khartoum-based central power, which has steadfastly shown itself to be discriminatory, exploitational, and repressive. And as a result, they established the Beja Congress in 1958 to express their discontent with the emerging power structure and to demand their due status in the post-colonial states (Young, 2007). Since its foundation, the Beja Congress has occasionally participated in national politics, pushing for the improvements of the Beja people's situation, which has been a victim of alienation, marginalization, underdevelopment, and neglection of the northern-Arab elite (Bereketeab, 2013). The NCP and Eastern Front, which was founded in 2005 by the opposition organizations Beja Congress and Rashaida Free Lions, were engaged in a full-fledged struggle by the early 1990s, while the Asmara Agreement was followed in October 2006 by the signing of the Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement (ESPA), which was carried out in eastern Sudan with assistance from the SPLM/A. In addition, the Eastern Front was given permission by the ESPA to become a junior partner in the Government of National Unity, in which the leader of the eastern front became vice of President Omar Al-Bashir (Young, 2007). Furthermore, the Darfur crisis was one of the worst, with the Janjaweed, a militia sponsored by the central government,

launching an attack against the Darfur rebels, killing thousands of innocent civilians, and the situation still remain volatile.

Although Somalia was one of the first African countries to gain independence, it has faced numerous challenges that have led to intra-state and inter-state war and conflict. On July 1, 1960, Somalia attained independence, and it was made up of Italian Somaliland and British Somaliland, which came together four days after British Somaliland's official independence on June 26, 1960 (Moller, 2008). The unification of British Somaliland and Italian Somaliland quickly proved to be harmful to the Somali state, where political unrest and tension peaked in 1968 due to clan-based division of post-colonial leaders and parties, possibly as a result of their various colonial legacies. In addition, a military junta was imposed in October 1969 following a coup led by General Siad Barre that took advantage of the unrest that followed the 1969 election to put an end to the brief period of multi-party civilian rule (Moller, 2008). This contributed to the breakdown of Somalia as a country in 1991, which was hastened by Cold War actions, geo-regional politics, and clan politics (Moller, 2008). As a result, Somalia has been deemed a failed state since 1991, despite the establishment of multiple weak transitional federal governments.

Social unrest was at an all-time high as a result of the deteriorating political situation under Said Barre. In Somalia, tribal communities and clan-based organizations were commonplace as a means of self-organization and resistance to the regime. The result was the creation of several clan-based movements, including the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF, Mijerteen), the Somali National Movement (SNM, Isaaq), and the United Somali Congress (USC, Hawiye), which eventually led to the overthrow of the Siad Barre regime in 1991, who had ruled the country since 1969. However, their success turned out to be a mission that was impossible to manage and turn into a national effort, and following the overthrow of the regime, Somalia was divided up among the competing factions, resulting the creation of the following states: central and southern Somalia, ruled by Hawiye; Puntland, ruled by Mijerteen; and Somaliland, ruled by Isaaq. In addition, due to regional and international intervention, on the name of "global war on terror" and extremism, the central and southern Somalia were plagued, but the two breakaway regions—particularly Somaliland—have created peaceful, stable, and largely democratic governmental systems though not yet recognized internationally as sovereign states (Bereketeab, 2013).

The uneven level of development of regions and ethnic groups within nations is another outcome of colonialism in the region and even in the post-independence era such scenario also continuing by some governments in the region. In Africa in general

and in the Horn of Africa in particular, resource extraction was one of colonialism's primary goals. As such, regions, which were convenient and with plenty of mineral resources and fertile land were often targets for investment, whereas regions believed unprofitable were typically marginalized (Bereketeab, 2013). For instance, the southern Ugandan Buganda regions had privileges compared to other areas of the country. Likewise, the Rift Valley and central Kenya were deemed viable by the British, whereas the western and northeastern regions were marginalized as unprofitable and problematic. In addition, other regions that were comparatively neglected by the colonial rule included southern Sudan and northern Uganda, and all these regions are still undeveloped places that have developed into conflict hotspots (Mengisteab, 2011). However, since the last few decades, South Sudan has been discovered to have one of the most extensive oil reserves in Sub-Saharan Africa, and oil extraction has become the country's primary source of revenue. Furthermore, 70% of South Sudan's total area is fertile land, making it the most suitable agricultural land in the region.

That being said, the region has had an alarming rate of environmental degradation, which is another contextual aspect that has contributed to the intra-community and inter-community conflicts and instability in the horn of Africa region. In addition, the region's populations, particularly the peasants and nomads, have been under increasing pressure from deteriorating environmental conditions, which has led to communal conflicts involving land and water (Kidane Mengisteab, 2011). Conflict with racial and environmental roots led to near-anarchy in western Sudan in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and the reason for this was that, historically, when sedentary African communities had harvested their crops, northwestern Arab pastoralists had moved southward along their migration routes into these regions (Isaac and Targowski, 2015). The Arab pastoralists started migrating their herds considerably earlier in search of water and pasture due to frequent droughts and growing desertification, frequently ruining the unharvested fields of the African farmers (Isaac and Targowski, 2015).

Inter-state war

Over the past few decades, the countries in the region have encountered a number of difficulties, with Sudan, Ethiopia, and Somalia suffering as a result of both domestic incompetence and natural disasters (Isaac and Targowski, 2015). After being decimated by war, poverty, famine, and pestilence, each country is tremendously fragile and faces an uncertain future while maintaining the lowest level of development on all standards (Isaac and Targowski, 2015). Conflicts in the region are triggered by a variety of complex and interconnected issues, while the economic and institutional frameworks left behind by precolonial empires and the colonial state are one of the contextual and crucial factors that contribute to Intra-state and inter-state conflict (Mengisteab, 2011). Since its decolonization, the region has undergone numerous social, political, and economic changes that have included military coups, interstate as well as civil wars, revolutions, racial and religious conflicts, and complicated humanitarian crises, among others. And also, during the postcolonial era, civil wars have broken out in every nation in the region at least once. In addition, the region has also seen more inter-state conflicts than any other part of Africa (Yeboua and Cilliars, 2021). From the late 1950s to the present, the region has had numerous devastating interstate wars, most notably the Ethiopian-Somali wars (1964, 1977-78, 2006-9), the Kenyan-Somali war (1963), the Ugandan-Tanzanian war (1978-79), and the Ethiopian-Eritrean border war (1998-2000) (Bereketeab, 2013).

Africa had its greatest moment of hope during the 1960s, when the majority of its nations gained independence from over a century of colonial control. Conflicts in other parts of Africa subsided, while in the Horn of Africa it persisted and became devastating in the last five decades. Ethiopia, for example, was involved in protracted conflicts in Eritrea and Somalia in the 1960s and 1970s, respectively. In 1961, political instability erupted in Eritrea after Ethiopia unilaterally ended the federal arrangement made by the United Nations in violation to the 390A (V) resolution of the United Nations General Assembly, spurring the establishment of an Eritrean independence movement. Ethiopia was also at odds with Somalia in the early 1970s over the Ogaden area, where a Pro-Somali separatist movement had emerged. Besides, dragging both countries in continuous suspicion and state of hostility, these conflicts also destroyed the economy of both Ethiopia and Somalia, with disastrous ramifications for the entire region. As a result, the region experienced weaker economic growth than the rest of the continent. National economic development was dwarfed by the development of powerful military forces, which forced governments to allocate their limited resources to the security and military sectors, and proxy war. Despite the fact that all of these countries faced enormous demands for the expansion of social and educational services, as well as the development of infrastructure for economic growth, they all set aside a portion of their income for the maintenance and expansion of their armed forces (Henze, 1991).

With the rise of military rulers to power, Africa in general and the horn of Africa in particular became a battleground for war and conflict. Though armed forces expanded rapidly across Africa in the 1970s, rates in the region (Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, and Kenya) far outpaced the continent's average. Particularly after Somalia's General Said Barre and Ethiopia's Colonel Mengstu Hailemariam took power in 1969 and 1974 respectively; both countries were forced

into a state of perpetual animosity. As a result, during their conflicts, Ethiopia and Somalia saw the biggest increases in military budget and personnel. Hence, the total number of armed personnel in the region increased more than any time before, dramatically rose from 100,000 in 1970 to 382,000 in 1979 (Henze, 1991). To make matters worse, between 1974 and 1980, the share of Ethiopia and Somalia's small GNP that went toward supporting their military forces significantly grew, nearly tripling in Somalia and increasing by five times in Ethiopia (Henze, 1991). During that time, only Sudan had a decrease in the amount of GNP consumed by the military. In addition, Kenya had a proportionately large increase, but when compared to the other Horn countries, Kenya's military spending was a far lower burden considering that its economy is still growing (Henze, 1991). Despite its short period of independence, Kenya has made exceptional social and economic progress, and furthermore, the absence of a military tradition and the leaders' lack of propensity to tackle the majority of the nation's challenges from a military perspective, has contributed significantly to this success (Henze, 1991).

Political inconsistencies and governmental policies are the main causes of disasters in the Horn, and the Horn states use zero-sum politics because they are primarily concerned with preserving the status quo. In addition, to defend themselves against political opposition and fronts for ethnonational liberations, they spend their meager economic excess on destructive weaponry and ineffective civilian and military bureaucracies (John and Leiper, 1995). To consolidate and stay in power for long-time, military priorities has become primarily strategy of each national government, while the socio-economic crises remain among the worse place in the world. Hence, most of the countries in the region failed to feed and deliver basic social service for their people. The Horn of Africa region is one of Africa's most war-torn regions. Residents of the region have had to endure various inter-state and Intra-state wars and conflicts since 1956, when Sudan became the first country in Sub-Saharan Africa to attain independence, and continuing to the present. In addition, even before the age of decolonization, the region was far from stable (Mengisteab, 2011). For example, between the early 1800s and the time of decolonization, it had a number of battles, the majority of which were related to colonization and resistance to colonialism, slave raids, state formation and empire building, resource control and trade routes, and the struggle for freedom (Mengisteab, 2011).

Some of the main causes of inter-state wars and conflicts in the Horn region have been territorial and border disputes, and these battles have been significantly influenced by the ill-defined frontiers between rival pre-colonial empires that were later set by colonial powers (Yeboua and Cilliars, 2021). An example is the farming conflict in the Al-Fashaga, a fertile land, bordered between Sudan and Ethiopia, and the vast maritime border dispute between Kenya and Somalia in the Indian Ocean, which is believed to contain a huge oil and gas reserve (Kouassi Yeboua and Jakkie Cilliars 2021). Furthermore, the region is home to a variety of ethnic tensions, such as those involving Sudan's Darfur crisis, wars among Somali clans, and ethnic tensions in Ethiopia and South Sudan (Yeboua and Cilliars, 2021). The scramble for Africa was a legacy of colonialism that had a negative impact on the entire continent, and it was designed primarily to serve the interests of the colonial powers, with no regard for the socioeconomic structures and repercussions of the societies in question. Even after independence, African governments embraced colonial borders rather than altering and reconstructing the colonial territory's fractured structure. Colonial boundaries are frequently not properly defined, let alone delineated on the ground. Because of this ambiguity, many border conflicts have erupted in Africa**.** As a result, several of the Horn of Africa region's wars and disputes, most notably those involving South Sudan in 2011, and Somaliland's ongoing aspirations to secede from Somalia, have resulted in the revising of national borders (Kouassi Yeboua and Jakkie Cilliars 2021).

Though most Horn of Africa countries have border disputes with at least one of their neighbors, the Eritrea-Ethiopia border conflict, which erupted into full-fledged war in 1998-2000, was one of the bloodiest conflicts in the contemporary history of the region. Although the Algiers Agreement in 2000 ended the border conflict and the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC) rendered its ruling declaring Badme the flash point - Eritrean sovereign territory, Ethiopia refused to abide by the agreement and continues to occupy sovereign Eritrean territory until 2020. As a result, not only was there a genuine potential that the no war, no peace condition would lead to another horrific war, but it also gave rise to a proxy war in Somalia, where both countries supporting their respective opposition forces, contributing to the existing political instability. The civil war in Somalia between the Islamic court Union (ICU) and the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in 2006 signaled the start of the open proxy war after Ethiopia officially joined the ongoing civil war in supporting the transitional Federal government. The unresolved border conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea has spilled over into Somalia, transforming a border dispute between two IGAD members (Eritrea and Ethiopia) into a proxy war in a third country, with one of the parties, Ethiopia, receiving IGAD approval to send its armed forces into Somalia in 2006 (Bereketeab, 2013). Following its opposition to the IGAD resolution, Eritrea withdrew its membership in 2006. However, after Ethiopia and Eritrea agreed to normalize their relations in 2018, Eritrea re-joined IGAD in June 2023, after an Eritrean, high-level delegation led by its foreign minister attended the summit for the first time since 2006.

That being said, another border conflict between Sudan and South Sudan over Abyei is one of the border conflicts in the region that could lead to total war. Despite the fact that British rule separated South Sudan and the north throughout the most of the colonial period, the border between the two countries remains ambiguous (Mengisteab, 2011). Abyei is economically interesting to both South Sudan and Sudan due to its large oil reserves. Also, its border location led to conflicting claims over ethnic, cultural, and linguistic. As such, resolving the Abyei issue is critical not just for Sudan and South Sudan's peace and stability, but for the entire region as well. Border conflicts can have serious ramifications not just for relationships between states, but also between ethnic groups, particularly for those who live along the border when their allegiance to their governments is called into doubt (Mengisteab, 2011). This is a serious risk, since in the Horn of Africa, as in other African regions, colonial powers established the majority of the border between nations in the Horn region (Bereketeab, 2013). The majority of these boundaries divide the same ethnic groups over multiple adjacent nations, with Somalis being a prominent example. The issue of boundary alterations or the retention of inherited colonial boundaries in Africa is very contentious. And despite their historically problematical origins and dubious ethnographic rationale, there is a strong belief among African leaders and scholars that Africa's borders are best left intact. In 1963, the Organization of African Unity adopted the sustainability, even inviolability, of boundaries established at independence. However, it is undeniable that this situation has impeded attempts to foster cooperation and integration on the continent.

While the majority of African countries appear to have accepted colonial borders, governments in the Horn, such as Somalia, have maintained an active irredentist foreign policy, as seen by their attempts to unite all Somali-speaking people under a unified Pan-Somali-nation (Bereketeab, 2013). These irredentism and expansionism policy made Ethiopia and Kenya joining forces when both countries went to war against Somalia in the 1960s and 1970s. In brief, the unsettled boundary issues between North and South Sudan and the disputed boundaries between Ethiopia and Sudan, disputes between Kenya and Somalia in the Indian Ocean, all carry the potential for future conflict in the region (Bereketeab, 2013). In addition, many of the region's civil wars are intimately related to inter-state conflicts since, frequently, the organizations fighting the state are either supported by or act as proxies for other states (Mengisteab, 2011). For a number of reasons, governments in the Horn have been involved in one another's domestic conflicts, and the majority of them sponsor or are accused of hosting their neighbors' opposition armed groups, and this could be owing to ethnic ties with rebellious groups, as some people support insurgencies in neighboring countries. In addition, ethnically based insurgency organizations frequently receive support from neighboring populations due to ethnic ties to those populations, even when their governments do not directly assist them. And the Somali state, for example, backed insurgency activities in Ethiopia's Somali-populated Ogaden area, and in Kenya's Somali-populated North Eastern Province, before disintegrating in 1991 (Mengisteab, 2011).

In the process, proxy war has become one of the principal tools of foreign policy for the governments of the Horn of Africa. This comprises reciprocal operations with intra-state protagonists, and in the context of the region, proxy warfare refers to the practice of nations supporting insurgencies that originate in the countries of their adversaries. In addition, this strategy tries to degrade both real and potential enemies in order to boost their negotiation position when interacting with one another (Bereketeab, 2013). For several decades, this political game has dominated the region's relations, dragging them into a condition of animosity rather than cooperation for common progress. As a result, the costs of proxy war are usually enormous, while a large proportion of the population seeks international aid for necessities such as food and shelter. The Ethiopian Democratic Union (EDU), the Tigray People's Liberation Front, the Oromo Liberation Front, and other rebel movements that at various points opposed Ethiopia's imperial and military governments were supported by Sudan and Somalia, while Ethiopia reacted in a similar way by backing rebel groups that originated in both nations (Bereketeab, 2013). Additionally, by signing a mutual defense treaty in 1964, Ethiopia and Kenya countered what they saw as a Somali threat to their sovereignty. And, in order to undermine Somalia's ability to assert its claims over the Ogaden and to counter Somalia's support for irredentist movements, succeeding Ethiopian regimes supported insurgency groups like the Somali Salvation Democratic Front and the Somali National Movement against the Somali state (Mengisteab, 2011).

Sudan was providing moral and material support to Eritrea's two liberation forces, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) and the Eritrean Liberation Front (FLF), that were fighting against the Ethiopian regimes for Eritrea independence. And furthermore, Sudan aided the Tigray People's Liberation Front in its fight against Mengistu Haile Mariam's Ethiopian government, while Ethiopia supported the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) against several Sudanese regimes. In addition, in 1993-1994, Sudan supported the Eritrean Islamic Jihad who were fighting against the government of Eritrea, while Eritrea responded by supporting the National Democratic Alliance, one of Sudan's opposition groups (Mengisteab, 2011). Furthermore, from 2012 to 2018, Ethiopia and Eritrea accused one another of supporting each other's opposition groups. For example, the

Ethiopian government was alleged to back Eritrean opposition groups like the Eritrean Democratic Alliance as well as smaller groups like the Red Sea Afar Democratic Organization (Mengisteab, 2011). In response, Eritrea supported several opposition movements in Ethiopia, including the Oromo liberation Front, the Ogaden liberation Front, the Tigray democratic movement (DMHT), and Gnbot sebat. However, after the two countries agreed to normalize relations in 2018, all Ethiopian opposition movements returned to Ethiopia and continued their struggle peacefully.

EXTERNAL INTERVENTION

Although the intra- and inter-state conflicts wreaking havoc in the region are rooted in historical, socioeconomic, and environmental issues, intervention from within and beyond the region has exacerbated them. And, these interventions are said to be motivated by competing national interests as well as a variety of economic, political, security-related, and strategic issues, such as the war on terror and piracy (Zeleza, 2008). Hence, external intervention in the Horn of Africa has a long history. Since ancient times, the Horn has drawn attention from outside forces via the Red Sea and Indian Ocean coasts; thus Arabs, Greeks, Romans, and Portuguese all had an impact on the region, and for the last five centuries, conflicts and wars between various ethnonational groups have been widely documented as they fought over religion, land, trade routes, and power (Sorenson, 2016). Some of the external interventions that had a disastrous impact on the peace, security, and development of the region occurred in the contexts of colonialism, the Cold War, and more recently, the war on terror and piracy. In addition, Political polarization, economic imbalance, prolonged conflicts, environmental destruction, and corrupt state building are the cumulative effects of these factors (Bereketeab, 2013). In addition, Horn of Africa is a region of strategic importance. It is one of the most strategically important marine transportation routes in the world due to its geographic location along the Bab el-Mandeb strait, which connects the Red Sea with the Gulf of Aden. All maritime trade between Europe and Eurasia must transit through its narrow route.

As a result, the Horn of Africa region is one of the regions Africa that has experienced the highest burden of foreign interventions. The reason for this is that, the region's proximity to the Middle East, an area that is extremely sensitive due to two variables – oil and the Arab–Israeli conflict – has long brought interest from outside powers. Additionally, the Red Sea and Bal El-Mandeb serve as the primary shipping lanes, especially for oil cargo traveling from the Middle East and Far East to Europe and the Americas (Sorenson, 2016). As such, control or influence over the region becomes extremely important for any superpower or big power, and it is not a coincidence that during the past three decades, the majority of great powers have

deployed their navies there in an effort to fight piracy. All of these elements contribute to the state's problem, which has come to characterize the area. Additionally, the state's predicament exacerbates the tensions and fears there (Bereketeab, 2013). These threats have given rise to regional organizations. For instance, external involvement is a major driving force behind IGAD's peace mediation efforts in Somalia, Sudan, and most recently in South Sudan, member countries of IGAD are subject to the geostrategic demands of more powerful foreign governments, and we see regional powers intervening in neighboring countries' internal affairs on behalf of powerful foreign states (Bereketeab 2013). This was proven in 2006 by Ethiopia's invasion of Somalia to overthrow the Islamic Court Union (ICU) that had controlled most parts of the country. To justified its invasion, Ethiopia labeled the Islamic court as a terrorist organization and a threat to its sovereignty.

Along with local circumstances, external influence and intervention have been major causes of war and conflict in the Horn of Africa since late 1960. During the Cold War struggle between the USSR and the US, both superpowers poured weapons into the region to assist client regimes, making the situation more serious and violent. Up until 1978, the US supported Ethiopia while the Soviet Union provided military assistance to Somalia; however, once Somalia invaded Ethiopia's Ogaden region, these affiliations were reversed. And, despite equal overall weaponry shipments from the United States and the Soviet Union to the region in the 1960s, the Soviet Union outpaced the United States in the early 1970s. In addition, when the initially pro-Soviet dictatorship of Jaafar Nimeiry took power in Sudan in 1969, the US refused to arm Ethiopia to match the Soviet arming of Somalia and did not take any efforts to compensate for the impact of substantial Soviet supplies to Sudan at the same time (Henze, 1991). Delivery of weaponry to Horn countries has heightened tensions in the region and empowered rulers to use force against their citizens where Ethiopia under Colonel Mengstu Hailemariam and Somalia under Said Barre are classical example.

During the cold war, Soviet Union's involvement in the Horn of Africa region had two effects: first, it provided armaments, and second, it acted as a model for Marxist-Leninist political and economic ideology (Henze, 1991). Furthermore, in comparison to what the West has assisted, Soviet's development support has been meager, and its development model has had bad results in the region. In addition, the Marxism-Leninism model used by Horn leaders has had a negative impact on the region's political structures and economic development (Henze, 1991). Despite the fact that the Cold War ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Horn of Africa remains geo-strategically significance to the interests of USA and other major powers such as China, France,

Italy, and Turkey, each mentioned county had a military base at Djibouti.

The economic life of the countries in the region has severely damaged by the war and conflicts. As a result, the governments in the region have failed to ensure their people's economic well-being due to several reasons: mismanagement of national assets and resources, low intra-regional trade, increasing military and security budgeting, highly corrupt and narrow-minded political elite, external interference, and the exploitative nature of the (center-periphery) world economy. Another issue that has divided the region's states and made outsider intervention in Somalia's civil war is the post-September 11 War on Terror. Furthermore, it appears that state-society ties in the region's countries are deteriorating as a result of outside backing for regimes that profess to be partners in the War on Terror despite their dismal records on democracy and human rights (Mengisteab, 2011).

CONCLUSION

The complicated nature of wars and conflicts in the Horn of Africa cannot be solved with a panacea. The successive Horn Africa governments have been unable to create any significant initiatives that bring sustainable peace, stability, and development in the region. The complex and dynamic nature of the factors that cause it coupled with the involvement of multiple external actors with competing interests made the issue very difficult to be managed by the Horn countries, and even by regional organizations such as IGAD. Political elites' misappropriation of productive resources and large expenditures on social control organizations to maintain order rather than addressing the core causes of wars and conflicts in the region, appear to capitalize the political and financial leverage of the initiatives. These efforts have hampered the development of local initiatives, participatory development strategies, and multicultural democracy, all of which are building blocks for long-term political and social stability. It is important to note that rather than being a problem in themselves, wars and conflicts in the region are byproducts of some sort of deeper misunderstanding in the countries of the region. And instead of solving domestic problems, and enhance cooperation with neighbor countries, proxy war, and suspicion toward each other became the nature of politics in the region. Thus, as long as these root causes are not addressed thoroughly, wars, conflicts, and their devastating ramifications will continue to occur in the region.

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