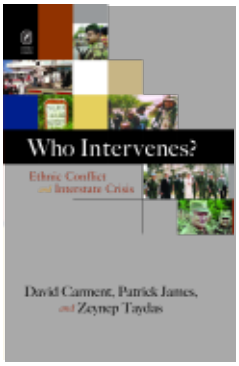
4. Somali Irredentism - The Pursuit of a "Greater Somalia"



CHAPTER FOUR

Somali Irredentism—The Pursuit of a "Greater Somalia"

> We shall take up arms. Let all perish! We shall take up arms. Let all perish! We shall not delay in recovering our missing parts. We are filled with discontent and fury and shall take up arms. A person robbed of his property wastes no time recovering it. He never enjoys conversation or social entertainments. We shall have no time for gossip and luxurious conversation, but shall take up arms to restore our missing property[1]

1. Introduction: In Pursuit of a "Greater Somalia"

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the interstate dimensions of ethnic conflict in an irredentist setting, namely, Somalia's aspirations for a "Greater Somalia" that would include Djibouti, the North Frontier District (NFD) of Kenya, and all of the Ogaden on Ethiopia's border with Somalia. The division of ethnic Somaliland into five different administrations—Italian Somaliland, British Somaliland, Kenyan Somaliland (NFD under the British administration), French Somaliland (now Djibouti), and Ethiopian Somaliland (Ogaden region under Ethiopian rule)—created feelings of isolation and separation among Somalis. In 1960, Italian and British Somaliland were united as a result of popular insistence and became part of a Somalia republic. However, the rest of Somaliland remained problematic. Since independence, Somalis have made territorial claims based on historical, ethnic, religious, and linguistic aspects. This shaped Somalia's foreign policy extensively after 1960, and an ideal emerged: a single Somali state ruling an entire Somali nation. Somalia, with a five-sided star representing each part of the greater Somali nation, remains a nation in search of a state (Selassie 1980; Laitin and Samatar 1987).

Also known as Western Somalia, the Ogaden consists of two separate areas in eastern Ethiopia. The southeast comprises the Ogaden proper. Here the large majority of people are Somalis of the Ogaden clan, a group closely

tied to the Darod clan. The northeast area, known as the Haud, is a key seasonal grazing area for Somalis of the Dir and Darod clans.[2] Djibouti originally existed as a French colony of the overseas territory of the Afars and Issas, while the NFD was and still is a part of Kenya.

To comprehend fully the strength of Somali nationalism, several characteristics of Somalia need to be recognized. First of all, Somalia is exceptional in Africa because nearly everyone living in Somalia is an ethnic Somali and shares a common culture, language, history, and social structure. Second, the clan structure created a belief in a common ancestry as the basis of national solidarity. Third, the role of religion (Islam) is important in reinforcing Somali national solidarity (Selassie 1980).

Political mastery of Somali elites to unite divided clans to pursue irredentist claims is significant. To the extent that external confrontation became a basis for consolidation of power rather than a constraint on action, Somalia's ethnic homogeneity provided an opportunity for irredentism that is unavailable to leaders of most multiethnic societies. For example, since obtaining independence in 1960, Somalia has been involved in seven irredentist-based crises in the region.[3] Among these, the Somalia-Ethiopia conflict stands out as the most violent, protracted, and consequential (Heraclides 1990, 1997).

The Ogaden conflict exhibits a number of complex overlapping issues in which the ethnic features of Ethiopia and Somalia, most notably diaspora and deep-seated cleavage, are fundamental. The most captivating element of the Ethiopian-Somalia conflict is the fact that the two antagonists fall on opposite ends of the demographic spectrum. Ethiopia is a diverse, ethnically segregated state that has experienced no fewer than three significant internal upheavals, the most notable of these being the Eritrean and Tigrayan secessionist struggles, with the Oromo Liberation struggle garnering less external support (Makinda 1992; Heraclides 1997). During the antimonarchical revolution of 1974, armed insurrection occurred in fourteen of Ethiopia's states (see also Brecher and Wilkenfeld et al. 1988). By contrast, in religious and linguistic terms, Somalia is a homogenous state. Its clan-based struggles for identity shift according to external pressures placed upon the country. Approximately 98 percent of its six million people are ethnic Somalis, and almost all are Sunni Muslims. As Laitin and Samatar (1987: 45) observe, "The Somalis are Sunnis, adhering to the Shafiite school of Islamic jurisprudence, and their Islam is characterized by saint veneration, enthusiastic belief in the mystical powers of charismatic roving holy men, and a tenuous measure of allegiance to sufi brotherhoods." By language and history the Somalis are not Arabs; only recently has a relationship formed between the Arab states and Somalia. Clan-based differences are not insignificant. As proof of

this point, the MAR Project recently designated the clan Issaq as a distinct minority with Somalia. The Issaq are listed as a disadvantaged "Communal Contender for State Power," defined as culturally distinct peoples, tribes, or clans in heterogenous societies who hold or seek a share in state power.[4]

Until recently, Somali elites have proved successful in mobilizing clans on the basis of a national identity in the face of an external adversary (Makinda 1992). After independence and up to 1990, pan-Somali nationalism served as a unifying and legitimizing principle, and "every Somali leader has been judged by his willingness and ability to pursue the goal of a 'Greater Somalia'" (26). In brief, the idea of a Greater Somalia includes an important political dimension, which is at once internally beneficial and externally divisive (Laitin and Samatar 1987; Saideman 1998b).

Another important aspect of the Ethiopia-Somalia dispute is the regional context within which the conflict unfolded. Suhrke and Noble (1997: 13) suggest that the multiethnic characteristics of African states heighten their feelings of vulnerability, which in turn leads to a restrained policy toward boundary disputes. By extension, African governments pursue restrained policies toward ethnic conflicts in other states. (Saideman [2001: 181–82], however, tests this now-conventional wisdom about vulnerability and, surprisingly, finds no support for the argument concerning inhibition.) Indeed, the multiethnic character of African states stands out as a deeply embedded characteristic of African foreign policy during the Cold War (Collins 1973). The founding Charter of the Organization of African Unity (OAU [now the African Union (AU)]), which upheld the inviolability of borders, reinforced this orientation. Nonetheless, Somalia's continual and contentious conduct in staking claims to Ethiopian territory ran counter to this pattern of institutionalized claims to state sovereignty.

A third dimension of the conflict is the tendency to overemphasize the role played by the superpowers. To be sure, external involvement has tended to exacerbate the conflict. For example, the most extreme phase of the protracted conflict centered on the Ogadeni after the fall of Ethiopia's emperor, Haile Selassie. This period witnessed the transformation of Somalia into an ally of the United States and Ethiopia into a Soviet ally. Western analyses of the conflict stress the importance of U.S. military assistance to Somalia in encouraging territorial claims on Ethiopia's Ogaden and Kenya's Frontier District and in militarization of the region in general.

This view, however, treats the war in the Horn of Africa as an event separate from preceding crises and also underestimates the autonomy of national political forces in the development of local strategies in response to unfolding regional opportunities (Selassie 1984). While superpower military

assistance strongly influenced the escalation of tensions in the region, these arms flows represent only a sign of a more significant problem (Selassie 1984). The superpower rivalry did give Somali elites some leverage to obtain substantial economic and military assistance, and that support allowed these leaders to suppress critics and detain opponents by balancing and playing on clan interests and rivalries. However, even after the decline of East-West tensions in the late 1980s, the region experienced three more confrontations between Somalia and its neighbors—all at the hands of Somalia's military leadership.

By the end of the Cold War, external links through which Somali elites maintained power waned considerably. Internally, their hold on power also became significantly weaker due to increased clan rivalries. By the 1990s, historical animosities and clan loyalties had come to dominate political, social, and economic life in Somalia. The loose, segmented, clan-based structure that served Somalia's leaders well during that country's international confrontations had become a significant source of internal divisiveness. By 1992 Somalia faced its own secessionist struggle in the north, namely, with the Isaaq clan, which comprises about 20 percent of Somalia's population. Under the leadership of Abd ar-Rahman Ahmad Ali Tur, the Issaq-dominated Somali National Movement (SNM) proclaimed the breakaway "Republic of Somaliland" on 18 May 1991. Less than one year later, Somalia existed in name only, having succumbed to politically produced human disaster, internecine struggle, "warlordism," and economic collapse.[5]

This analysis will focus on crucial interstate crises or "peak points" in the Somalia-Ethiopia protracted conflict as indicators of a much broader process of interstate ethnic strife and intervention. This approach provides an opportunity to determine the impact of changes in institutional and ethnic constraints on preferences for strategies of intervention and makes it possible to assess the sensitive interplay between irredentist-type conflicts and separatist struggles. Given that Somalia's irredenta also exhibit elements of separatism, specifically in the Ogaden, meaningful conclusions can be drawn from the evolving relationship between these two types of interstate ethnic conflict and the implications therein for internationalized ethnic conflict and intervention (Heraclides 1997).

Figure 4.1 shows a time line for Somali irredentism from independence in 1960 onward. Four crises between Ethiopia and Somalia, which happen to span four decades, are examined. Primary attention is given to the events and decisions leading up to and including the crisis and war of 22 July 1977 to 14 March 1978. Somalia-Ethiopia confrontations preceding the war involved minor clashes along the northern border. Similarly, crises of low intensity fol-

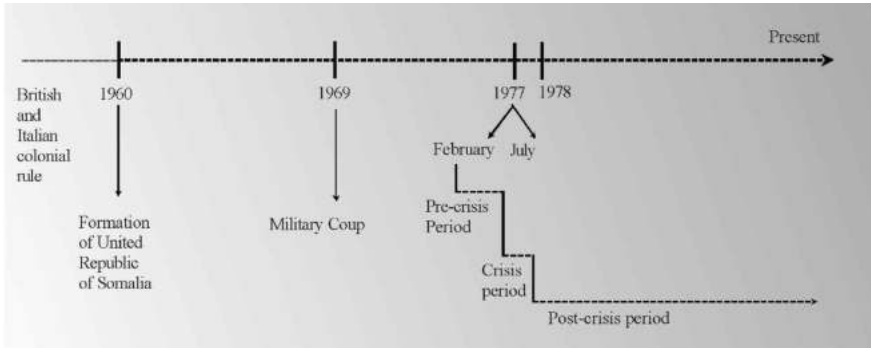


Figure 4.1. Somali Irredentism

lowed on the heels of the war. Although all of these crises resulted in frustration for Somalia's achievement of its objectives, only during the war of 1977–78 did Somalia get close to successfully staking claims to Ethiopian territory. Why that crisis resulted in war is a matter of judgment; it can be explained, in part, by the ethnic and institutional characteristics of the two main protagonists.

Analysis in this chapter unfolds in five further sections. The second section examines the historical and political aspects of the conflict. Political and ethnic determinants of Somali and Ethiopian behavior are weighed, along with contributing effects. The third section analyzes the series of crises from the period of Somali independence up to 1969. Fourth, the relationship between these events and the crisis-war of 1977–78 is clarified, and the implications of those crises for Somalia's deterioration and failure in the 1990s are addressed. Propositions are tested in the fifth section. Sixth, and finally, the accomplishments of the chapter are summarized.

2. Demographic Considerations

2.1 The View from Somalia—Clan Fealty and the National Interest

Somalia, as noted earlier, is one of Africa's most ethnically homogenous states. Somalis speak the same language, follow the same religion, and believe themselves descended from common ancestors. Despite its national homogeneity, Somalia features a multitude of subnational clan-based identities (Saideman 1998a, b). In an attempt to overcome the fractiousness of their clan-based culture, Somali national leaders framed a constitution that made

the nationalist struggle the central feature of Somali's political and social history. By all accounts, this strategy succeeded; despite numerous clan divisions, the goal of achieving a Greater Somalia united the vast majority of Somalis for many years.

Traditionally, clans have played two prominent but contradictory roles in Somali politics: They present a compliant and dutiful veneer of political unity in response to external threats, yet revert to dissension when the menace vanishes. Somalia's social and economic activities and political organizations traditionally have arisen from lineage systems based on clans and patrilineal kinship groups. These groups are divided even further into dia-paying groups varying in size from a few hundred to a few thousand (Gorman 1981; Laitin and Samatar 1987; Makinda 1992).

Colonization acted as a catalyst first to the formation, and then to the development, of unity among Somali clans. Colonialism had a significant impact on Somalia. First, during the colonial period, Somalia experienced control by Italy, France, Britain, and Ethiopia. The Italians became the first of the European powers to establish their influence in the area. Ethiopia, which had managed to maintain independence from colonial powers by defeating the Italians in 1896, had long been an important actor in the region. Through a series of dubious political agreements, signed between 1885 and 1935, Ethiopia managed to extract significant portions of Somali territory from the British and Italians. Fearful of Ethiopian designs, Somali clan leaders sided with the British colonists and, under a series of agreements making it a British protectorate, opened the country's borders to British settlement. These agreements later would provide the basis for Somali claims over disputed territory (Sauldie 1987: 17).

Sketched out in 1897, various legal protocols between England and Italy aimed to settle boundaries between respective areas under Italian, Ethiopian, and British control. These mandated boundaries, firmly in place at the turn of the century, did not correspond to demographic reality (Sauldie 1987). Hundreds of thousands of Somali (and mostly nomadic) herdsmen of the Ogadeni clan (a subclan of the Darod family) found themselves under the jurisdiction of Ethiopia. For its part, Ethiopia's leaders assumed that sovereignty over the Somali people was its prerogative, a claim often made in the past (Drysdale 1964).

By the 1920s, Ethiopia, Britain, and Italy had extended their power deep into Somali-held regions. In response, resistance to colonial interference and domination assumed the form of a series of Somali "holy wars" conducted by Sheik Mohammed Abdille Hassan, nicknamed "Mad Mullah" (Drysdale 1964). These campaigns, directed primarily against the British, had the net

effect of drawing support from the clans within all of Somalia's regions in the Horn of Africa. The Italians, in search of easy outlets for colonial expansion, provided primary external support for resistance. For Italy, Somali warlords could be viewed as strategic allies in its goal to depose the Ethiopian leader, Haile Selassie I, who had come to power in 1930. With the help of these allies of convenience, a sense of Somali "nationhood" began to develop. In turn, Somali clans set aside traditional animosities to meet the threats from colonial control and short-term exigencies of colonial "divide and rule" policies (Bhardwaj 1979).

2.2 Ethiopian Expansion—the External Threat

The second factor in the construction of Somali unity is the role played by Ethiopian expansionism. The notion of an Ethiopian "state," brimming with myth and tradition, dates back as far as three thousand years. But the history of modern Ethiopia begins with the ascendancy, in 1889, of Menelik II of Shoa (Haile Selassie's father) to the throne of the Ethiopian kingdom. Initially, Ethiopia consisted of a small highland kingdom limited to the Shoan, Tigrayan, and Gonadrin highlands. The rulers of this kingdom were of Christian origin (Coptic) and spoke a language (Amharic) that made them distinct on many counts from the people they ruled and their neighbors. Under Coptic rule, a large mass of territory occupied by Muslim Somali herdsmen did not fall under Ethiopian suzerainty. Over time and through European aid and Ethiopian subterfuge, Menelik managed to consolidate most of these territories (Selassie 1984). The Haud (northern part of the Ogaden) and the Ogaden (proper) territories fell under Ethiopian control.

At this time, most of the Somali population was divided into three distinct regions: the former Italian East African Colonies, Somaliland under British control, and Somali areas in Ethiopia. In 1949, at Somalia's urging, the country had been placed under UN trusteeship with Italy as the administering authority (Drysdale 1964).

Surprisingly, Ethiopian leaders postulated that the Ogaden Somalis would prefer Ethiopian citizenship to secession and first raised the idea of self-determination for all Somalis (Drysdale 1964: 83). The idea of securing self-determination for all of these Somalis came out of the 1947 UN Human Rights Subcommission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, associated with the post–World War Two decolonization process (Drysdale 1964). A series of UN Security Council meetings, in which the British proposed uniting all three areas into one state, followed the declaration. The Soviet

Union refused to sponsor the proposal; the Ethiopian Ogaden would have to be excluded (Sauldie 1987; Moynihan 1993). Only conquered, Italian-held territory would be reconstituted within the British protectorate. A bilateral agreement between Britain and Ethiopia reaffirmed Ethiopian control over the Haud region (Drysdale 1964). The final agreement also granted grazing rights to Somali tribes in the Haud. By most accounts, Ethiopian leaders became concerned at this turn of events; the union of the two territories constituted, in their view, a step toward Greater Somalia. An Ethiopian government official expressed his concern in the Voice of Ethiopia: "Ethiopia has fought and will fight, if need be, to preserve her integrity" (quoted in Drysdale 1964: 105). In 1950, Ethiopia claimed forty thousand additional square miles of Italian Somaliland territory (Farer 1976: 81).

By 1957, the decision over what to do with Italian Somaliland fell to the UN General Assembly. When it became clear that the General Assembly would be unable to make a decision because neither party could agree on the terms of reference, Ethiopia rejected the principles of self-determination for the Somali people. In 1959 the fourteenth session of the UN—the last one prior to Somalia's independence—also failed to obtain an agreement from the two parties (Farer 1976; Sauldie 1987: 16–23).

Accordingly, in the period preceding independence, relations between Ethiopia and Somalia became strained. Somalia consisted of some, but not all, of the territory occupied by the Somali people. Above all, its boundary dispute with Ethiopia showed no sign of peaceful resolution. The Ethiopian government continued to see the Somali problem in Ethiopia in terms of territorial integrity for the postcolonial state, not as a matter of the right to self-determination.

2.3 Independence—the Development of Pan-Somali Nationalism

The colonial "divide and rule—unite and depart" policy had a subsequent impact on the strategic choices of the fledgling Somali leadership. When Somalia was granted independence in July 1960, Somali elites faced the difficult prospect of uniting two extremely dissimilar colonies; each had its own colonial language, judicial, and legal systems.[6] In an attempt to surmount these difficulties and maintain the uniqueness of a clan-based culture, Somalia's leaders framed a constitution that stressed Somali nationalist struggle as the defining characteristic of its political and social history.

After independence, foremost among Somalia's foreign policy goals was extension of the boundaries of the new state to include the overlooked Somali communities in Ethiopia's Ogaden region, the French Territory of Afars and

Issas (Djibouti), and Northern Kenya (NFD). Claims against Ethiopia sparked the greatest attraction for Somalia's new leaders; the border between Ethiopia and Somalia never had been delineated clearly, and Somalis in northern Kenya belonged to clans—the Dagoodiya and Harti—not central to the Somali power structure. In contrast, the Darod and Ogadeni clans of the Ogaden belonged to important and influential branches within Somali society.

At independence the constitution of Somalia included eventual realization of a "Greater Somalia" as a key Somalia objective (Sauldie 1987: 17). The constitution held that "the Somali Republic promotes by legal and peaceful means the union of all Somali territories" (Laitin and Samatar 1987: 138). At the same time, the Somalia government published a more aggressive foreign policy document that reiterated the claims to a Greater Somalia. The document also asserted that agreements between Britain and Ethiopia violated previous treaties Britain had signed in 1885 that granted protection to northern Somali tribes (Sauldie 1987). Less than a month before Somalia's independence on July 3, the Ethiopian government announced that upon Somalia's independence, the 1954 agreement no longer would be recognized. The past treaties, conventions, and agreements were ambiguous, confusing, and ineffective, and the Somali case lost much of its edge after the Republic signed, along with thirty-three other African states, the Charter of the OAU in 1963. When the government, under Somali Prime Minister Abdirashid Ali Shermarke, chose to reject the various Anglo-Ethiopian agreements, border clashes broke out between Somali tribesman and Ethiopian forces. This crisis and the ones that would follow can be traced to the inability of the former colonial powers and the international community to develop a coherent and effective policy on the issue of border demarcation in the Horn of Africa. However, the direct causes of these and subsequent conflicts are associated with Somalia's internal political search for national identity and its ongoing quest for democratic and authoritarian forms of political stability.

3. Postindependence Confrontations

3.1 The Politics of Irredenta

Faced with potentially debilitating domestic divisions, Somalia's leaders set about framing a coherent foreign policy to reclaim Somali territory, in the belief that such action would be the best way to achieve internal unity. Somalia's leaders pursued this goal on two fronts: through diplomatic channels like the UN and the OAU and via covert support for secessionist

movements in areas adjacent to the Somalia Republic. The linkage between Somalia's political and ethnic configuration and its belligerent activity is central to understanding these strategies. The most notable aspect of this connection is the relationship between Somalia's institutional structure and its confrontational policies. For example, Somalia's postindependence experimentation with democracy resulted in a series of limited border clashes with its neighbors. In contrast, confrontations with Ethiopia after the rise to power of the Somali military in 1969 took on a decidedly more aggressive tone (Saideman 1998b).

Somalia's political system's chief weakness, by some accounts, was clan-based domestic politics. This informal system, paradoxically, found expression in a unitary constitution. Although it was formally a liberal democracy, kinship ties remained the means for marshaling entire clans that sometimes numbered hundreds of thousands. This was not without its problems; prestige, usually accorded with age and rank, became an impediment to the government's stated goals of regional equality, development, and modernization. Overrepresentation of southern Somalis in the government compounded this problem (Laitin and Samatar 1987). Political parties formed along regional clan cleavages, which complicated the national unity issue. Since independence, southern clans had occupied most of the senior government posts, including senior positions in the military (Makinda 1992).

Among the three regions contested by Somalia—Ogaden, Djibouti, and the North Frontier District in Kenya—the latter two provided seemingly inferior opportunities to achieve reunification on the diplomatic and military front. The French occupied a firm position in Djibouti, and France had a strong regional ally in Kenya (Farer 1976: 81–88; Bhardwaj 1979). Confrontation with Djibouti would mean, in effect, a conflict with incomparable French political and military resources. In the event of war, the vastly underequipped Somali army no doubt would be defeated, with its elected leaders facing the consequences.

Ethiopia, at the same time, experienced political turmoil. Provocative and potentially destructive policies, now directed toward Muslims in the Ogaden, reinforced assimilationist policies, most notably promotion of Amharic cultural integrity to elevate the political and social structure of Ethiopia's Christian community to a national requirement in the 1950s (Farer 1976: 82–83). Furthermore, Ethiopia had a parliament but no political parties through which Somali frustrations could be vented. A failed coup against Selassie in 1960 indirectly strengthened Somalia's hand (Farer 1976; Henze 1991). Somalia's regional objectives focused on exploiting the weaknesses of Ethiopia first and Kenya second. After repeated diplomatic failure to bring to

the world's attention the complexities of their dilemma, Somalia's leaders diverted their energies to help liberate the Somali regions. Initially, Ethiopia had military superiority, which meant that, at best, Somali clansmen (often interspersed with Somali guerrillas) could harass Ethiopian troops but not defeat them. The Somali government, in turn, provided sanctuary and support for the Ogaden "freedom fighters" (members of the West Somali Liberation Front [WSLF]). These initial Somali intrusions amounted to brief probes, intended to determine Ethiopian military weaknesses and bolster support for the government at home.

3.2 Postindependence Interactions

In December 1960, the WSLF, essentially guerrillas trained and supported by Somali forces, surrounded an Ethiopian police garrison and launched an attack. Ethiopia responded to the threat to territory with mobilization of its military units and air force. Faced with superior forces, the guerrillas had to withdraw. At the same time, Somalia protested the mobilization to Ethiopia and appealed to the All-African People's Conference (the precursor to the OAU which was established in 1963). Somalia chose not to acquiesce to Ethiopian threats to discontinue its efforts toward irredentism (Brecher and Wilkenfeld et al. 1988). Clashes and sporadic violence along the border continued into 1961 (Farer 1976).

In its decision on the issue, the All-African People's Conference of 1961 voted heavily in favor of Ethiopia and made efforts to obtain a settlement between the two states. Despite these and subsequent efforts, clashes between WSLF guerrillas and Ethiopian forces continued over the course of the next several years.

3.3 Crisis in Kenya—Exploring Opportunities in the Horn of Africa

The postindependence crisis with Ethiopia moderated Somalia's relations with its neighbors. With the Ethiopian mishap still on their minds, Somali leaders turned to the situation in Kenya. In Kenya, a British fact-finding mission of October 1962 found that 87 per cent of the 400,000 Somalis living in Kenya's North Frontier District (NFD) favored union with Somalia (Sauldie 1987: 25). For its part, Kenya used counterinsurgency techniques borrowed from the British and restricted the movements of potentially rebellious nomads through "population centers" (Farer 1976: 80). Worried that Somalia would invade the NFD, Kenya's newly elected leader, Jomo Kenyatta, placed his troops on full alert and declared a state of emergency.

On 29 December 1964, Kenya sealed its border with Somalia. Ethiopia, worried about the implications Somali success would have for its own border dispute, pursued and obtained a secret mutual defense treaty with Kenya (Sauldie 1987: 27).

Somalia could do little to respond, apart from providing sanctuary for the insurgents. It soon became clear that as long as Kenya's ethnic leaders in Nairobi remained united on the Somali question, the Somalis in the NFD never would manage to secede on their own. To assist the secessionists, Somalia would need new weapons. It looked first to China and then the Soviet Union for support.

Kenya requested in February 1964 that the dispute be mediated by the OAU. The process ended without resolution. On 4 March 1964, Kenya held elections, and this time the Somali secessionists agreed to participate in exchange for some degree of local autonomy. By mid-1967, a Zambian initiative to mediate the ongoing conflict succeeded in obtaining a temporary halt to hostilities when Kenyan and Somali leaders promised to cease provocative acts and restore normal relations (Brecher and Wilkenfeld et al. 1988). This did not mark the end of the strife—on the diplomatic front, the conflict over Somalis in the NFD continued into the 1980s, and a Somali presence in Kenya continues to be a force for destabilization (Sauldie 1987: 26).

3.4 Crisis in the Ogaden—Prelude to Change

By 1964, three significant internal and external changes had taken place in the region. First, Somalia's democratic leaders faced increasing pressure from political opponents to resolve the Greater Somalia question. Much of the parliamentary debate on the issue consisted of rhetorical belligerence to outbid Somali opponents and identify those with questionable loyalty. But genuine concern also existed for the plight of Somalis in the Ogaden (Farer 1976). As early as 1963, the inhabitants of the Ogaden had come out in open revolt against the Ethiopian government (Sauldie 1987). Second, in this period the Soviet Union made a substantial military gesture to Somalia. The offer included arms and training designed to equip a twenty-thousand-strong army, possibly for use against Ethiopia, which had been receiving military aid and equipment from the United States. Third, and finally, a new government had been elected in Somalia. Its leaders adopted an openly aggressive stance in pressing Somali claims. The new government's President Abdirazak, Haji Hussein (1964–67), a key opponent of Shermarke, achieved election based on a promise to resolve the Ogaden problem. With Soviet armaments in hand,

he resolved to do so through a combination of force and diplomacy (Sauldie 1987).

Accordingly, Somalia triggered a crisis for Ethiopia on 7 February 1964, when its military forces carried out a mass attack on the Ethiopian frontier post at Tog Wajeleh. Ethiopia responded through resistance at the border and called for an immediate meeting of the OAU (Brecher and Wilkenfeld et al. 1988). Ethiopian retaliation on the eighth and the subsequent military action on Somali territory triggered a crisis for Somalia. On the ninth, Abdirazak responded by declaring a state of emergency throughout Somalia. Through dispatches sent to the OAU, Abdirazak accused Ethiopia of penetration into Somali territory. Somalia perceived correctly that OAU members would continue to support the Ethiopian claims.

Somalia immediately requested a meeting of the Security Council, contingent on whether the OAU could end the border dispute (Brecher and Wilkenfeld et al. 1988). Secretary-General U Thant appealed to the parties to settle the dispute peacefully. A cease-fire was agreed upon on 16 February but did not hold. The crisis ended on 30 March 1964, with a formal agreement for a cease-fire achieved through the good offices of the Sudan. The antagonists established a joint border commission that favored the status quo. No changes were to be made to the existing border. Ethiopia once again had succeeded in preventing Somalia's irredentist objectives from bearing fruit.

3.5 Political Transformation and Reconciliation

After four years of independence and three international crises, Somalia's irredentist goals had been crushed soundly in both political and military terms. Somalia had failed to capture favorable attention from either the world or even Africa for the Somali people's situation. African leaders consistently aligned themselves behind Kenya's Kenyatta and Ethiopia's Selassie. Furthermore, the government's irredentist objectives earned the country a reputation as a regional misfit and troublemaker. Apart from its ties with the Soviet Union and the Arab states, Somalia had become increasingly isolated in the diplomatic sphere.

Still, Somalia's leaders stood committed firmly to a Greater Somalia. Their choice of tactics, however, changed significantly. Somalia's leaders realized that it would be futile to press their irredentist claims in light of objections from both the OAU and the UN. Instead, Somalia decided that secessionist movements with the goal of "self-determination," rather than unification, would be nurtured. Both the UN and the OAU recognized self-determination

as a legitimate basis for struggle, so the Somali leadership hoped that strategy would prove more successful on the diplomatic front.

Somalia would continue to pursue its irredentist goals, but with covert support hidden behind the authenticity of "anticolonial" struggle. Although Somalia's support was axiomatic, its leaders continued to deny direct involvement in what it viewed as domestic "struggles for liberation." For example, amid the hostilities with Ethiopia in 1964, the OAU passed a resolution reconfirming the colonial boundaries. In response, the Somali National Assembly passed unanimously its own resolution, declaring that the OAU stance "shall not bind the Somali Government" and that it sought a resolution of the conflict through "peaceful means" (Laitin and Samatar 1987: 138). For three more years, border disputes periodically erupted. For instance, in 1966, about 1,750 Somalis were killed on the border between Kenya and Somalia. With the return of Shermarke as president in 1967, Somalia's aggressive foreign policy reversed abruptly.

When once again elected president of the Republic of Somalia in June 1967, Shermarke chose Mohammed Ibrahim Egal, a member of the Issaq clan and more evenhanded in approach, as prime minister. Egal sought a rapprochement with Ethiopia as best he could with the limited means available to him. At this time the Arab states, which had been firm supporters of Somali objectives, were defeated in the Arab-Israeli Six Day War of June 1967 and could not be relied upon for support. The Kremlin, as well, adopted a more distant approach to the conflict after the June war and could not be counted on for support in the event of armed conflict. The closure of the Suez Canal also threatened Somalia's economy. Finally, U.S. aid to Somalia remained contingent on obtaining a multilateral arrangement with its neighbors. Thus a temporary reconciliation with Ethiopia and Kenya would have to be arranged (Sauldie 1987: 28).

Under OAU auspices, a series of meetings occurred throughout 1967 and 1968. At these meetings Somalia agreed to end hostilities on the Kenyan border and restore friendly relations with Kenya. This agreement included reopening diplomatic relations, encouraging growth and trade, and discussing the possibility of a larger East African federation comprising Somalia, Kenya, Sudan, Ethiopia, and Djibouti (Sauldie 1987: 29). The concept of an East African Federation, however, would not be considered seriously for another ten years (Sauldie 1987).

Relations with Ethiopia, by contrast, remained less promising because of Selassie's insistence on maintaining assimilationist policies in the Ogaden. Violent encounters between Ethiopian security forces and WSLF forces

continued through the rest of the decade and into the 1970s (Saideman 1998b).

In sum, between 1964 and 1967 the Horn of Africa experienced turmoil. Somalia confronted Kenya, Ethiopia, and France, but its irredentist efforts proved unsuccessful.

4. Confrontation as State-Building

4.1 The War Within

Any hope of reconciliation with Ethiopia through democratic means came to an end on 15 October 1969, when a coup toppled the Somali government. In the coup, Shermarke was assassinated, and leadership of the government under Egal was replaced by a Supreme Revolutionary Council headed by Major General Mohammed Siad Barre (later President Barre). Barre nationalized the economy, banned political parties, and suspended the constitution. Kibble (2001) argues that all of these actions, including the emergence of socialism, nationalism, and centralization of power, principally served the purpose of overcoming problems originating from clanism and backwardness. A political machine under Barre's leadership, called the Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party (SRSP), was established in 1976. For the purposes of the present inquiry, the importance of this political transformation is threefold.

First, the rise to power of the Somali military meant the temporary cessation of any form of peaceful resolution of the conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia. Barre's generals, also his clan allies, pressed for a military solution to the issue. Earlier defeat at the hands of the Ethiopians had led to an upsurge of clan antagonisms within the army as each group looked for scapegoats to explain its past failures (Makinda 1992). Barre proved to be an astute political player and knew that pan-Somali nationalism would provide the appropriate vehicle for assuaging the military's concerns. Indeed, Barre had risen through the ranks of the army on the basis of his nationalist and regional ambitions, and like the leaders before him (except Egal), he belonged to the Darod clan and had strong ties to the Ogaden. In times of domestic turmoil, Barre proved successful in pitting one clan against another. Alliances and interests became aligned according to clan lineages, and to ensure allegiance the army recruited heavily from Ogadenis.

Second, Somalia changed internally in ways that would have implications for later rounds of irredentism. Originally, the aggressive policy of arming

Somalia derived from the need to reunite the clans and satisfy nationalist ambitions. Now militarization moved toward becoming a means for internal repression. Initially, the foreign policy plan worked. By the mid-1970s, social cohesion within Somalia had improved. Clan differences continued, but the government's effective handling of the threat of a 1973 famine muzzled many critics (Gorman 1981). Even when dissent emerged, Somalia's new military government remained relatively insulated. As mentioned earlier, Barre, operating through the SRSP, maintained an autocratic, centralized system that tried to replace clan loyalties with revolutionary allegiance to the nation through "scientific socialism" (Makinda 1992). Additionally, the autocratic nature of the regime resulted in abuses of human rights and oppressive behavior. The military emerged as the most powerful institution (Kibble 2001).

Barre's ascent to power is significant for a third reason related to this study: relations with the Soviet Union and its Arab allies (notably the United Arab Republic) became stronger than ever. This was due less to Barre's council's stated goal of scientific socialism than to the decreasing amounts of financial aid the Somali government had been receiving from the West. (For example, in the early 1960s, Somali received aid packages from Britain and the United States equivalent to $8 million annually. This paled in comparison to the $32 million offered by the Soviet Union. The European Community remained a donor through the 1970s [Farer 1976: 98].) Despite a population one-seventh the size of Ethiopia and far fewer resources, the quality of Somalia's armed forces now matched or exceeded those of Ethiopia. Although Ethiopia had a larger army and a more advanced air force in absolute terms, at least half of its armed forces had to be used against the growing secessionist threat in Eritrea (Gorman 1981). Within this context, the combination of advantageous external opportunities and internal pressures produced Somalia's decision to step up support for the WSLF.

It also is important to note that the United States long had been an important ally of the Selassie regime after World War Two. In part, the United States had tried to fill the vacuum left by the departure of the British and Italians by supporting Ethiopia as a regional force and linchpin for anchoring American policy in the Horn of Africa. This took the form of military and economic aid, along with use of naval and air facilities. Neglect by the U.S. government of Ethiopia's internal conflicts indicated how much the policies of the United States became guided by external factors, most notably confrontation with the Soviet Union. The decision in 1973 to end Ethiopia's relations with its longtime ally Israel complicated the situation but also served as an indicator of changes yet to come (Selassie 1984). In sum, the period under

Siad Barre, up to 1976, can be characterized as years of seemingly quiet diplomacy building up to action.

Somalia joined the Arab League in 1973. This amounted to a major political feat for a country whose inhabitants, although Muslim, were neither Arab nor spoke Arabic. Prospects for financial aid from OPEC members increased markedly. President Barre also was made chair of the OAU in 1974 and therefore became able to influence more African leaders in that way (Sauldie 1987: 38). Under Barre, détente on Africa's Horn was clearly a calm before the storm (Laitin and Samatar 1987). The buildup culminated in the violence of 1977.

4.2 The Precrisis Period—21 February to 22 July 1977

After more than a decade of independence, Somalia had emerged on the regional scene as an influential and relatively cohesive state, whereas its chief enemy, Ethiopia, faced collapse from within. Into this matrix of political changes entered a propitious combination of opportunities for Somalia's leaders. In 1974, Selassie was deposed, and in his place a military revolutionary council known as the Dergue came to power. In 1977, Mengistu Haile Mariam emerged as the leader of the Dergue, after eliminating many rivals (Selassie 1984). The coup effectively produced two geopolitical transformations in the region.

Realignment of regional and international forces stood as the first result of the military coup. Although both sides now inclined toward Moscow—Somalia more than Ethiopia—that fact could not induce either of them to seek out and obtain a negotiated solution to their problems. The leaders of these two countries had more skill as fighters than negotiators. If anything, the rivalry between Ethiopia and Somalia increased in intensity because Somalia, the traditional ally of the Soviet Union, now believed that Ethiopia was gaining financial and military support at its expense. On 27 May 1977, Somalia warned the Soviet Union that increasing aid to Ethiopia would endanger Somalia's relations with all Soviet-bloc countries.

The second effect of the military's rise in Ethiopia was its influence over the WSLF. With Ethiopian collapse imminent, the WSLF decided to increase its efforts. Since independence, the Somalis of the Ogaden had fought for reunification with Somalia, but, over time, the WSLF leaders developed an independent organizational capacity and became less convinced that reunification would be the best choice for them. From the WSLF perspective, the general weakness of the Ethiopian government and brutally repressive acts directed against Ethiopian minorities made an independent WSLF-led state

both desirable and plausible. By the time of the Ethiopian coup, considerable bitterness existed among Somali rebels over the question of unconditional union with Somalia (Gorman 1981). Barre responded to these threats by reorganizing the WSLF; its efforts would be coordinated with those of the Somali regular army. In effect, this meant permitting regular troops to "resign" and join the WSLF. Such efforts not only brought the WSLF back on an irredentist course but also ensured its loyalty to Barre (Laitin and Samatar 1987). Furthermore, around this time the idea began to circulate that potentially large oil reserves existed beneath the surface of the Ogaden, which provided an additional incentive for reclaiming the territory (Sauldie 1987).

The impact of revolutions in Ethiopia and Somalia should be mentioned at least briefly. Selassie (1980) argues that Somalia's revolution took place due to internal social and political events. As noted above, the failure of Western-style democracy, public welfare, and social justice led Barre to reject Western-style parliamentary democracy and replace it with a "revolutionary democracy that aimed both at representation and self-government" (117). In Ethiopia, by way of contrast, antidemocratic behavior of the Mengistu regime reflected "feudal values that he and his group internalized under the old system." In Somalia, however, "the legacy of a 'pastoral democracy' enriched the revolution." Thus the collision between those two regimes regarding Ogaden might be viewed as much as "a result of the incompatibility of the two sets of values as of conflicting territorial claims" (117).

By early 1977, reorganized WSLF forces took advantage of the movement of Ethiopian troops from the Ogaden to Eritrea. The Eritrean conflict approached crisis dimensions. On 21 February 1977, hostilities broke out in the disputed Ogaden frontier. Somalia denied involvement, asserting that it had "always advocated the peaceful settlement of problems of any nature" (Legum and Lee 1979: 69). Simultaneously, the Republic of Djibouti faced impending independence, and Somalia accused Ethiopia of planning an invasion of Djibouti. By May 1977, Ethiopia blamed "Somalia trained infiltrators for attacks on the Addis-Ababa-Djibouti railway" (69). In mid-June the WSLF reported that it had killed 352 Ethiopian soldiers and captured 176 in a skirmish in the mountains near Harar. Several days later, on 19 June, after the capture of several small towns in the Ogaden, Ethiopia had yet to react to what already seemed in evidence: Somalia's forces, not just the WSLF, had been carrying out these attacks.

By most accounts, WSLF forces carried out initial attacks on Ethiopian territory as a prelude to major war. The WSLF succeeded in destroying railway bridges, capturing water holes, and laying siege to small towns. The

incursion had the net effect of discouraging the Western powers, staunch allies of Kenya, from supporting Somalia. With a break in relations with the Soviet Union now imminent, Barre no longer could bank on Western support as well.

These actions against the Ethiopian regime, by Somali accounts, had been perpetrated by the WSLF. However, Barre, not the WSLF, made the subsequent decision to escalate the conflict to full-scale interstate war (Laitin and Samatar 1987: 141). On 22 July 1977, Somalia's armed forces mounted a full-scale attack on the Ogaden, thus triggering a foreign policy crisis for Ethiopia.

4.3 Crisis and War in the Ogaden—22 July 1977 to 14 March 1978

On 23 July 1977, Ethiopia claimed that an all-out Somali attack had been launched against its territory. Although Somalia continued to deny involvement (a deception maintained until 13 February 1978, when Somalia openly committed its regular forces), U.S. spy satellites later confirmed "this was no simple desert skirmish on the order of previous Ethiopia-Somali confrontations" (Legum and Lee 1979: 32). Ethiopia responded in two ways: First, Ethiopian representatives appealed to the UN and again to the OAU to halt the fighting in the Horn of Africa. Second, Ethiopia's leader, Mengistu, appealed for external military assistance. Romania, East Germany, and Czechoslovakia shipped arms to Ethiopia. In addition, Greek mercenaries reportedly came to the aid of Ethiopia (Sauldie 1987: 48), while Vietnamese delegations arranged sale of U.S. war surplus equipment, and Israeli pilots allegedly flew in spare parts and ammunition for Ethiopia's American-made equipment (Legum and Lee 1979: 33).

On 24 August, renewed efforts at mediation by the OAU again ended in frustration; this time the Somali delegation refused to join in because representatives of the WSLF had not been allowed to participate. The OAU secretary-general, William Eteki Mboumoua, announced that the OAU did not recognize the WSLF as an African liberation movement. The Somali delegation then accused the OAU of "ignoring the major interest on which the OAU Charter is based . . . the liberation of African territories still under colonial domination and oppression." Tanks, aircraft, and army battalions were in evidence, although it is difficult to reconstruct the exact numbers involved (Legum and Lee 1979: 70).

Throughout October, the WSLF, now fully supported by Somali troops, tanks, and aircraft, increased in size to twenty thousand men. Around this time, the Soviet Union withdrew its support for Somalia. In turn, the Soviet

Union now provided Ethiopia with "defensive weapons to protect her revolution" (Legum and Lee 1979: 71, 72; Sauldie 1987: 51). This infusion of support marked the turning point in the war and the end of relations between Somalia and the Soviet Union. On 12 November, Mogadishu revoked the Friendship treaty and expelled all Soviet advisers from the capital.

Somali forces, in their desperate attempt to capture Harar, had become overstretched. As a result, Somali supply lines now lay open to air attack from Ethiopian MIG fighters. Ethiopia also bombarded northern Somali cities. In response, in late January 1978, Somalia protested to the OAU and called for the organization to condemn the Soviet Union and Cuba and other Warsaw Pact countries for their interference. The call for support also served as a plea to the Western powers, notably the United States, who had remained silent during this surprising turn of events. The United States remained concerned about what it perceived as an alarming level of Soviet presence in the region and set about cautiously trying to resolve the issue. U.S. President Jimmy Carter began to devise a means of preventing a possible invasion of Somalia. He did so, belatedly, by channeling U.S. military aid to Somalia through the latter's Middle East allies, notably Egypt (Legum and Lee 1979). This support, however, came well after Ethiopian success in the Ogaden. Carter also called on both sides to end the conflict peacefully.

Given Somalia's weakness, the Soviet-orchestrated (both Soviet and Cuban) counterattack to regain the lost territories was predictable and swift. On 5 March 1978, Jijiga became the first major city to be recaptured by Ethiopian forces. By then, most Somali forces had been driven back or had undertaken "tactical withdrawals" to their points of origin prior to the war. One-third of the Somali forces reportedly were killed.

On 9 March, Mogadishu broadcast a statement: "The big powers have suggested that the problem of the Horn of Africa be solved peacefully and that all foreign troops withdraw, and that Somalia withdraw her units, at the same time promising that the rights of Western Somalia will be safeguarded, the Central Committee of the Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party has decided that Somali units be withdrawn" (Legum and Lee 1979: 35). On 15 March the Barre regime announced that all of its regular forces had been withdrawn and that it would accept a cease-fire. In response, the Dergue refused to accept a cease-fire until Somalia (*a*) publicly renounced for all time any claims to the Ogaden, Kenya, and Djibouti and (*b*) confirmed with the OAU and the UN that it recognized the international border between Ethiopia and Somalia (Sauldie 1987: 55).

Although Somalia's army had been defeated in the battle, the WSLF had not surrendered and refused to accept the cease-fire. WSLF leader Abdullah

Hassan Mohammed defiantly announced that "the masses will continue to wage war until complete success, no matter how long or how many sacrifices it takes" (Legum and Lee 1979: 35). Despite this braggadocio, the war was over (Heraclides 1997).

This war proved to be important for both the warring parties and outsiders. While the Ethiopian government perceived the developments in terms of a war of aggression and violation of its territorial integrity, Somalia regarded the strife as a by-product of the idea of the right of self-determination and regaining lost territories. Most African governments perceived Somalia as the aggressor state. The failure of OAU and UN mediation between Somalia and Ethiopia created a political vacuum that led, in turn, to outside intervention by Cuba and the Soviet Union (Selassie 1980).

4.4 Postwar Phase and After—15 March 1978 to the Present

Several important changes occurred during the immediate postwar period. The United States, although never openly committed to the WSLF, tried to strengthen its relations with Mogadishu. In March 1978, Washington renewed its economic development programs and began discussions about future military aid to Somalia. In return, the United States obtained access to Somali ports and airfields in early 1979. This occurred against a backdrop of regional events that encompassed a Treaty of Friendship between Ethiopia and the Soviet Union and an appeal from Djibouti for help to defend itself against an alleged Ethiopian plot to overthrow its government (Selassie 1984). Not only the defeat but also the coup attempted by a conservative-leaning Arab group transformed Somalia's internal situation. Specifically, three major changes can be traced to the coup attempt.

First, the coup attempt signaled serious dissatisfaction among various clans with the postwar turn of events and thereby threatened the Barre regime. Officers of the Majerteen clan, who had led the failed coup, sought refuge in Ethiopia. They subsequently formed the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF). The onset of Somalia's spiral into disintegration clearly is linked to this failed coup.

Second, a new Somali constitution formally renounced all claims to the Ogaden and instead stated support for the liberation of Somali "territories under colonial oppression" (Selassie 1984). This change in orientation had the net effect of establishing a basis for détente with Ethiopia and undermined any legitimacy the Barre regime may have had with clans who still dreamed of a united Greater Somalia. By the late 1980s, opposition to the Barre regime broke along clan lines.

Third, Somalia experienced another foreign policy crisis, from 5 December 1980 to 29 June 1981. During this crisis, Ethiopia threatened Somalia with invasion unless it agreed formally to cease support for the WSLF (Brecher and Wilkenfeld et al. 1988).

By mid-1981 it became clear that Barre no longer had control of the WSLF and other political groups within Somalia. For example, on 30 June 1982, in an alliance of convenience with the Ethiopian Dergue, the SSDF attempted another coup against Barre's government and created a new foreign policy crisis for Somalia. Fighting ensued and Somali forces infiltrated deep inside Ethiopian territory and attacked a town a hundred kilometers from the border (Henze 1991). In response, the SSDF, almost certainly with Ethiopian support, took control of two border towns. Again as a consequence of internal challenges to the Barre regime, relations between Ethiopia and Somalia flared up. A foreign policy crisis began for Somalia on 12 February 1987 and ended two months later in April 1987. Border skirmishes of that nature continued sporadically for the next several years until Somalia formally withdrew its forces from Ethiopian territory and signed a peace accord with Ethiopia in 1988. The accord called for demilitarization of the common border. This proclamation effectively amounted to Somalia's renunciation of its claims to the Ogaden region. Immediately after the accord was signed, civil war broke out in the north as the Somali nationalist movement started to fight for the independence of Somaliland. Barre repressed the civilian population, but also agreed to work on a new constitution and emphasized UN-monitored, multiparty elections to be held in February 1991. A constitutional review process got underway but, in late 1990, already weakened severely by clan conflict, Barre's support collapsed. In January 1991, Barre's militia admitted defeat and his Darod party, the Somali National Front (SNF), was toppled from power, which in turn forced Barre to flee the country. Into this vacuum entered a coalition of the United Somalia Congress (USC), the Somalia National Movement (SNM), and the Somalia Patriotic Movement (SPM), who together deposed the leader and replaced him with a "national salvation committee" (*Globe and Mail,* 13 February 1993). In May 1991, Somaliland in the northwest declared unilateral independence; however, it still lacks formal international recognition. According to Kibble (2001:12), the declaration of independence responded to the regime's "record of lack of power sharing, corruption, abuses of human rights and autocracy."

For several reasons, Barre's defeat merely accelerated the disintegration of Somalia.[7] First, the opposition forces had only one thing in common: the defeat of Barre. Barre had managed to stay in power because of the inherent weakness and disunity of his opponents. With few allies, Barre was no match

for these clans when they united against him. Second, when Barre was overthrown, the Hawiye-led but severely divided USC immediately assumed power. The USC deeply opposed the SNM and SPM. Under its leader, General Aideed, the USC automatically assumed power and made a unilateral appointment of an interim president without consulting the other groups.

During November 1991 the most intense fighting since the fall of Barre broke out in the capital. The forces that occupied Mogadishu and overthrew President Barre split into two groups under warlords Ali Mahdi Mohammed and Mohammed Farah Aideed. Fighting persisted in Mogadishu and spread throughout Somalia, with heavily armed elements controlling various parts of the country. Ensuing struggles reflected clan-based politics at its most basic level. In the absence of any pretense to institutions, the struggle for survival and power became determined by weapons and clan alliances.

It is important to note that despite Somalia's being a unitary republic, it effectively had two administrations—one in the northwest (Somaliland) and the other in the northeast (Puntland). All other places (and even Somaliland from 1994 till 1996) suffered from human right abuses and fighting. Many cities, including much of Mogadishu itself, were destroyed and shortages of food were severe. Somalis suffered from famine, and, according to various estimates, one to two million Somalis either became displaced internally or refugees (Kibble 2001).

Due to the intensity of the conflict between the clans, in 1992 the United States sent a peacekeeping force (Operation Restore Hope) to restore order and safeguard relief supplies. Given the humanitarian challenge posed by clan warfare, the UN secretary-general concluded that airlift operations—already being carried out by the World Food Programme (WFP) and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), as well as by the ICRC—needed to be enhanced substantially, with priority given to central and southern Somalia. In addition, a "preventive zone" on the Kenya-Somali border was established for special deliveries of food and seed, in an attempt to reduce famine-induced population movements. The secretary-general concluded that the UN did not have the capability to command and control an enforcement operation of the size required. He concluded that no alternative existed other than to resort to the enforcement provisions under chapter VII of the UN Charter.

Efforts to find agreement among the leaders of the fifteen Somali political movements began in 1993. On 27 March 1993, these leaders signed an Agreement of the First Session of the Conference of National Reconciliation in Somalia. All of the participants, including representatives of women's and community organizations, as well as elders and scholars, unanimously endorsed the agreement. The parties resolved to put an end to armed conflict

in Somali and reconcile their differences through peaceful means. They reaffirmed their commitment to comply fully with the cease-fire agreement signed in Addis Ababa in January 1993, which had included the handing over of all weapons and ammunition to UNITAF and UNOSOM II. This ceasefire proved to be short-lived.

From June until October 1993, the United States launched a military offensive against General Aideed in Mogadishu. On 3 October 1993, U.S. Rangers launched an operation in south Mogadishu aimed at capturing a number of key aides of General Aideed (suspected in subsequent attacks on UN personnel and facilities). The operation succeeded in apprehending twenty-four suspects, including two key aides to General Aideed. During the course of the operation, Aideed's headquarters were destroyed, but Somali militiamen shot down two U.S. helicopters using automatic weapons and rocket-propelled grenades (Sloyan, "Mission in Somalia," *Newsday,* 7 December, 1993; Bowden 1999).

In 1994 the United States withdrew all of its forces from Somalia and in March 1995 the remaining UN peacekeeping force, which had tried to continue providing aid and mediating, also withdrew. After the departure of UNOSOM II, the country still had no effective, functioning government, no organized civilian police force, and no disciplined national armed forces.

In general, the UN's success remained limited to ending the famine and the sporadic return of refugees and displaced persons. It failed to provide resolution or reconciliation between the warring sides. Clashes between clans have continued since 1995, and Somalia remains one of the poorest countries in the world according to the human development index, with an average life expectancy of forty-one to forty-three years and a mortality rate for children under five of more than 25 percent (Kibble 2001).

Muhammad Aideed died from gunshot wounds in August 1996. Aideed's son, Hussein Muhammad Aideed, replaced him. The younger Aideed boycotted the Ethiopian government-sponsored reconciliation conference in November of that year. In November 1997, clan leaders met in Cairo and decided to set up a national government and constituent assembly. They failed, however, to come up with an acceptable power-sharing agreement. With no central government, renewed famine created intense problems for Somalis; insecurity and interclan violence continued, especially in central and southern Somalia, throughout 1999. Aideed's forces continued to control the large area south of Mogadishu.

On 2 May 2000, with the initiative of the Djibouti government, the Somalia National Peace Conference brought the clan leaders and senior figures together to end years of civil war and form a new government. On 26

August 2000, the Transitional National Assembly (TNA) was formed and elected on the basis of clan participation. Abdulkassim Salad Hassan became the new president of Somalia. In October he appointed Ali Khalif Gelayadh, a former minister of industry under Siad Barre, as prime minister. In April 2001 the Somali Restoration and Reconciliation Council (SRRC), basically a group of southern clans opposed to the transitional government, formed in Ethiopia. The SRRC announced its aim: to establish a rival national government. The interim government has been on duty since 2000, although it should be noted that some groups claimed that they remain outside of this Djibouti-sponsored peace process.

Fighting continued to take place in the south, and referendum results proved that many in Somaliland support the idea of independence from the rest of Somalia. Due to a vote of no-confidence on 28 October 2001, the prime minister and his cabinet were replaced by Hassan Abshir Farah on 11 November 2001. In addition to this, in that same month, the United States decided to freeze the funds of the main remittance bank, and the largest employer, al-Barakat, due to suspected links with Al-Qaeda.

In April 2002 the Rahanweyn Resistance Army (RRA) in the southwest unilaterally declared autonomy for six districts in the region. After Somaliland in the northwest and Puntland in the northeast, the "Southwest Sate of Somalia" became the third region in Somalia that declared its independence. Warring groups and the transitional government agreed to sign a cease-fire so hostilities would end for the duration of peace talks in October 2002. Dahir Riyale Kahin was elected as the first president of breakaway Somaliland in April 2003.

At the beginning of 2004, warlords and politicians reached an agreement on forming a new parliament. They agreed on the principle of equal representation of the four main clans and some minority groups. In October, Somalia's transitional parliament elected Abdullahi Yusuf as the new president, with a mandate to restore order in the country after thirteen years of civil war. Although this does not mean that the war is over, it is a big step forward. Somalia has been without a functional central government since warlords ousted Mohamed Siad Barre in 1991 and turned the country into clan-based fiefdoms. Two governments have been formed since 1991, but neither could manage to establish control across the country. On 12 December, Somalia's parliament passed a vote of no-confidence against the government of Prime Minister Mohammed Ali Gedi and his cabinet and dissolved his government. However, two days later, President Abdullahi Yusuf reappointed Gedi as the prime minister, and on 24 December, Gedi managed to obtain parliament's approval.

Most recently, the Somali coast has been hit by the deadly tsunami of 26 December 2004 and approximately 50,000 people have been displaced. More than 140 people are reported dead. At the time of writing, the Somali people are trying to heal their wounds and hope that their government will function effectively and bring peace to a war-torn country.

5. Analysis and Propositions

In terms of the framework, the three stages proceeded as follows.

At stage 1 both states exhibited apprehensiveness in formulating belligerent foreign policies that could lead to confrontation. Based on the evidence, this resulted primarily from Ethiopia's ethnically diverse demography and Somalia's weak status as a new state. Nevertheless, at the outset Somali leaders did rely on the issue of a Greater Somalia as the basis for acquiring domestic support.

During stage 2 the presence of high levels of affinity and cleavage within Ethiopia provided an opportunity for Somalia to initiate a conflict. The persistence of cleavages provided recurring opportunities for Somalia to escalate the conflict.

Finally, at stage 3, each state had become organized to use force against the other. This is true especially for Somalia, which, after Barre came to power, set about acquiring arms. Perhaps with fewer domestic constraints and his control of the military, Barre could use force. In response, Ethiopia was intransigent, which, as expected, ultimately resulted in war. Ethiopia's internal divisions prevented it from doing more than simply defending itself. The last three crises ultimately result from Somali internal divisiveness, with interactions that led to policies of moderation for both sides. In other words, weakened by internal pressures, the leaders of both states became either unable or unwilling to reescalate the conflict to war once again.

Somalia's homogeneity presents a challenge to commonly accepted interpretations of ethnicity. Under the "subjective" definition provided by Barth (1969), along with more "objective" versions (Rothschild 1981), clan-based divisions are sufficient to constitute differences among ethnic groups. Thus, at one level, each clan constitutes a distinct ethnic group while, at another level, the Somali peoples also make up a distinct ethnic group (Saideman 1998b). This apparent contradiction is not really one at all; it merely underscores the instrumentalist and situational features common to processes of ethnic mobilization within Somalia (Olzak and Nagel 1986).

Indeed, the unfavorable implications of a clan-based society are signifi-

cant. Many scholars have noted that the basic characteristic of such a society is its *inherent instability.* Depending on the nature and context of a particular political matter (Laitin and Samatar 1987: 158), "segments of a clan unify temporarily, to deal with an imminent emergency only to splinter off into antagonistic sub-segments when the emergency abates." In this context, the idea of a Greater Somalia held advantages for Somali leaders in state-building and developing personal power. Consider, by way of contrast, the multiethnic nature of Ethiopia. Ethiopia's diversity appears to have heightened its sense of vulnerability, which led to its support for creation of the OAU Charter and a search for external allies, both designed primarily to restrain Somali adventurism. Also consistent with Laitin and Samatar's (1987) assessment of segmented societies is that repeated foreign policy failure proved to be divisive internally.

For purposes of brevity, interactions between Somalia and Ethiopia provide the main focus for this analysis. Somalia's relations with Ethiopia, however, also appear to have influenced its interactions with other states. Notable in this context are the two far more restrained interstate crises between Kenya and Somalia. The more limited nature of that conflict can be explained, in part, by Kenya's multiethnic character and moderate levels of institutional constraint.

Five propositions are tested, as in the other case studies. These propositions relate to strategies of intervention, autonomy, domestic costs, the role of affinities and cleavage, and the typology, respectively.

Proposition P_1 pertains to the commitment to multiple strategies of intervention. The limited period of Somali democracy allows for some comparison. Evidence indicates that political parties did compete to be the best representatives of the Somali interest, the most intensely symbolic being pan-Somali irredentist movements. Leaders competed on the basis of their nationalist credentials, and the public judged them that way. Legitimacy derived, at least in part, from achieving the goal of uniting all Somalis, and in turn this had implications for clan-based unity. The system proved particularly effective during the democratic phase, when political leaders obtained a "balance of power" among the clans that reduced the need to pursue foreign policy objectives to obtain internal unity. When this power balance fell out of synch, largely because Barre recruited heavily from his clan-group, uniting the clans through external confrontation became more of a necessity. The unfortunate aspect of this approach is that, eventually, the process of achieving clan-based unity, which served Somalia during its first decade of independence, became the basis for undermining its fragile institutional structure.

Institutions did moderate the Somali inclination for intervention in the

early years. All of the interstate crises during this period primarily took the form of border skirmishes. Despite the low intensity of these cases, Somalia might have been expected to show greater efforts at managing the potential for crisis escalation. Instead, Somalia set about accumulating weapons to reclaim the territory by force. Prior to crisis onset, Somali nationalism caused consistent outbidding among politicians. Thus, Somalia constituted a threat to Ethiopia from the outset. The threat is evident in attempts at finding both a military and negotiated solution to the Ogaden problem prior to Somalia's independence. The former action, which included support for the WSLF and confrontations with other states, resulted in a spiraling of tensions between the two states.

Could a difference between mass and elite preferences account for the more restrained Somali foreign policy? Based on the evidence presented so far, it appears that escalation of the crises, which had occurred under Somali democracy, reflected elite efforts to shore up a succession of weak governments. Over time, each succeeding crisis became more intense as leaders built upon pan-Somali nationalism for political gains. More specifically, where executive aims and constituency desires are fundamental to the choice of strategy, then a forceful interventionist policy may emerge if (and only if) constituency desires do not undercut support for leaders and internal cohesion. Consistent with this view, Waller (1992: 43) argues that:

> one source of a political regime's legitimacy in territorial states is conquest. Yet as such states grow larger they encounter other states, hence increasing the cost of expansion. As these costs increase so does the probability of . . . foreign policy failure. The primary outcome of foreign policy failure is the delegitimation of the regime in power at the time of the foreign policy failure. Delegitimation creates an opening in the political process for opposing factions.

Proposition P_2 focuses on a preference for nonviolent interventions by ethnically diverse states. Although Somalia's demographic characteristics do not permit a full evaluation of this proposition, it is worth pointing out ways in which Somalia's behavior is consistent with the assumptions underlying the proposition. According to conflict linkage theory, when a state beset by internal strife enters into a conflict with another state, internal coherence is expected to increase because those within the state will put aside their differences in order to pursue the higher goal of national security (Wilkenfeld 1973). A conflict at its origins, such as domestic unrest threatening an insecure government, can be transformed and possibly even intensified at an

interstate level. Consistent with this idea, Coser (1956; see also Rummel 1963; Wilkenfeld 1973) developed the idea of cohesion through conflict: war becomes the opportunity for a state ridden with antagonisms to overcome them by uniting against an external enemy. The conflict linkage perspective suggests that Somalia's leaders would pursue a strategy of confrontation as long as benefits clearly outweighed costs. Toward the end of Somalia's experiment with democracy, a period in which clan divisions became more salient, the country began to experience levels of domestic disorder that surpassed the threshold for which externalization of conflict would be conducive for cohesion.

After the 1969 coup, elite preferences for confrontation faced even fewer domestic barriers. Only military and clan divisions constrained Somali elites. In response to that situation, Barre proved effective in recruiting heavily from his own clan group and packing the military with clan-friendly officers. Barre also succeeded in developing pan-Somali nationalism as a hallmark of the country's collective struggle. Indeed, the only formal constraint on Somali belligerence then became OAU condemnation—until Barre's selection as head of that organization. In sum, Somalia's clan divisiveness and militarization show a strong correlation, and that connection is manifested in at least three ways.

First, as noted previously, the constitutionally embedded idea of pan-Somali nationalism served as an important defining characteristic of Somalia's identity. A succession of failures to realize this goal led to a loss of legitimacy for popularly elected governments. The army then became a custodian of the national interest.

Second, compared with the multiethnic states of sub-Saharan Africa, Somalia experienced fewer coups. In most African states the pivotal role of the military is due to fear of an unstable ethnic situation. Military coups occur most often in societies that exhibit porous ethnic-military boundaries. In Somalia's case, the recruitment of specific clans into the military led to their overrepresentation and resulting breakdown of the military along clan lines.

Third, the aborted coup of 1978 indicated that elites had become dissatisfied with the Barre regime, but dissent had not yet trickled down to the masses, because the Barre regime maintained a monopoly on power and had stepped up repressive acts. As Muller and Weede (1990: 627) have argued, extremely brutal authorities can discourage all forms of group resistance. When the army and militia began to break up along clan-based lines in 1988, competition among clans no longer was restricted to clan leaders.

Proposition P_3 concerns forceful intervention and the concentration of

costs and benefits. Forceful intervention is most likely when political resistance among constituents is low (i.e., authoritarian regimes) and generic, all-purpose support exists from members of the same ethnic group (i.e., ethnic group dominance), as for Type I_a states. The proposition finds support in the latter stages of the protracted conflict. Before the war of 1977, Somalia's international opportunities presented themselves on three fronts: a favorable military balance with Ethiopia, a supportive ally in the WSLF, and a war in Eritrea. Although there may be other reasons for the sustained conflict between the two states, including U.S.-Soviet rivalry and military aid from the superpowers to both states, at least three internal conflicts erupted within Ethiopia, and these events facilitated repeated Somali attempts at territorial retrieval. When cleavages also appeared in Somalia's fragile clan structure in the 1980s, two more crises occurred between the two states.

Proposition P_4 concerns the heightening effects of affinities and cleavage. It also finds general support in this case. Like the Sinhalese in the previous chapter, Somalis consider themselves a distinct ethnic group. For this reason, Somalia's affinities with other states generally are low. However, the presence of Somalis outside of Somalia provided the incentive for staking claims to territory. An important aspect of the dynamics of this claim is the varying importance Somali elites have attached to different regions. For example, the Ogadeni and Darod of the Ogaden are central to the power structure of Somali politics, whereas the Somalis of Kenya and Djibouti are less so. This fact shapes the interests of Somali leaders who derive support from specific clans. Leaders of clans with a strong link to the Ogaden (e.g., Barre) have shown a greater interest in irredentism than those from clans without this level of affinity (e.g., Egal).

The extent to which a state mobilizes social resources to mount a credible campaign to assist ethnic brethren is arguably as much a function of strong preferences for the issue at stake as of capabilities. Indeed, transnational ethnic linkages can create extreme preferences that compensate for a deficiency in capabilities. It is clear from the evidence that some Somali elites became concerned about the plight of Somalis in the Ogaden, and this link led to direct support for the WSLF. This backing increased internal divisions within Ethiopia, which provided additional incentives for future invasion. The central concern in this instance is whether states are able to regulate protracted conflicts when affinities are so strong.

Evidence shows that rules developed for facilitating cooperation between the two states became too one-sided in favor of Ethiopia. In other words, Ethiopia could impose internal assimilationist policies on Somalis in the Ogaden and also manipulate international rules (e.g., OAU Charter) in its

favor. Guarantees for the safety of the Somali minority in Ethiopia proved insufficient to prevent Somali elites from making an issue of their plight and then taking actions to address it. The decision by Barre to fully support the WSLF in the early 1970s signaled the potential for future interstate conflict. However, Barre's clan stood out among the groups with the greatest ties to the Ogaden, and he recruited heavily from the Darod clan.

The perceived security issue of the Ogadenis became a symbol for creation of a Somali ethnic identity that leaders showed skill at manipulating. It also became a source of tension between the two states. The combination of increasing tensions and an uncompromising Somali worldview made finding a cooperative solution difficult. As a result, the one-time perceived problem of security for Somalis in the Ogaden became a very real issue of interstate security—one that proved difficult to deescalate.

Evidence also indicates that as Ethiopian cleavages increased, Somalia continued to press its advantage. The main issue, here as above, is that Ethiopia constituted a threat to Somalia from the outset because of its historical claims to the Ogaden. One implication of this linkage is that conventional safeguards, such as the ability of the African community to control both Ethiopian and Somali belligerence, could be expected to fail (Saideman 1998a, b). For example, both Djibouti and Kenya expressed an understandable reluctance to become involved in the issue. Only after several crises and wars did an alliance between Ethiopia and Kenya emerge.

Proposition P_5 focuses on the relative likelihood of intervention. In the typology presented in figure 2.1, Somalia would be classified as an ethnically dominant, constrained Type II_a state until the 1969 coup against the democratic government. Under the regime of General Barre, Somalia became an ethnically dominant, low-constraint, or Type I_a, state.

In general, Somalia's foreign policy tends to confirm the predictions based on the typology. During the early 1960s, in a high-constraint, ethnically dominant state, Somali leaders had to be sensitive about the support of their constituencies. They therefore could not easily pursue belligerent, revanchist policies that would jeopardize the national economy and potentially eliminate key trading partners and outside aid. To appeal to both elements within the international community and nationalist sentiments of their constituents, Somali leaders provided covert assistance to their coethnics over the border while publicly renouncing the goal of a greater Somalia. In short, Somalia's inconsistent stance during this time is largely in accord with the framework's expectations—namely, the state practiced sporadic interventionism.

After the coup in 1969, however, the situation changed dramatically. Somalia became a low-constraint state, and, in line with expectations, its

military government supported more bellicose policies vis-à-vis coethnics in neighboring states. General Barre openly committed Somali troops to support the secessionist movement in Ethiopia. By early 1977, Somali secessionist forces engaged in a war with Ethiopian troops. UN and OAU threats did not work against the military regime, which did not care about either mass support or external criticism. Given the homogeneity of the society, an ethnically oriented foreign policy became the optimal strategy.

6. Conclusions

The goal of this chapter was to examine the interstate dimensions of ethnic conflict and the impact of institutions and ethnic constraints on intervention in the case of Somalia. The chapter started with historical and political aspects of the conflict involving Somalia and Ethiopia over the Ogaden region. These developments led to the 1977–78 war that along with the conflicts afterward have been analyzed in depth. Five propositions have been evaluated in light of historical developments, with generally favorable results.

Judging from Somali behavior, ethnically dominant states will formulate ethnically oriented foreign policies and will do so much earlier compared to high-constraint, diverse states when confronted by a perceived security issue. In this case, the plight of the Somalis in the Ogaden created a structural security dilemma for both states that was very difficult to resolve within the parameters of existing international norms and rules and a single crisis. Convergence of mass and elite aspirations on the issue of a Greater Somalia appears to have compounded the problem. This may indicate the skillfulness with which Somali leaders could manipulate mass sentiment. It is possible that interparty policies during the democratic phase did not differ on the issue of a Greater Somalia and therefore intransigence rather than compromise was more likely. Thus, within ethnically dominant, institutionally constrained states (i.e., Somalia before 1969), elites appear to show greater solidarity on foreign policy issues, including decisions to use force.

Levels of cleavage and affinity appear to have an impact on protractedness and future escalation. Combining this evidence with that of the preceding chapter, it appears that high-constraint states of both the diverse and dominant variety are not as immune to using force as expected. However, the elites of these states appear to favor support for insurgency movements rather than direct state-to-state confrontation.

Thailand, 2004. http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/