

Forum: Disarmament Committee
Issue: Measures to Fully Eradicate Al-Shabaab from Somalia
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Position: Chair

Introduction

Once referred to as the Switzerland of Africa, Somalia used to be an exemplary country to all other independent African countries with its levels of democracy and freedom. Yet after the military coup in 1969, this reputation has been spoiled and the country has entered into a dark era. General Siad Barre ruled almost two full decades after replacing the exemplary democracy with a one-man dictatorship. Finally, in 1991, the people of Somalia opposed the military dictatorship and overthrew the existing regime. In the absence of a governmental authority, a civil war commenced which continues even today. It was with the civil war that the reputation of Somalia started suffering. The country came to be known as a place of crime, terrorism, piracy and inhumane conditions since there was no persistent authority to settle the inner conflicts that were being faced. This was when warlords and armed militia groups started to rule over parts of Somalia.

The most powerful, organized, and popular of the troublesome groups rose in the conflict is the Al-Shabaab (“the youth”). Having started its attacks with a suicide bomber on March 2007 in Mogadishu, Al-Shabaab has strived to spread radical Islam through such terrorist attacks ever since. The terrorist group has marginalized non Muslim Somalians as well as Kenyans and Ethiopians in the region. Hence, they have assumed control of much of the Southern part of the country in 2008 and implemented Sharia Law in places that they have controlled. Lately, with the intervention of United Nations and African Union backed by Ethiopian and Kenyan troops, most of the lands controlled by the Al-Shabaab were regained and the terrorist organization has been weakened.

Today, Al-Shabaab doesn't hold major cities in neither Somalia (including the autonomous region of Somaliland) nor in the neighboring countries, but it is as dangerous, if not more, as before given that it continues to conduct deadly terror attacks in the region. Hence, the organization still poses a threat to the future and to the youth of the country as they continue to recruit potential combatants by will, but mostly by force. Therefore, al Shabaab will remain a threat to the peace and security of the international community until it is fully eradicated. It is essential that the United Nations and the international community cooperates with the Federal Government in Somalia to fully end the suffering caused by Al-Shabaab in

order to conclude the civil war, increase the wellbeing of the people of Somalia, and make Somalia regain its reputation as the pearl of eastern Africa.

Definition of Key Terms

Religious Terrorism:

“The unlawful use of violence and intimidation, especially against civilians, in the pursuit of political aims.” (Oxford Dictionaries). Parallel to the definition of terrorism, religious terrorism is the practice of unlawful acts of violence which aim to spread the specific religion through the creation of environment of fear and intimidation.

Al-Shabaab can be defined as, more suitably than any other definition, a terrorist organization. For the sake of political correctness, definitions such as Islamic Terrorist Organization should be avoided and the organization should simply be referred as a terrorist organization in the drafted resolutions since the validity of the term “Islamic Terrorist Organization” is still debated on the basis that many followers of Islam do not affiliate the acts of these so called Islamic Terrorist Organizations and therefore are opposed to the naming as such.

Sharia Law:

Sharia Law is the name of the set of laws, which are derived from Quran and the Hadith, the common practices of and the words said by prophet Muhammad. It was first used by the earliest Muslim states such as the Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphates. The Sharia Law has also been imposed by the terrorist organization Al-Shabaab in the places that it governed until the intervention of the joint African Union troops. Thus, imposing the Sharia Law brought a lot of support to Al-Shabaab from the native Muslim population of Somalia.

Interestingly enough, the transitional government, backed up by the United Nations, stated that they would also impose the Sharia Law in order to regain the support of the Muslim population from Al-Shabaab. So, when writing a clause regarding the judicial system of the country, the delegates should be aware of the fact that Sharia Law has many supporters in the Somalia.

One of the most important flaws of the Sharia Law is that it is open to interpretation as different administrations, and people, may derive different meanings from the passages of Quran and the Hadith. Hence, some practices of Sharia Law are contradictory with the International Declaration of Human Rights.

Wahhabi Islam:

Wahhabi Islam, or Wahhabism, is an interpretation of Sunni Islam, which has originated in Saudi Arabia. It supports fundamentalism and proposes a stricter utilization of Islamist principles in governance and other aspects of daily life. (“What is Wahhabism?”)

Al-Shabaab considers itself as follower of Wahhabi Islam and imposes its practices under the areas it controls. Such practices include “stoning people to death and amputating the hands of thieves” (“Who are Somalia’s Al-Shabaab?”).

Westgate Massacre:

On Saturday, 21st of September 2013, Al-Shabaab carried one of the most deadly terrorist attacks in its history at the Westgate shopping mall in Nairobi, Kenya. Having killed more than a hundred innocent civilians, the terrorist organization has allegedly retaliated to Kenyan troops advancing in Somali soil to combat Al-Shabaab (McConnell).

Incidents like Westgate Massacre are examples on how easy it is to commit terrorist acts. A small group of militants was enough for Al-Shabaab to make a statement and plant seeds of intimidation in the hearts of people who opposed it. Now, having lost most of its land, Al-Shabaab is most likely to direct its focus on such individual and suicidal attacks. This example, and many more not mentioned here, is the reason why fully eradicating Al-Shabaab is vital.

United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA):

Established in 1982 upon the recommendation of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), UNODA is a UN organ, which aims to facilitate the disarmament processes all around the world in cooperation with the Member States of the UN (“About Us” – UNODA)

When writing clauses regarding the disarmament of Al-Shabaab, the delegates may, very well, ask for the assistance of UNODA experts.

African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM):

AMISOM is an active peacekeeping force, which was established on 19th of January 2007 by the African Union’s Peace and Security Council with the approval of United Nations (amisom-au.org). It have been active in Somalia since then in order to protect the Federal Government of Somalia, combat Al-Shabaab and maintain peace and security of the country. AMISOM’s military force is composed of five different sectors. A different country is responsible for providing ammunition and staff for each of these sectors. These countries are Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Burundi.

AMISOM is the single most important peacekeeping entity in the region, which has been proved to be

successful in the fight against Al-Shabaab. The fully eradication process may also be conducted via their involvement (AMISOM).

Failed State:

In the most basic words, failed state is a country or a state that has no functional government. Somalia, between 1991-2004, was a failed state in the absence of a legitimate government (Oxford Dictionaries)

Transitional Federal Government (TFG)

Transitional Federal Government of Somalia was a UN backed government of Somalia which was established in 2004, following devastating years of internal conflict and civil war. TFG has later, in 2012, been recognized by the international community as the official government of the Federal Republic of Somalia. The TFG was established by the UN in order to reestablish governmental authority in the failed state of Somalia.

General Overview

Recent History of Somalia

In the late 19th century, what was called Somalia was divided into three separate states and was ruled by the United Kingdom, Italy and France. When, in 1960, the British and Italian Somalia voted for independence and united; French Somalia remained under the colonial rule (and later gained independence under the name Djibouti). British and Italian Somali territories united under the name of United Republic of Somalia and held a democratic election. After 9 years of peaceful democratic rule, the government was accused of corruption, and oppositions to the status quo started to rise. In 1969, an army general, Siad Barre, staged a coup d'état, justifying it with corruption allegations against the government, and seized control of the country. In the two decades that followed the coup, the country remained under the Barre regime. In 1991, with the effects of lost wars, weak state policies and famine; Siad Barre's dictatorship has also been overthrown.

In the years following the revolution, a new government could not be established. In this absence of authority in the region, warlords and guerilla groups rose. In late 1990s, Somalia was classified as a failed state and was made an example for political and administrative catastrophe. In the midst of this crisis, several armed groups tried to declare independence and autonomous status in towns and cities under their control while the UN has strived to set up a transitional government. Complementary to this immense instability in the region was the lack of resources and famine. Alongside the threat of being shot at, the Somali people had to find food to avoid starvation. Yet humanitarian aid was almost impossible to deliver, as there was no safe passage to reach the civilians in need of UN's assistance.

In early 2000s, the Islamist movement started to rise all around the country. In the meanwhile, with joint efforts of UN, African Union (AU) and Ethiopia, joint troops were deployed to Somalia, and efforts to create a Transitional Federal Government (TFG) commenced. In 2004, the TFG was officially established with the support of UN. In late 2000s, when Al-Shabaab was formed and gained control over notable territories in Southern Somalia, AMISOM was authorized to take counteraction. Towards the early 2010s, AMISOM took most of the Al-Shabaab controlled lands from the organization and supported the TFG which then became the official Federal Government of Somalia. With the joint operations, Al-Shabaab was weakened but still remains as cancerous cells in rural parts of Somalia, ready to spread around the whole country once again. (James)

Birth, Development and Eradication of Al-Shabaab

Then, in 2004, UN intensified its efforts for resolving the question of Somalia, they have decided upon creating the TFG. This decision was highly disliked by many radical groups, which based their existence on the absence of a governmental authority in the region. So in order to prevent a government to be established in Somalia, these groups have united under the name of Islamic Courts Union. The Islamic Courts Union administrated areas in Somalia under the sharia law, and have created an “army” which served as the military wing of the organization with the aims of controlling the whole of Somalia. Al-Shabaab, officially established in December of 2006, was this very military wing of Islamic Courts Union. Having reached its climax in 2008, Al-Shabaab controlled more than half of the country including the capital, Mogadishu. The situation has been reversed

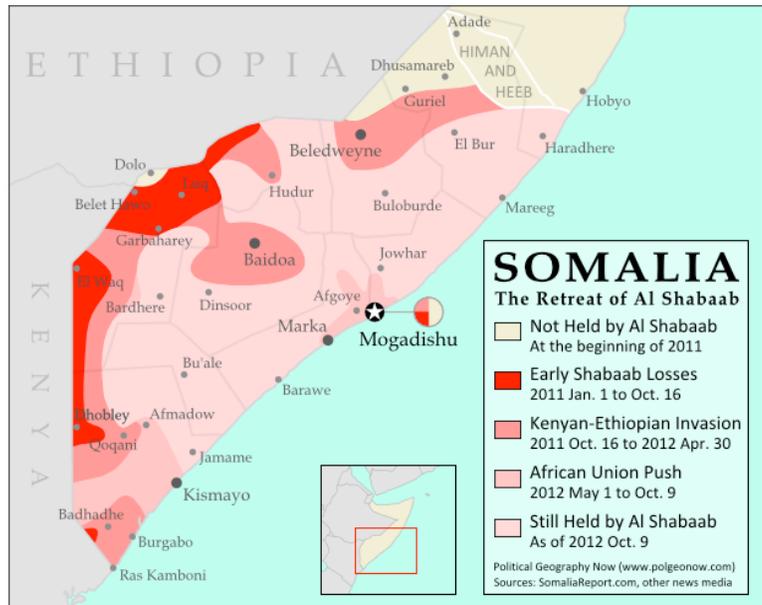


Image1: Political Map of Somalia, 2012
<http://www.polqeonow.com/2012/10/somalia-retreat-of-al->

after the intervention of AMISOM troops as retaliation to the advancement of Al-Shabaab. Today, Al-Shabaab exists as the most powerful and major threat against the current government of Somalia. Having withdrawn from the capital, Mogadishu, in 2011, the organization mostly exists in the rural sections of the country. Somali government, alongside with AMISOM forces and other supporting governments, still try to fully eradicate the organization today.

One of the most important sources of power for Al-Shabaab is the young Muslim generation of not only Somalia but also all other heavily Muslim populated countries in the world. Al-Shabaab has highly sophisticated recruitment networks, which enables it to gather militants from countries ranging from

Ethiopia to Belgium. According to the UN figures of 2015, the organization has 7,000-9,000 militants stationed in various parts of Somalia and Somaliland.

Affiliated to Al-Qaeda, Al-Shabaab is partly funded by Al-Qaeda and jihadists linked to it. The support of Al-Qaeda is not only limited to money transfer; there are evidences of illicit arms smuggling to Al-Shabaab from foreign countries. Other than Al-Qaeda, according to UN claims; Eritrea, Libya, Saudi Arabia and Hezbollah have been supporting the organization. Other than foreign help, Al-Shabaab has gathered resources from looting compounds in Somalia and collecting taxes from the places under their control.

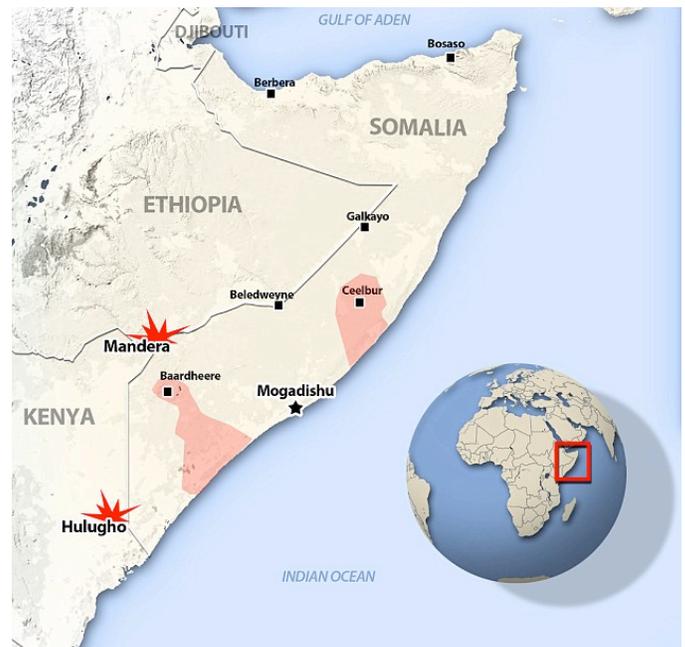


Image 1: Political Map of Somalia, 2015
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3156072/Somalia-terror->

Today's Somalia

Today Federal Parliamentary Republic of Somalia still struggles with Al-Shabaab as it controls rural areas in several southern Somali regions. Thus, the terrorist organization continues its suicidal attacks not only in Somalia, but in the neighboring Ethiopia, Djibouti, Uganda and Kenya.

Today's Al-Shabaab

When Al-Shabaab split from the Islamic Courts Union, it was a united terrorist organization with a working chain of command and experienced generals. The organization functioned, almost, as a government. They have collected taxes, ran the courts and administrated the areas under their control. During this time, the main aim of Al-Shabaab was to spread Wahhabis Islamic Doctrine to the whole of Somalia and to the World. Yet with the involvement of AMISOM troops in the conflict, many of the high-ranking officials have been killed, captured or imprisoned. This interference has affected Al-Shabaab immensely. After losing many experienced soldiers and lands to administrate in Somalia, Al-Shabaab has transformed into a violent terrorist organization that is more unpredictable and dangerous.

Operating in the rural parts of Somalia, Al-Shabaab is not united but is as dangerous as before, carrying out deadly terrorist attacks in order to revenge the AMISOM intervention. ("Who are today's Al-Shabaab")

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

Al-Qaeda

Al-Qaeda arose in the midst of the Afghan War fought between the Soviet Union. Having recruited thousands of Muslims from all over the world, the organization grew each year. Although it has been weakened by the United States and joint efforts of the international community, Al-Qaeda still conducts acts of terrorism and supports other developing religious, mostly Islamic, terrorist organizations.

Al-Shabaab has pledged its allegiance to Al-Qaeda with a video that was published on February 9th, 2012. Although Al-Shabaab and Al-Qaeda have been officially united on this date, the ties between the two terrorist organizations have always been tight. Al-Qaeda has, for long, been a dedicated supporter of Al-Shabaab both in terms of military training and weaponry (Joscelyn).

Ethiopia

Ethiopia is a neighboring country to Somalia and one of the most involved Member States, alongside with UN, regarding the joint efforts for the eradication of Al-Shabaab. The history between Ethiopia and Somalia is a long one, and the past interactions have not always been peaceful ones.

In Somalia, %99.8 of all citizens are followers of Islam; hence the country openly admits that it has an official religion. On the other hand, the most widespread religion in Ethiopia is Christianity. Based on solely on this, there had been border clashes between the governments and people of both countries in the past (ex: Ogaden War).

After General Siad Barre was overthrown, the instability of its neighboring country, Somalia, directly affected tourism and economy in Ethiopia. Due to this, Ethiopia has deployed troops in Somalia, in cooperation with African Union and through the authorization of the United Nations, to stabilize the country.

With the deployment of the Ethiopian troops and the support of the government, several towns were gained from Al-Shabaab in 2011. Yet due to financial issues and anti governmental protests, Ethiopia had to withdraw the majority of its forces from Somalia, which resulted in Al-Shabaab regaining control of important land in South Somalia. On that note, Ethiopia never fully stopped its support against the joint efforts of eradicating Al-Shabaab and still is an important power in the region in terms of coordinating efforts to fully eradicate Al-Shabaab (Harper).

Concluding, Ethiopian forces have never been wholeheartedly welcomed in Somalia by the Somali people due to religious and cultural differences between the two states. Thus, many Muslim Somalis have started to support and aid Al-Shabaab to expel the Ethiopian forces.

Kenya

Kenya, just like Ethiopia, is a neighboring country to Somalia and a majority of all Kenyans are Christians. Kenya has also played a pivotal role in the joint efforts in combatting Al-Shabaab by sending troops to the AMISOM and battling the Al-Shabaab militants. As a result of this support, Kenya and its people have suffered from many deadly Al-Shabaab attacks, Westgate Mall Massacre being the most deadly one of all.

Kenya also has become one of the biggest recruitment locations for Al-Shabaab, they have been manipulating young Muslim population in joining the organization and as Muslims are a minority in Kenya, it is easy to marginalize and recruit them. (Harper)

United States of America

United States of America was one of the first countries to recognize Al-Shabaab as a terrorist organization and has supported the Somali and AMISOM ground troops through its air force and drone operations. They have managed to kill two upper rank Al-Shabaab militants: Aden Hashi Ayro and Ahmed Abdi Godane in 2008.

Alongside the military support, the USA, through US Aid, has been trying to support the Somali people through the painful years of famine. Yet most of the aid has never reached to the people as Al-Shabaab followed a policy of not letting in the humanitarian workers and aid to pass through the lands under its control.

Al-Shabaab is in the U.S. State Department Foreign Terrorist Organizations List since March 18, 2008.

African Union (AU)

“The main objectives of the AU were, inter alia, to rid the continent of the remaining vestiges of colonization and apartheid; to promote unity and solidarity among African States; to coordinate and intensify cooperation for development; to safeguard the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Member States and to promote international cooperation within the framework of the United Nations” (au.int).

As defined in its mandate, the African Union is an organization of African countries, which aims to facilitate the growth and development of African countries while fighting to eradicate any and all barriers that stand in between. Currently, African Union defines Al-Shabaab as one of these barriers and works actively to eradicate the organization through AMISOM and other joint efforts. The AU plays a critical role in solving this highly important problem in the heart of Somalia.

Timeline of Events

“Somalia Profile – Timeline” article of BBC News has been utilized in the creation of the following timeline.

1869	Suez Canal opens, making Somalia's geopolitical location even more significant.
1884	The faith of Somalia, in terms of colonization, is decided in the Berlin Conference.
1888	Somalia is divided into three provinces and colonized by France, Italy and United Kingdom.
1960	British and Italian Somalia declared their independence and united at once under the name of United Republic of Somalia.
1967	Second general elections of the Somali history is held and Aden Abdullah Osman Daar became the president.
1969	Siad Barre conducted a military coup, assassinating the president, and assumed power.
1977	Somalia invaded the Ogaden region of Ethiopia, which used to be a Somali territory before the colonization movements.
1978	Ethiopia, through the help of Soviet intelligence, pushed out the Somali forces.
1978-1991	Opposition to Siad Barre's regime starts to form as a result of the devastating Ogaden war and endless starvation due to severe drought.
1991-2004	During this period, there had been an absolute absence of authority despite thirteen attempts of restoring a central government.
2004, August	In August of 2004, a new transitional government has been established and inaugurated in Kenya. Later that year, Abdullahi Yusuf has been appointed as the president of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG)

2006, February	In February of 2006, Transitional Federal Parliament meets for the first time since its formation.
2006, June	Al-Shabaab (although not officially named that way in the time) militias, under Union of Islamic Courts, take Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia, after battling warlords.
2006, August	Ethiopian troops are deployed into Somalia.
2006, December	Ethiopian troops and the TFG regain the capital, Mogadishu, from Al-Shabaab militants.
2007, March	African Union troops are deployed in Mogadishu following the authorization of the UN Security Council (UNSC).
2009, January	Ethiopia withdraws a majority of its troops from the region due to both economic and domestic affairs of the state. Following this withdrawal, Al-Shabaab captures numerous key cities.
2009, October	Al-Shabaab advances through the south and captures Kismayo, a port city in the south of Somalia.
2010	Extreme drought and famine kills almost 260,000 Somali people according to UN World Food Programme data (bbc.com)
2010, January	UN World Food Programme ceases its presence in the southern Somalia, which is under the control of Al-Shabaab.
2011, July	Al-Shabaab pulls out of Mogadishu.
2011, October	Kenyan troops reenter Somali soil and combat against the Al-Shabaab.
2012, May	Al-Shabaab is weakened through a joint operation of AMISOM forces and Somali Government.
2012, August	The TFG is recognized as the official Federal Government of Sudan.
2013, September	Westgate Mall Massacre in Nairobi, Kenya (please refer to the definition of key terms section of this report).

2014, May	Al-Shabaab carries out an attack at a restaurant in Djibouti.
2015, April	Al-Shabaab claims responsibility over the Garissa University Massacre, which led to the death of 148 people in total.

UN Involvement

United Nations has been involved in the issue of Somalia in aspects ranging from humanitarian to political. First and foremost, the creation and sending of the AMISOM was through thorough cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations. In other words, UN has mobilized peacekeepers in order to fight with the Al-Shabaab militias on the ground in order to stop the suffering of the Somali people. Another important involvement of the United Nations in Somalia was its support to the Transitional Federal Government. Last but not least, humanitarian aid provided by the UN through its sub-organs saved thousands of lives during the times of famine and extreme drought.

Relevant UN Documents

Putting on sanctions on Somalia, 10 November 2016 (S/RES/2317)

http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2317.pdf

Extending the authorization of AMISOM until 31st of May 2017, 7 July 2016 (S/RES/2297)

http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2297.pdf

Secretary General's report on Somalia, 27 January 2017 (S/2017/21): This report of the Secretary-General of the UN elaborates on the most recent situation of Somalia; therefore it is a useful resource for further readings.

http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_2017_21.pdf

Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

Al-Shabaab is not the same organization it was ten years ago. The scale and mandate of the organization has evolved since its existence, so did its methods of terrorization. Due to this fact, the previous attempts to solve the issue, which has been outlined below, may not be the same or even similar to the possible solutions offered in the next section of this report.

Since 2007, Al-Shabaab has been an active terrorist organization, which held notable acres of lands in southern Somalia in 2008-2011. In the years following the rise of the terrorist organization, the United Nations and joint forces from mainly the African Union had to take certain actions to end the Al-Shabaab rule in the region. These actions included the deployment of troops in the region to directly battle and push out the terrorist organization. Creation of AMISOM as the main entity for the war against extremism in the region has facilitated the joint efforts for elimination of the terrorist organization to be organized and effective.

Although deployment of troops was a highly effective response to the initial Al-Shabaab, which had the doctrine of spreading of Wahhabism to the whole of Africa and the World via war; more should be done to eradicate the basic ideologies that Al-Shabaab bases its roots on. The following section provides some suggestions regarding the steps that should be taken in order to eradicate the ideology of extremism, as a complementary victory to the success of AMISOM in ground wars.

Possible Solutions

Weakening a terrorist organization or a radical ideology is much easier than eradicating it fully. We are, today, at a point in which Al-Shabaab has been weakened, but also managed to spread its ideology in a region; therefore, UN and the international community should be more careful at this stage of the resolution of the problem at hand. Below are merely ideas for possible solutions to fully eradicate Al-Shabaab, please consider the ideas without being restricted by them.

First and possibly the most important action that should be taken to fully eradicate Al-Shabaab would be to cut its resources. The term resources should be inclusive of both materials and militias. So resolutions should aim to prevent the potential recruitment of potential combatants as well as preventing the illicit arms and resources smuggling in Somalia, which are delivered to Al-Shabaab.

Additionally, the fact that Al-Shabaab is still in control of some rural areas in Somalia should not be forgotten, thus AMISOM should be further supported and fostered to work with the Somali Government to push the militias out of the country borders.

Another important aspect of a determinate solution is sharing of intelligence and technology in between the Member States. Given that Somali is still trying to recover from devastating years of internal instability, Member States should offer the guidance and support to her. Republic of Turkey, for example, has established a military base in Somalia with the aims of training Somali soldiers. Additionally, given that the suicidal attacks of Al-Shabaab have an increasing trend, sharing of intelligence between the Member States to prevent such events should be encouraged.

Lastly, education against radicalism and improvement of education as a whole in Somalia should be considered by the delegates as a long term solution.

Notes from the Chair and Useful Links

If you would like to write a clause about AMISOM (ex: to expand its mandate), please check out the full mandate of the Peacekeeping Mission through this link:

- o <http://amisom-au.org/amisom-mandate/>

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