

Forum: Security Council (SC)

Issue: The situation in Somalia

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Introduction

Concerns over the situation in Somalia are among the most important ones for the United Nations Security Council. For more than thirty years, Somalia has struggled with instability especially due to its collapse of the government in 1991, internal conflict, the presence of terrorist groups like Al-Shabaab, etc., as well as a disconnection between and absence of the authority of its own institutions. Although there have been recent efforts to strengthen authorities and hence improve security, Somalia still faces serious challenges that threaten both national and regional stability and sovereignty.

In an effort to reconstruct its political framework, Somalia has enacted governance reforms and gradually transferred security duties from foreign forces to Somali authorities in recent years. However, these efforts failed to completely fix the issue. Al-Shabaab continues to carry out its assaults while political tensions between the federal government and regional governments endure. Additionally, malnutrition, dislocation, and drought made living circumstances worse.

The issue in Somalia falls directly under the Security Council's responsibility as the issue has consequences well beyond its borders. The ongoing conflict also affects the security in the Horn of Africa, which enables the spread of violent extremism and promotes instability. The SC has an immense potential to solve these challenges through peace operations, political support, dialogue, and even sanctions. The issue at hand is also closely connected to RCIMUN'26's theme of "In the Wake of Crisis: Rebuilding Trust, Peace, and Prosperity" as Somalia's recovery heavily depends on restoring institutional trust, achieving peace, and promoting sustainable development.

Definition of Key Terms

Horn of Africa: The Horn of Africa is "the easternmost extension of African land and for the purposes of this article is defined as the region that is home to the countries of Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Somalia, whose cultures have been linked throughout their long history." (Britannica)

Extremism: Extremism is the "belief in and support for ideas that are very far from what most people consider correct or reasonable."

General Overview

Background

Somalia's present status may be traced back to the breakdown of the government in 1991. In the months that followed of the overthrow of the Siad Barre dictatorship, the nation went into an extended period of civil war, during which there was no authority. For many years, Somalia lacked a functioning government, which severely weakened its political institutions and security. Hence, clan-based and regional structures became more dominant in governance and security matters, which made nationwide decisionmaking and coordination much more difficult.

Terrorist organizations gradually acquired strength and supporters at this time. The movement of militants and weapons into Somalia was made possible by inadequate border control and a lack of law enforcement capabilities, which made it easier for radical terrorist organizations to attract new members. Al-Shabaab is the most well-known of them. After making its debut in the mid-2000s, Al-Shabaab later allied itself with the global Islamist extremist organization Al-Qaeda. As previously said, Al-Shabaab attacked citizens, state servants, and even international organizations in order to gain more influence by exploiting the lack of authority.

Political Authority and Governance Challenges

These disagreements between authorities often resulted in policy deadlock and reduced the effectiveness of governance. In an effort to restore order, Somalia adopted a federal political system which was supported by international partners. This aimed to balance the power between the central government and regional authorities. Even though it was partially successful in that goal, it has also created tensions over authority, especially because of the disagreements between the two parties and slowed decision making process. These tensions have at times limited the ability of the central government to respond quickly to crises. Furthermore, disagreements over authority, resource allocation, security etc. have also strained relations between the federal and regional authorities. As a result, governance remains uneven and uncontrolled across the country, which affects the overall stability of the political system.

Security Situation and Threats

Security is a major challenge in Somalia. Despite its efforts, Al-Shabaab remains a significant threat through regular attacks such as bombings, assassinations and attacks on public institutions. The group has modified its methods and is still active, particularly in urban areas, even if military operations have diminished its territorial authority. In addition to interfering with day-to-day activities, these attacks seek to lower public trust in the government. Meanwhile, national security institutions, which continue to struggle with a lack of funding, training, and other resources, are under further strain as a result of the gradual transfer of security duties from foreign forces to Somali authorities.

Humanitarian and Social Impact

The conflict has led to severe humanitarian consequences. They were already exposed to challenges like drought, poverty and had limited access to basic services. Millions of people face food insecurity and displacement. In recent years, political instability and insecurity have further worsened the Somali people's living conditions by disrupting the humanitarian operations and restricting access to the affected areas. As a result, providing relief has become considerably more challenging, particularly in cases where several populations have depended on humanitarian aid for extended durations. Long-term social and economic effects of the humanitarian crisis have also been felt, especially by women and children. Malnutrition has increased, healthcare access has been restricted, and education has been interrupted. Additionally, because of these appalling conditions, relocation has become more permanent rather than transient.

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

Somalia: The Federal Government of Somalia aims to strengthen authority and security, as well as reduce the dependence on international forces. This does not mean rejecting international assistance, however. Somalia needs collaboration from Member States, especially in building infrastructure and enhancing security. It should also establish its ownership in political and security measures. The government considers Al-Shabaab the main threat to its stability and continues to cooperate with the international community to address this challenge.

Al-Shabaab: Al-Shabaab is an armed extremist group that goes against the Somali government and international involvement in Somalia. It wants to weaken state authority through violent attacks. It also targets international peacekeeping forces and humanitarian workers to disrupt the international involvement. It uses asymmetric warfare tactics, which include suicide bombings and improvised explosive devices to compensate for its loss of territorial control. Its continued ability to recruit members and generate funding has become a major concern for both Somalia and the international community.

African Union (AU): The African Union is an important factor as it plays a major role in supporting peace and security in Somalia and neighboring countries through its initiatives like peace operations. It recognizes that stability in Somalia is necessary for the overall peace in the Horn of Africa. The AU supports a slow and condition-based transfer of responsibilities, like security, to the Somali forces. However, it has also expressed concerns about the funding and the readiness of Somali institutions to fully bear these responsibilities without international support.

United States of America (USA): The United States of America specifically focuses on the counterterrorism efforts in Somalia and supports the Somali government through military assistance, training, and humanitarian aid. In addition to its military assistance, the USA supports governance reforms and the humanitarian programs aimed at addressing the root causes of extremism and terror.

Kenya: Kenya is affected by the instability in Somalia as it has a shared border. It supports Somalia in its efforts to combat Al-Shabaab and specifically focuses on preventing the cross-border attacks.

Kenya also hosts a lot of Somali refugees, which places an economic and social burden on the country itself. Hence, to relieve that burden, it encourages initiatives that promote stability in Somalia and reduce the forced displacement and hence participates in regional security efforts.

Ethiopia: Ethiopia remains a major player in the issue at hand due to its location and security interests. Like the other Member States, it supports a stable and unified Somalia, as otherwise it would affect its own security directly. Ethiopia has also contributed troops to regional peace efforts and engages in dialogue with Somalia. On top of that, Ethiopia closely monitors the updates related to federal-regional authorities, as these dynamics are very related to border security and power balance.

Timeline of Events

1991	The central government has collapsed following the fall of the Siad Barre regime. This led to a long period of constant civil war without a functioning authority.
1990s	Clan-based groups gained control over large regions of the country and hence, Somalia experienced prevalent violence, displacement and institutional breakdown.
2000	The Transitional National Government (TNG) was formed as an attempt to restore central authority.
2004	The Transitional Federal Government (TFG) was established.
2006	Al-Shabaab was established as an armed extremist group and eventually became one of the strongest terrorist groups in the region.
2007	The AU launched its peacekeeping mission in Somalia to assist the transitional authorities and monitor.
2012	The Federal Government of Somalia was established and adopted a federal

	system.
2013	“The United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia” (UNSOM) was created.
2022	A new Somali president was elected through an indirect electoral process.

UN Involvement

The United Nations has been actively involved in Somalia for several decades primarily through its peace operations and humanitarian assistance as well as sanctions authorized by the United Nations Security Council. One of the most significant UN presences in Somalia is the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) established in 2013. UNSOM supports the federal government of Somalia in areas such as governments constitutional development, electoral processes, human rights and the security sector. It also plays a role in coordinating between the Somali authorities and International Community. However, it's not as effective because of the security constraints and political disagreements within Somalia. The UN has also supported peace and security through cooperation with the African Union particularly by authorizing and overseeing the African Union lead peace operations in Somalia these missions have helped protect key infrastructure and support somebody's Security Forces yet the long-term reliance on external forces has raised concerns about the sustainability. As for the humanitarian aspect, UN agencies such as the Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) play a major role in coordinating emergency aid, food assistance, protection etc. Despite these efforts, humanitarian operations often aren't enough due to limited funding and logistical challenges.

Relevant UN Documents

Resolution 751, 24 April 1992 (S_RES_751)

Resolution 814, 26 March 1993 (S_RES_814)

Resolution 1744, 20 February 2007 (S_RES_1744)

Resolution 2036, 22 February 2012 (S_RES_2036)

Resolution 2093, 6 March 2013 (S_RES_2093)

Resolution 2102, 2 May 2013 (S_RES_2102)

Resolution 2124, 12 November 2013 (S_RES_2124)

Resolution 2372, 30 August 2017 (S_RES_2372)

Resolution 2628, 31 March 2022 (S_RES_2628)

Treaties and Events

Djibouti Agreement (2008): The Djibouti Agreement was signed between the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia and the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia. Its main goal was ending fights and conflict through dialogue and the withdrawal of foreign troops. Although it had some effect on the matter, it wasn't completely successful in its goal as not all armed extremist groups participated.

African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) (2007): AMISOM was established to support the Somali government in its goal of restoring stability and combatting Al-Shabaab. It has secured some of the major cities and supported Somali security forces. However, due to funding issues and such, the mission faces significant challenges and hence wasn't as successful.

Establishment of the Federal Government of Somalia (2012): The establishment of the federal government ended the transitional period. This event is very important

Transition from AMISOM to ATMIS (2022): The African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) replaced AMISOM. It wanted to transfer the security responsibilities completely to Somalia gradually. This was an important yet very challenging goal, and still hasn't been able to get achieved, as Somali institutions still lack adequate capacity

National Elections (2016-2017, 2021-2022): These indirect, as Somalia lacked the security, administration and voter systems required for nationwide direct elections, were organized with great support from both within and outside the nation. Citizens couldn't vote directly and hence chose clan elders and regional representatives, who then voted the leaders of the nation. This approach helped Somalia to move forward. However, it also raised concerns about democracy, transparency and inclusiveness.

Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

There have been several national, regional and international efforts to address the issue in Somalia. While they have definitely had an impact on the issue, they weren't able to solve it completely. One of the main approaches has been the deployment of peacekeeping operations, especially those led by the African Union with authorization from the SC. These missions helped reduce the control of Al-Shabaab. However, they haven't fully eliminated the threat. Political reconciliation efforts have also been central to previous attempts. The establishment of a federal political system and the formation of a recognized central government were really important, yet there were disagreements between them which weakened political coordination and delayed the decisions. Furthermore, international assistance focused on humanitarian relief. While aid has saved a lot of lives and reduced the immediate suffering, it has been often disrupted by reasons like insecurity and political instability. Limited access to such areas and weak coordination has also reduced the long-term impact of such

aid.

Possible Solutions

The issue at hand requires immediate attention. Due to the complex nature of the situation, delegates should consider all aspects of the problem from security to governance, and humanitarian concerns to diplomacy. These elements are closely connected and progress in one greatly affects the other. Therefore, a balanced and comprehensive approach is necessary.

One possible solution is strengthening Somali institutions while maintaining sufficient international support. Somali's dependence on the international parties is evident. However, a sudden withdrawal of international forces could create a security absence. Instead, a gradual and condition-based transition should be prioritized. Somali security forces must receive proper training, equipment, and financial support before taking on full responsibility. Capacity-building programs should focus not only on strengthening military operations but also on improving coordination, accountability, and long-term sustainability. After such a training is received, Somali institutions can establish their authority over the area.

Another important step is improving political coordination between the federal government and regional authorities. Ongoing disagreements over power, resources, and security responsibilities continue to slow down decision-making. To solve this issue, regular political dialogue should be encouraged to reduce tensions and build trust. Constructive communication between leaders can help prevent further instability. International actors may support this process when necessary, but long-term political stability must come from Somali-led cooperation.

Humanitarian challenges must also remain a priority. The situation in Somalia continues to affect thousands of civilians. Immediate actions are required considering the severity of the danger these people are in. Aid delivery routes should be better secured to ensure assistance reaches those in need without disruption. Stronger coordination between humanitarian agencies and local authorities can improve efficiency and access. In addition, long-term solutions such as climate resilience programs, water management initiatives, and food security strategies should be expanded to reduce repeated crises caused by drought and instability.

Delegates should also review existing sanctions and monitoring mechanisms to ensure they remain effective and relevant. Sanctions should continue targeting extremist groups while also minimizing unintended effects on civilians. Strengthening monitoring systems can help improve enforcement.

Finally, cooperation between the United Nations, the African Union, regional actors, and the Somali government is essential. A coordinated and unified approach will increase the effectiveness of all efforts. Sustainable peace in Somalia requires progress not only in security, but also in political trust and development.

Notes from the Chair

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