

BUILDING STATES WHILE

FIGHTING TERROR

**CONTRADICTIONS IN UNITED STATES STRATEGY
IN SOMALIA FROM 2001 TO 2007¹**

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GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACOTA	African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance
AFRICOM	US Africa Command
AIAI	Al-Ittihad Al-Islamiyya
AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
ARS	Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia
CIA	US Central Intelligence Agency
CJTF–HOA	US Combined Joint Task Force–Horn of Africa
EACTI	East Africa Counter-Terrorism Initiative
GPOI	Global Peace Operations Initiative
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
NRC	National Reconciliation Conference
ONLF	Ogaden National Liberation Front
PRM	Popular Resistance Movement in the Land of Two Migrations
SCLR	Somali Congress for Liberation and Reconciliation
SNM	Somali National Movement
TFG	Transitional Federal Government
TNG	Transitional National Government

UIC	Union of Islamic Courts
UN	United Nations
UNITAF	United Task Force
UNOSOM	UN Operation in Somalia (April 1992 to March 1993)
UNOSOM II	UN Operation in Somalia (March 1993 to March 1995)
USAID	US Agency for International Development
YMM	Youth Mujahideen Movement

INTRODUCTION

'Somalia burns, but does anyone care?' This question was asked by Andrew Cawthorne (2007) of *Mail & Guardian*, reporting in April 2007 on the eruption of violence in Somalia. The premise of his statement, 'Somalia burns', has remained indisputable. Since the Ethiopian invasion of Somalia in December 2006, Somalia has experienced the worst fighting since the civil war of the early 1990s. April brought a peak in violence in Mogadishu between the Ethiopian-backed Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and insurgents, including remnants of the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC). In the first week of April, a local human rights group reported 381 deaths and 565 wounded in just four days of fighting (*CBC News* 2007). Later in the month, the same group reported 212 killed and 291 wounded in another five days (Duhul 2007). As a result of the violence, an estimated 321 000 people, one-third of Mogadishu's population, were displaced by April (Abdulle 2007). Through September, the number of internally displaced people continued to rise. After visiting the region, United Nations humanitarian coordinator John Holmes said, 'In terms of numbers and access to them, Somalia is a worse displacement crisis than Darfur or Chad or anywhere else this year' (Clarke 2007). To date, Somalia is indeed burning.

This situation raises Cawthorne's (2007) question: 'Does anyone care?' In his article, Cawthorne writes that Somalia 'has failed to grab world attention or stir global players'. Clearly, he is correct when he asserts that Western media and the public have largely neglected the story, associating Somalia with chronic bloodshed. Yet the international community, especially the United States government, has closely followed these events. In fact, US concern and subsequent actions have played a significant role. The Bush Administration, since the events of 11 September 2001, has expressed concern that as a 'failed state', Somalia may serve as a haven for terrorists. Until 2006, Washington was paying warlords in Mogadishu to track suspected al-Qa'eda operatives and thwart Islamists. Then, with the UIC takeover of Mogadishu in mid-2006, the US tacitly backed the Ethiopian invasion. Today, Washington is pursuing counter-terror operations amid the Ethiopian occupation, while simultaneously promoting state building. As far as Cawthorne's query is concerned, US officials care a great deal about Somalia. However, the danger

exists that a lack of public attention reduces accountability. Policymakers are able to operate with little debate on the ethics and effectiveness of US strategy. The aim of this report, if nothing else, is to challenge that position.

Research aims

This report does not purport to be a definitive analysis of recent events in Somalia. Without actually spending time on the ground and interacting with local actors, it is impossible to truly understand the situation. Still, there is a severe shortage of research on recent events in Somalia. To reverse that trend, this report consolidates existing scholarship and perspectives to investigate US policy in Somalia.

This report suggests that US policy in Somalia since 2001 represents many strong trends in US security thinking. For instance, there has been a revived emphasis on state stability and, conversely, a problematisation of state weakness as a threat. US officials have focused on 'failed states', such as Somalia, as havens and recruiting grounds for terrorists. Correspondingly, state building has been declared a key tactic of counter-terrorism. US officials have argued that the best long-term defence against terrorism is the existence of functional central governments, especially those willing to cooperate with Washington. Therefore, the US State Department recently stated that the two pillars of state building and counter-terrorism drive US policy in Somalia (McCormack 2006). The purpose of this report is to consider the interaction of those pillars in policymaking and, especially, their application at the scene of action.

On the ground in Somalia, the situation has become appalling. The humanitarian toll described above makes it one of the worst crises in the world. The US and Ethiopian-backed state building support to the increasingly illegitimate TFG has incited popular violent resistance. Moreover, jihadists, repelled by the Ethiopian invasion, have returned in larger numbers and with more resources than before. Given these realities, this report investigates the following questions:

- How and why has US policy, at least to date, contributed to this instability?
- How do the two pillars of US Somalia strategy relate to violence and prospects for peace?
- What can be learned from Somalia about the merger of counter-terror operations and external support for state building?

To address these questions, the first chapter sketches broad security trends; however, the bulk of this report focuses on US policy in Somalia from 2001 to 2007. Somalia provides an interesting case study that is under-studied and yet representative. From a humanitarian perspective, focusing on Somalia is timely given the severity of the ongoing violence. Meanwhile, a US policy perspective is equally appropriate as the war-on-terror framework deeply impacts dynamics in Somalia and other conflict-affected areas in Africa. For this study, the terrorist attacks of 9/11 provide an obvious start date because the aftermath inspired a clear shift in US approach toward Somalia. The original end date for research was 1 June 2007, but this report has been updated to consider events up to 1 October 2007. Nevertheless, while an end date is required for publication, a continued need for grounded, real-time analysis persists as events in Somalia unfold. This report shows that future policy without such groundwork will always have unpredictable results.

Research methodology

The material for this report is largely the result of secondary research and is essentially an attempt to consolidate the literature relating to Somalia, US security policy and the post-9/11 interaction of the two. Three particularly useful research groups were International Crisis Group, Power and Interest News Report and Social Science Research Council with their Web forum on 'Crisis in the Horn of Africa'. All three are respected for their rigorous standards and reliable analyses. Furthermore, this report relies heavily on the insights of Ken Menkhaus, who is perhaps the most widely published scholar on recent US policy in Somalia. Menkhaus worked as a special political advisor to the UN Operation in Somalia (Unosom) from 1993 to 1994 and has researched Somalia for decades. In addition to literature specific to Somalia or US policy in the region, research for this report involved a range of sources addressing the broad topics of state building, state collapse, terrorism and peacebuilding. In particular, this report draws upon the theoretical work of Samuel Huntington, Mohammed Ayoob, David Chandler and Mark Duffield. Their arguments were individually evaluated in the light of data gathered on Somalia.

In addition to this literature, research for this report involved the modest collection and analysis of primary sources. This process included compiling all references to Somalia in daily press briefings issued by the US State Department between May 2006 and June 2007. In fact, a question or discussion about Somalia occurred at 48 briefings. These references were

analysed to assess trends in US public discourse on Somalia. Though quite limited, this procedure did expose certain tendencies in US policymaking. The same process was used to evaluate US State Department press statements or communiqués issued during the same period.

Meanwhile, a second series of primary sources involved news articles, both international and Somali. By far, the most difficult challenge in studying Somali affairs is the lack of access to on-the-ground data. This report admits its serious limitations without fieldwork of this kind. Sixteen years of state collapse and lawlessness have severely limited the reach of researchers and journalists. Nonetheless, several Somali media sources recently joined the Internet: Shabelle Media Network, Hiiraan Online and HornAfrik. For this report, articles from these sites, along with articles archived from Reuters and the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), were reviewed and key events were identified. Though imprecise, this method created a picture of recent Somali events, to which a more rigorous study of US policy could be juxtaposed.

Report structure

As far as the report is concerned, Chapter One shows how the ‘state’ has returned as the locus of US security thinking. Since 9/11, US officials have increasingly stressed the security threats posed by ‘failed states’, thus advocating more emphasis on state building. This chapter first provides definitions and theoretical foundations for these developments and then examines their evolution in policymaking. In Washington, state building is now considered a tactic of counter-terror strategy. Yet, as this chapter concludes, this opinion may underestimate the volatility of state building, especially with external involvement.

Chapter Two examines the experience of state collapse and state building in Somalia. This case challenges two assumptions of US security thinking. First, the correlation between failed states and security threats is not as straightforward as may be thought. Indeed, some foreign terrorists have used Somalia as a transit point but the country has remained largely averse to fundamentalism and foreign ideology. Even the rise of political Islam was initially more pragmatic than ideological. Second, external efforts at state building have mostly incited violent conflict. Since colonialism, Somalis’ experience of central government has been that of one clan using power to dominate others and this, combined with deep resentment at the Ethiopian occupation, has made current efforts at state building especially explosive.

Building on this narrative, Chapter Three analyses US policymaking and its impact on events in Somalia since 2001. The securitisation of 'failed states' made Somalia an obvious target for concern after 9/11. Yet, lacking relationships on the ground, US policy has largely paid surrogates to pursue suspects. By 2006, this strategy included an alliance of Mogadishu warlords who were challenging the rising UIC. With the courts' takeover, US efforts shifted to backing the fragile TFG and the Ethiopian invasion. Officials in Washington now highlight the two-pillared approach of state building and counter-terrorism. However, this chapter argues that the TFG is increasingly a source of conflict; without public legitimacy, it faces imminent collapse. This fact, combined with a growing insurgency feeding off foreign military occupation, exposes contradictions in US strategy.

The Somalia experience thus shows that the current marriage of counter-terrorism and state building is largely counterproductive to the achievement of either goal. Combining the two, especially with the use of surrogates, may easily fuel suspicion and resentment. Looking ahead, Chapter Four predicts that violence in Somalia has become self-propelling and is already driving the country back into lawlessness. For the US, this situation may put Somalia in the very situation the US sought to avoid: targeted by an extremist movement that is growing amid local sectarian fighting. Without a significant shift in agenda toward peacebuilding, such a scenario may be unavoidable. Yet, as Chapter Four and the conclusion identify, US policy needs to learn major strategic lessons: Combining an attempt to build states while fighting against terror will likely incite a local backlash.

CHAPTER 1

SECURITISING THE STATE

The saying goes, 'Better the devil you know than the devil you don't.' Since the end of the Cold War, this adage has become increasingly fundamental to US security thinking. In 1993, the then CIA Director James Woolsey pronounced, 'We have slain the dragon, but now live in a jungle full of poisonous snakes.' Underlying Woolsey's statement was the re-securitisation of the 'unpredictable', primarily located in the developing world. Mark Duffield (2001) writes, 'The threat of an excluded South fomenting international instability through conflict, criminal activity and terrorism is now part of a new security framework.' The destruction of the World Trade Centre on 9/11 solidified this paradigm; the attacks exemplified how small groups can exploit state vulnerability. In response, the Bush Administration was quick to point out the dangers of underdevelopment. As stated in the 2002 US National Security Strategy, 'America is now threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing ones.' In similar vein, Donald Rumsfeld (2002) wrote, 'Our challenge in this new century is a difficult one: to defend our nation against the unknown, the uncertain, the unseen and the unexpected.'

Markedly, this security calculus has reclaimed the 'state' as its unit of analysis. Especially since 9/11, US officials have increasingly warned of the security threats posed by 'failed states'. They have emphasised that such states can 'serve as safe havens and staging grounds for terrorist organisations' (Rice 2003:1). Chapter Two examines such security threats in the conditions of state collapse in Somalia. Meanwhile, the securitisation of state failure has coalesced with the chosen cure: state building. This tactic is hardly new to US foreign policy, but it has now become a widespread one in the war on terror. Chapter Three analyses this approach in the context of US counter-terrorism in Somalia. Yet, to allow such scrutiny, this chapter offers basic definitions of and theoretical foundations for these developments. Discussions on state-ness have a long history in political thought. This chapter evaluates the novelty of this securitisation in recent policymaking, especially since 9/11. Finally, it considers potential dilemmas in employing state building for other ends, whether they be counter-terrorism, democracy expansion or peacemaking. These predicaments are illuminated in the report's focus on Somalia.

Definitions of state-ness

A definition of what a state entails or does necessarily underpins any conception of state collapse or state building. This section reviews the definitions that guide the concepts of this report. First, according to Max Weber (1946), a state is a human community that effectively claims 'monopoly on the legitimate use of physical force' within an established territory. Agreeing, Francis Fukuyama (2005:8) explains, 'The essence of stateness is, in other words, enforcement: the ultimate ability to send someone with a uniform and gun to force people to comply with the state's laws.' Clearly, enforcement is necessary, but is it sufficient to constitute a state? Charles Tilly (1985:81) classifies three tasks of enforcement: war making, state making and protection. He adds a further dimension: extraction. The latter requires a degree of coercion but also presumes an organised ruling body.

Taking Tilly's framework further, Samuel Huntington (1968:12) argues that modern states are made by political systems, especially those defined by 'adaptability, complexity, autonomy, and coherence of its organisations and procedures'. States require not only control of a given territory but also management of that territory's public goods and interests. This gives the state a degree of both legitimacy and relevance in the eyes of its citizens. This report understands the state as ranging from Weber's basic definition of monopoly of force to Huntington's analysis of political order. State-ness lies on a continuum and not among distinct categories. A more dynamic definition allows for a more nuanced analysis of states in flux.

Furthermore, a dynamic definition of *state* can better evaluate state making and, conversely, state failure or collapse. These processes, however, require definitions if they are to be useful analytical concepts. First, state failure is predicated on a lack or severe weakness of central political systems. Susan Rice (2003:2) defines *state failure* as a central government's inability to maintain control over its territory and to provide basic services to its citizens. In addition, Weber (1946) and Huntington (1968), *state failure* refers to a governing body's failure to maintain control and political order. State collapse is the extreme form of state failure (Rotberg 2003:2–10). Zartman (1995:1) defines *state collapse* as 'a situation where the structure, authority (legitimate power), law, and political order have fallen apart and must be reconstituted in some form, old or new'. There may be other forms of governance within a collapsed state, but they do not have a monopoly in the given territory.

Conversely, state building or making is the process of gaining control, building governance and securing legitimacy in a given territory. Mohammed

Ayoob (1995:22–23), using Tilly's framework of state functions, describes state making as 'expansion and consolidation of territorial domain under political authority (war), maintenance of order in that territory (police), extraction of resources from territory and population to carry on routine administration (taxation)'. Additionally, Huntington (1968:20) emphasises building autonomous and legitimate political institutions 'that are not simply expressions of the interests of particular social groups', illustrating that state formation lies on a spectrum: one that begins with basic controls but that continues to political institutionalisation and even democratic participation. Therefore, this report understands state building to be the dynamic process of establishing order in a given territory toward managing public goods and interests.

Theoretical foundations

Intertwined with definitional work on state-ness, an extensive theoretical scholarship sets a framework for understanding the developing state and its dilemmas. Reviewing all work of this kind falls outside the scope of this report, but one needs to briefly present three theoretical foundations that relate to US policy in Somalia. The first is the problematisation of state weakness or failure in the developing world. In 1968, Huntington (1968) famously wrote, 'The most important political distinction among countries concerns not their form of government but their degree of government.' Huntington argued that the primary cause of under-development is lack of political modernisation, namely viable and legitimate institutions. Though heralded as innovative at the time, this thesis was hardly new. In fact, many of the great political theorists—John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and even Plato—wrote about the importance of political institutions for human development. Yet Huntington's work (1968) still laid the groundwork for modern state building. His thesis is embodied in Fukuyama's (2005:29) present prognosis: 'It is now conventional wisdom to say that institutions are the critical variable in development.'

The second theoretical foundation, extremely relevant to Somalia, involves the violence inherent to state formation and change. Ayoob (1995:32) argues that state building engenders violence as such initiatives 'clash with the interests of counterelites and segments of the population that perceive the extension of state authority as posing direct danger to their social, economic, or political interests'. As a result of colonial divide-and-rule policies, many in the developing world see state capture as a winner-takes-all enterprise (Keohane 2003:280). Making or reviving a state pits societal groups against each other, exacerbating violence (Menkhaus 2003:407). Even Huntington

(1968:41) acknowledges that modernisation produces instability in the short to medium term. In his work, Tilly (1985:177–180) shows how modern European states took more than four centuries to curtail such instability and to solidify their statehood. Today, Third World state builders face much greater time pressures, along with constraints imposed by international (mostly Western) norms and standards (Ayoob 1995:30). Especially in Africa, this pressure, coupled with the arbitrary colonial imposition of boundaries, makes for a security predicament that is not easily overcome.

A third theoretical foundation for this report concerns dilemmas of external involvement in local state-building projects. In more recent scholarship, some have problematised the Western propensity for interventionism and, especially, ethical rhetoric. This factor is later examined in relation to Somalia, but useful dominant ideas may be introduced here. One position is that international commitment to ‘make sovereignty work’ for the developing world is essential for global security (Krasner & Pascual 2005:163). However, in spite of their differences, many neo-conservatives and liberal internationalists have found themselves awkwardly sharing this stance. However, others contend that this humanism is simply a veneer for the ‘interests of the powerful’ (Chomsky 1999). As in the Cold War, wealthy states are primarily cultivating allies to expand their influence. A third view holds that international state building is driven by real politics rather than new forms of regulation. David Chandler (2006a:17) writes that modern sovereignty ‘comes replete with a multitude of new mechanisms for monitoring, evaluating and auditing behaviour and the policy choices of recipient countries’. Chandler (2006a:64) suggests that state building entrenches new hierarchies of control. This debate lies at the core of the increasing security–development merger in Western policymaking.

Historical precedents

Before turning to the current dynamics, it is worth considering why the current securitisation of state failure and building may be regarded as hardly original. Throughout human history, one finds countless examples of states using incentives cast as ‘development’ to secure their influence in foreign regions. The persistence of mercantilism and colonialism was often predicated on such transfers. However, precedents for today’s security–development nexus came mostly after the World War II. The widely hailed Marshall Plan, initiated in 1947, was essentially state-building assistance for many recipients. In his famous speech at Harvard University, the then Secretary of State George Marshall (1947) said, ‘It is logical that the United States should do whatever it is able to assist in the return of normal economic health in the world, without

which there can be no political stability and no assured peace.’ Historians have since debated the extent to which the Marshall Plan was designed to contain the Soviet Union (Cox & Kennedy-Pipe 2005). Indisputably, it was meant to foster US influence within Western Europe. Additionally, Washington offered the same incentives to Eastern Europe nations if they agreed to broader integration and market liberalisation. Therefore, assistance was made conditional on US security objectives.

Throughout the Cold War, there was further recognition that failed states could easily be manipulated by the superpowers. Consequently, both the Soviet Union and the US were eager to secure influence with developing nations. This desire stirred massive aid transfers; many were explicitly military but others were economic and marked for development. From a US perspective, this move greatly influenced the policies of the Bretton Woods institutions. For example, in the early 1970s, the then World Bank President Robert McNamara referred to combating poverty in the context of ‘containing communism’. Many in Washington strongly held that impoverished countries without access to Western markets were more likely than others to fall to communism. This opinion led to an emphasis on ‘building’ or insulating weak states against external Soviet influence.

Although today’s dynamics are different, one needs to recognise the long history of securitising underdevelopment. Neil Cooper (2005:472) writes that a failure to see historical precedents ‘can be understood as an intrinsic element of a securitising discourse that justifies regulatory interventions as a response to a specific global emergency rather than as part of longer-term trends’. History allows one to identify not only protracted patterns but also new dynamics.

New dynamics: securitising state failure

This chapter shifts now to the new dynamics that inform and overlay US policy in Somalia. Since the end of the Cold War, US security thinking has undergone significant transformations, expanding the range of threats and referent objects. This process has included the securitisation of both state failure and state building. This section examines state failure while the next considers the trajectory of state building. According to a myth perpetuated in much recent scholarship, the US securitisation of failed states is solely a post-9/11 phenomenon. While this concern has indeed been heightened since those attacks, it had been growing since the end of the Cold War. Officials in the Clinton Administration held that US security depended on securing

allies and access to 'controlling third world stability' (Clough 1992:55). In 1997, the then Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Susan Rice said that the US had to stop threats emanating from Africa's state weakness, including 'terrorism, international crime, narcotics, weapons proliferation and disease' (Alden 2000:358). Long before 9/11, Washington's security planners were anticipating how to insulate and control the Third World 'jungle full of poisonous snakes' (Woosley 1993).

Nonetheless, it is true that the 9/11 attacks and subsequent war on terror have brought a far more heightened securitisation of state weakness. Sebastian Mallaby (2003:2) writes, 'The war on terrorism has focused attention on the chaotic states that provide profit and sanctuary to nihilist outlaws, from Sudan to Afghanistan to Sierra Leone and Somalia.' The primary cause of concern is the notion that weak states can harbour terrorist networks. Porous borders, insufficient law enforcement and weak surveillance within developing states seem to provide vulnerabilities easily exploited by terrorists. Additionally, it is widely believed that a strong correlation exists between poverty and terror: People without access to basic resources or services are more easily radicalised than others. Yet one may question these assumptions for good reason. First, the correlation between poverty and terrorism is less than reliable given that perpetrators have mostly come from middle-class backgrounds. Second, one needs to dissect the label of 'failed states'. Studies have shown that quasi- or weak states are often suitable for foreign terrorists while failed or collapsed states serve as transit zones (Piombo 2007:2-4).

Still, state failure represents unpredictability, which is the driving fear of the post-9/11 landscape. Michael Ignatieff (2003a:21) described the situation graphically: 'Terror has collapsed distance, and with this collapse has come a sharpened focus in imperial capitals on the necessity of bringing order to the barbarian zones.' Beyond terrorism, 'failed states' have also taken on further 'barbarian' connotations in today's environment. Fukuyama (2005:125) writes, 'Weak or failing states commit human rights abuses, provoke humanitarian disasters, drive massive waves of immigration, and attack their neighbours.'

One needs to consider each of Fukuyama's points briefly. First, the majority of modern human rights and humanitarian crises do occur in the developing world. Yet, although this is an obvious reality, Noam Chomsky (1999:4) argues that framing it as such has the intention of labelling the Third World as 'the defiant, the indolent, and the miscreant, the disorderly elements of the world'. Second, the emphasis on immigration (from South to North)

highlights a direct danger posed by state weakness to wealthier states. The evoked image of 'outsiders' flooding US or European borders is fear-producing. Third, Fukuyama references the propensity for violent conflict in the developing world. Again, data proves this correlation, but the correlation is being securitised toward particular ends. Rather than being described as a place of instability, the 'failed state' is depicted as the perpetrator of instability, the threat itself. This discourse shifts the approach 'from the category of "development/humanitarianism" to a category of danger/fear/security' (Abrahamsen 2004:680).

These resulting discourses on danger are unique to the current security-development nexus in Western policymaking. Whereas development was considered an incentive during the Cold War, it is now regarded as an antidote to threatening failed states. Mark Duffield (2001:120) argues that development assistance has been repackaged to highlight it as 'insurance against the types of chaos and transborder threats expounded by the new barbarism school'. For some, this opinion finally moves the humanitarian crisis from the realm of low to that of high politics. It has certainly led to resource mobilisation as USAID budgets have increased. However, it is equally clear that the repackaging of development has changed its complexion. Alice Hills (2006:630) writes that the securitisation of aid has exacerbated suspicion of USAID, which many now see as a 'quasi-security agency'. Washington's fixation on state failure has raised fears that development initiatives may be focused on containment rather than on the actual transformation of life prospects (Abrahamsen 2004).

New dynamics: state building as security

The new focus on failed states has revived and revised international commitment to state building. As seen in Huntington's thesis, policymakers in the post-Cold War period have argued for building viable political institutions to improve crisis management in the developing world (Ignatieff 2003a). However, this notion of state building is hardly a new trend; it has been a dominant policy at various times in history. Today's state building is unique because of the new view of state failure being a threat in itself. According to the dominant belief, the primary cure for this threat is the bolstering of strong central governments. Fukuyama writes (2005:162), '[F]or the post-September 11 period, the chief issue for global politics will not be how to cut back on stateness but how to build it up.' US officials now claim that counter-terrorism is most effective within strong states that have capacity for law enforcement and surveillance (Menkhaus 2004:78). State-building

projects seek to establish that same monitoring capacity in failed states. In the long term, many believe effective state building will minimise grievances and lessen potential for radicalisation. Therefore, Washington considers state building to be tantamount to peace building.

In the case of Somalia, state building is considered a key tactic of US counter-terror strategy. Similarly, US invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, initially primarily intended to topple regimes, have taken on explicit state-building projects to fight terror. Yet, as these cases illustrate, such projects are difficult and delicate, especially without long-term planning. As regards the theory of Ayoob (1995) and others, state formation is often a violent and unstable process. Particularly within polarised societies, it pits groups against one another because the state is perceived as a zero-sum game. The added overlay of the war on terror may turn counter-elites into counter-hegemony and give added ideological stakes to such struggles. The contradiction, at least in the short term, is that territories undergoing externally driven state building may actually become more dangerous and prone to terrorism (Menkhaus 2004:80). In turn, weak governments may utilise counter-terror security frames to mobilise international support for repressive tactics (Kagwanja 2006:73). Such dynamics can spiral into new forms of violence, undermining both state building and counter-terrorism.

Still, the US has made structural shifts to prioritise state building as a tactic of counter-terrorism in the developing world. In 2004, responding to instability in Iraq, the Bush Administration launched the Office of the Coordination for Reconstruction and Stabilisation, a new office within the State Department devoted to this task (Krasner & Pascual 2005:154). Uniquely, since 9/11, the Pentagon has increasingly been charged with state-building projects (Piombo 2007). For example, the Combined Joint Task Force–Horn of Africa (CJTF–HOA) was established in 2002 to work for long-term stability in the region. The Djibouti-based force spends most of its time on building governance capacity and aiding civilian affairs (Barnes 2005:7). Such initiatives will only grow with the creation of the Pentagon's new Africa Command (Africom) set to open in late 2008 (Crawley 2007). Africom signals a long-term commitment to using military bodies to monitor and address state weakness in the developing world.

At the same time, Washington's concerns about 'ungoverned space' have led to empowered alliances with select strong regimes throughout the developing world (Alden 2000). Through training and financing programmes, the US has emphasised military-to-military relationships with its partners (Whelan 2005). In exchange for support, these allies are expected to share intelligence

and contain potential threats from failed states (Marchal 2007). With the backlash from Iraq, Washington is especially keen to employ these allies for its counter-terrorism operations whenever possible. Given the context, US investments in state building are at least partially aimed at furthering this new security strategy. Chandler (2006a:190) critically writes that today's state-building projects are 'the practice of denying empire'; however, they actually establish its apparatus.

State-building dilemmas

Embracing state building since 9/11, Bush Administration officials have cast it widely as a means to fight terror, promote democracy and secure peace. Yet, as definitional disputes, theory and historical cases show, the case is far from that simple. In fact, the tactical interplay of state building with each of these three goals is complex. This final section exposes several dilemmas that illuminate challenges facing US policy in Somalia. State building is a valuable endeavour, but it is highly volatile and never happens in a vacuum. Melding state building with security goals particularly requires sophisticated analysis and long-term commitment. Even then, with people's lives and identities at stake, it hardly constitutes assembling a puzzle.

First, as mentioned earlier, the relationship between state building and counter-terrorism is complicated and at times even conflicting. The assumption that terrorism functions best in areas of state collapse is simplistic. State collapse, as in Somalia, for instance, increases vulnerability and unpredictability and poses risks of terrorist organising (Menkhaus 2004:71–73). Conversely, terrorist networks seem to function better in quasi- or weak states with a 'modicum of law and order' (Piombo 2007:1). In other words, state-building projects may actually make territories more hospitable for terrorist networks in the medium term. In the long term, successful projects should theoretically increase stability. However, tactical state building may actually be aimed less at infrastructure and more at intrusion by outside actors. Chandler (2006a:26–37) writes that Western states use these projects to establish external regulation while denying their political influence. State building is thus primarily used to impose international surveillance mechanisms within states labelled dangerous and unpredictable.

Meanwhile, another danger of using state building as a tactic of counter-terrorism is that this process may incite a backlash, creating new insecurities. As described above, hasty state building often fuels violence in divided societies. Groups that fear losing because of the establishment of a central

government will act to stop its formation. Additionally, when external actors become involved, their backing certain actors rather than others may breed suspicion and resentment. In the case of US involvement, appeals to counter-hegemonic sympathies may give mobilising potential to international terrorist networks. Mistrust of external actors is deepened when they are simultaneously pursuing military operations within the country. Robert Pape (2003) has shown that suicide terrorism is most common in response to perceptions of foreign military occupation. Therefore, international actors must be clear in their strategy when intervening because state building is a deeply unstable and unpredictable process (Chesterman 2004:242–246). Attempting to use it as a hastily contrived solution for counter-terrorism, however sensible in theory, may end up being counter-productive.

Bush Administration officials have equated state building with the promotion of democracy. The 2002 National Security Strategy identifies the spread of democracy and free trade as necessary for the transformation of failed states. The theory is that representative government provides political channels for people to express their grievances rather than resorting to violence. Huntington (1968:461) asserts that the foundation of political stability is the symbiotic growth of governance institutions and popular participation. Yet Huntington and others have also noted that premature democratisation may actually undermine state-building projects. In states without institutional capacity, democratic processes may cause conflict that easily spills outside the political process. Ayooob (1995:39) argues, 'In short, state making in Europe, particularly during its early crucial states, was not an enterprise conducted by political liberals or by advocates of the welfare state.' Pressuring states to democratise too quickly while they are state building may derail any fragile political order.

Finally, the end of this report deals specifically with the dilemma of state building and that which some consider to be its counterpart: peacebuilding. While some scholars describe peacebuilding as simply the cessation or avoidance of war, others strive for a more holistic understanding of peace that includes justice and right relationships. This report shares John Paul Lederach's (1997:23–35) definition of peace as the process of transforming and building relationships across divided communities. The question is how such transformation interacts with state-building projects. According to some strategists, the two are deeply intertwined and lasting peace can be achieved only through good governance. Evidence clearly shows that building viable political institutions is part of effective peacebuilding. Conversely, building this infrastructure without mitigating violence and brokering peace is nearly impossible (Rice 2003:6).

Nevertheless, it would be naïve to suggest that the processes of state building and peace building are identical: One entails establishing legitimate authority and the other cooperative relationships. As explained above, state formation is likely to be an unstable and violent process. Huntington (1968:358) contends, 'In most societies, civic peace is impossible without some reform, and reform is impossible without some violence.' Furthermore, external involvement may add new layers to existing conflicts, heightening violence. Therefore, at times, state building and peacebuilding may be 'mutually antagonist enterprises' (Menkhaus 2004:18). As evidenced by colonialism, inorganic state-making projects can deepen societal divisions. This phenomenon may demand a more thorough discussion that falls outside the scope of this report: the remaining authenticity and worth of the Westphalian system of sovereignty. However, this chapter is merely intended to introduce the debates and theoretical frameworks that inform current US security policy. The rest of this report assesses these trends through present dynamics in Somalia. To begin this case study, Chapter Two turns to the realities and threats of state collapse in Somalia.

CHAPTER 2

STATE COLLAPSE AND SECURITY IN SOMALIA

'Somalia is a failure among failed states,' writes Ken Menkhaus (2004:17), former advisor to the UN and Somalia expert. For the last 16 years, Somalia has been unlike any other state in the world: It has lacked a functioning central government. Consequently, no more appropriate archetype exists for the securitisation of state failure described in the previous chapter. Immediately after 9/11, Western officials labelled Somalia a potential haven for terrorism. Chapter Three examines the way in which this security thinking has shaped US policy toward the country. Before to this analysis, however, one needs to understand Somalia's state collapse and its security predicaments. Past neglect by external actors to do so has led to misguided policy. Menkhaus (2006/2007:74) writes, 'This track record has earned Somalia the dubious distinction of being the world's foremost graveyard of externally sponsored state-building initiatives.' Effective policy requires rethinking assumptions about Somalia and the role of the state in society (Little 2003:1).

Dissecting state collapse requires historical, political-economic and anthropological perspectives. The first half of this chapter attempts to include all three in a brief narrative of Somalia's route to state collapse and its subsequent dynamics. This narrative highlights grievances that continue to incite division, especially those surrounding land rights (De Waal 2007). Additionally, one cannot appreciate Somalia's situation without considering regional dynamics, especially its fierce enmity with Ethiopia. Today, the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea often takes on proxy dimensions in Somalia. Recognising these intricacies, the second half of this chapter assesses threats and opportunities. In particular, it examines the evolution of political Islam and the rise of the UIC in southern Somalia. Ethiopia and the US alleged that the UIC was increasing co-opted by a growing terrorist threat in Somalia. This chapter considers the validity of this claim that led to the December 2006 invasion and the present dynamics of violence. Evaluating the tumultuous events that followed in 2007 necessitates a holistic perspective on the state of Somalia.

History: colonialism to state collapse

First, this section sketches the country's history prior to state collapse in 1991. Before colonialism, the dominant characteristic uniting Somalis was not a

shared culture or religion but a pastoralist lifestyle. Somalis generally operated in nomadic groups 'involving camels, cattle, goats and sheep' (Woodward 2003:23–24). Yet, along with their pastoralism, Somalis largely identified themselves within four clan families, the Darod, the Diir, the Hawiye and the Isaaq, and each was composed of various sub-clans. A customary code of conduct, the *xeer*, allowed elders to mediate disputes and inter-clan conflict (Le Sage 2005:15–16). No radical change took place at first when colonial rule was imposed on Somalia: the northern region by the British in 1886 and the southern region by Italy in 1893 (Le Sage 2005:17). However, over time the imposition of colonial borders constrained the migratory and trade routes of the Somalis (Woodward 2003:23–26). Facing local resistance, the colonialists resorted to divide-and-rule tactics to maintain control, agitating competition among the four clans. When the Somalis were granted their independence in 1960, the legacy of this division persisted in political organisation.

Following independence, a brief experiment with multi-party democracy disintegrated with an 'eruption of clan-based candidates and parties in the elections of 1969' (Woodward 2003:66). In the ensuing disorder, the army's senior officer, Mohamed Siad Barre, took power by military coup, establishing the Supreme Revolutionary Council. Backed by the Soviet Union, Barre consolidated power and nationalised state institutions. Then, in a move to attain the long-disputed Ogaden region containing mostly ethnic Somalis, Barre invaded Ethiopia in 1977. The ensuing two-year war was at that time the largest-scale conflict in Africa since WWII (Woodward 2003:132). Following a devastating loss to the Ethiopians, Barre's rule weakened. To keep order, he resorted to colonial divide-and-rule tactics, exploiting 'deep interclan animosities and distrust' (Menkhaus 2006/2007:80).

At the same time, Barre gave loyal elites control of the country's productive resources. His acts included 'systematic land-grabbing to create banana plantations and other irrigated farms'. In the process, 'many of the "farmers" were forced off their land at gunpoint and ended up as an agricultural proletariat' (De Waal 2007). Elites loyal to Barre benefited from the massive influx of foreign aid. Alex de Waal (2007) argues, 'These huge inflows of aid money, especially from the US, made it possible for the government to establish a patrimonial system wholly disproportionate to the productive economy.'

The resulting situation, though highly profitable for some, was deeply unstable. Several armed movements began to challenge Barre's regime, notably the Somali National Movement (SNM) in the north. These groups benefited in part from Ethiopian support because this country was eager to destabilise its rival (Woodward 2003:69–70). In response, Barre used

indiscriminate military force, but his army ranks were unravelling. The rise of a Mogadishu-based resistance, centred on the United Somali Congress (USC), became overwhelming. From 1988 to 1992, the country spiralled into civil war. On 26 January 1991, Barre fled the capital just before the USC took over his palace. However, the civil war had devastating effects: the rise of warlords, weaponisation of society and destruction of most of Mogadishu (Menkhaus 2006/2007:81). Somalia spiralled into state collapse. From an economic perspective, 'the locus of primary accumulation shifted from the exploitation of sovereign rents to violent asset stripping (looting)' (De Waal 2007).

History: early years of state collapse

The fall of Barre left a political vacuum in which several militias vied for state power. Intensive fighting over the following years entrenched state collapse in Somalia. In particular, the ensuing armed conflicts were 'inter-clan in nature, pitting large lineage groups against one another' (Menkhaus 2004:29). In the southern region, this mostly meant fighting between the Darod and Hawiye clans. Additionally, a sub-clan rivalry between Mohamed Farah Aideed and Ali Mahdi grew over control of Mogadishu, typically a Hawiye stronghold. In July 1991, Djibouti hosted a peace conference but it failed to stop the growing violence (Woodward 2003:72–74).

By 1992, human-induced famine and fighting had intensified, gaining international attention. In April, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 751 authorising the first UN operation in Somalia (Unosom I). In December, the Security Council added the United Task Force (Unitaf), authorised by Resolution 749. Led by US troops, Unitaf was tasked with securing corridors for humanitarian aid delivery. Initially, the operation was welcomed and its mission was partially successful (Chesterman 2004:85). However, Aideed perceived Unitaf's operations as increasingly prejudiced in favour of his rivals, namely Mahdi. Mistrust grew when the international operation was changed to Unosom II in May 1993 (Resolution 814). Chester Crocker (1995:5) describes this development as 'a sweeping ambitious new "nation-building" resolution'. Aideed's forces, feeling threatened, began attacking UN forces. This aggression led to the infamous and gruesome killing of 18 US troops in October, besides the unknown numbers of Somalis deaths. Continued violence led to US withdrawal in 1994 and eventual UN departure in 1995.

The exit of UN personnel did not trigger a further explosion of civil war, but it did leave a country with tense divisions and intermittent skirmishes

(Woodward 2003:78–79). In Mogadishu, competing militias controlled city neighbourhoods. As the next section illustrates, informal governance and economic activity evolved in the relative stability of this stalemate. Meanwhile, in May 1991, the northwest region of the country declared its independence with the creation of the state of Somaliland. Although international actors still do not recognise its independence, Somaliland has achieved its own distinctive stability and governance. Menkhaus (2006/2007:91) states, ‘Somaliland has also built up a modest but functional state structure, with ministries, municipalities, police, and a legislature all performing at variable but not inconsequential levels.’ This development has bolstered its claims for self-determination. Yet a minority of the region’s residents and a majority of Somalis oppose full independence (Bryden 2004:23). It is outside the scope of this report to consider Somaliland’s case fully, but it presents potential lessons for state building. Puntland, the northeast region of Somalia, followed its lead in 1998, declaring autonomous status. Increasing numbers of people believe that such a federalist system is probably most appropriate for Somalia.

Dynamics within state collapse

The misperception that state collapse is a static condition has often hindered externally led state-building initiatives. However, the Somaliland case indicates that the opposite is true. In fact, Menkhaus (2004:11) writes, ‘Far from sinking into complete anarchy, Somalia has seen the rise of sub-state polities, some of which have assumed a fragile but nonetheless impressive capacity to provide core functions of government.’ Outside of Somaliland, this governance has been mostly at the district and municipal levels. Coalitions among businesspeople, neighbourhood groups and clan leaders have established and enforced zones of security (Little 2003:123–144). In particular, the growth of a powerful business class has created incentives for controlled stability. This class is ‘served by a rule of law which controls criminality by the underclass, but not a system which has regulatory, investigatory and enforcement capacity’ (Menkhaus 2004:44). Thus privatised forms of policing have brought predictability to some parts of Somalia. Menkhaus (2006/2007:86) describes it as ‘a loose constellation of commercial city-states and villages separated by long stretches of pastoral statelessness’.

This local governance has been strengthened by partnership with emerging Islamic Sharia courts. A later section will examine the rise of political Islam more closely, but a description of the way in which rule of law has retained relevance in Somali life is worthwhile here. Modern-day Somalia has

essentially four judicial systems at work: those of regional administrations, traditional *xeer* or customary law of the elders, Sharia courts, and informal methods established by civil society groups (Le Sage 2005:15). Of these mechanisms, the Sharia courts have expanded their reach most in recent years. Though the courts are not devoid of fundamentalist elements, their stated aim has been the provision of order and security, two entities whose appeal cuts across Somali society (International Crisis Group 2005b:21). Andrew Le Sage (2005:38) writes that these courts have played three roles: apprehending criminals, ruling on cases and carrying out sentences, including imprisonment. By fulfilling these very practical needs, the Sharia courts have found allies in business and civil society groups. Unfortunately, however, failure to harmonise the courts with the other mechanisms of law still breeds confusion, frustrating any efforts at state-wide governance.

Perhaps the most resilient facet of Somalia since state collapse has been its economy. Widespread poverty does persist, but people have found means to cope and, in some cases, to thrive. Peter Little (2003:2) writes, 'Beyond the images of chaos and warfare that still shape outside perceptions of Somalia, hundreds of thousands of herders and traders effectively produce and trade Somalia's most valuable commodity, livestock.' For some, the deterioration of the rule of law has actually helped the trans-border cattle trade. It is estimated that 16 per cent of beef in Nairobi today comes from Somalia (Little 2003:83–91). Furthermore, Mogadishu has become a leading regional port with imports from Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Dubai, which are subsequently exported throughout the Horn of Africa (Marchal 2004:115). Because of the lack of regulation, Mogadishu is especially suitable for trade in illicit goods, including small arms and light weapons. Furthermore, while there is a striking lack of formal institutions, informal financial systems have grown rapidly. De Waal (2007) reports, 'By 2001, the leading Somali finance houses were multi-million dollar operations, diversified in telecommunications, trade and light industry.' As a result, Somalia's businessmen have become dominant powerbrokers, especially in urban centres (Menkhaus 2004:38). Their interests have received too little attention in recent analyses of Somalia.

Regional influences

Regional actors have had a major impact on Somalia because the absence of a central government renders the country especially vulnerable. This section outlines those influences. Even before state collapse, Somalia was deeply affected by regional actors and competition. Above all, enmity between Somalia and Ethiopia has shaped post-colonial politics. Between 1960 and

1978, the two countries fought three wars (Prendergast & Thomas-Jensen 2007:63). From the Somali perspective, hostility toward Ethiopia dates back to the nineteenth century, when Ethiopia acquired a territory of ethnic Somalis (Woodward 2003:126). The disputed Ogaden region covers about one-quarter of Ethiopia's land and is a major source of natural gas (Shinn 2006). Somalia has supplied arms to rebel groups in this territory to challenge Addis Ababa's power, which has caused Ethiopia to actively destabilise its neighbour (Woodward 2003:126–128). David Shinn (2006) argues, 'Ethiopia prefers a weak and divided Somalia, especially if a united Somalia results in an unfriendly neighbour.' Recently, Ethiopia feared that the rise of political Islam in Somalia might 'stimulate radicalisation of its own large Muslim population' (International Crisis Group 2007:4). As the countries share a border of almost 1 000 miles, continued inter-state antagonism adds complexity to state consolidation in Somalia.

Somalia has thus become involved in the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea. After the overthrow of the Mengistu regime in 1991, Eritreans voted to secede and were granted independence from Ethiopia (Woodward 2003:106–108). The countries initially enjoyed good relations, but tensions between the two grew and sparked war in 1998–99. The two signed a peace accord in 2000, agreeing to allow an independent international commission to rule on their disputed border. However, Ethiopia has refused to recognise the ruling, arguing it was biased toward Eritrea (Prendergast & Thomas-Jensen 2007:64–65). Tensions between the two have since grown. In the spirit of 'supporting the enemy of one's enemy', Eritrea has provided arms and support to anti-Ethiopian elements in Somalia (Lyons 2006:4). Not surprisingly, Somalis have been largely sympathetic to the Eritrean cause. Consequently, Ethiopia is 'willing to settle for ongoing state collapse rather than risk a revived Arab-backed government in Mogadishu' (Menkhaus 2004:9). More dangerously, it has increased the possibility that Somalia could become a proxy battleground for the Ethiopia–Eritrea conflict (Lyons 2006).

In addition to its relations with Ethiopia and Eritrea, Somalia is deeply affected by those with other countries. One reason is that Kenya has its own ethnic Somali population (including a territory claimed by Somalia) and great numbers of Somali refugees. The spillover of Somalia's lawlessness 'costs Kenya unknown amounts in lost business, lost tourism and lost human lives' (Menkhaus 2004:52). Yet, until recently, Somalis trusted Kenya to a certain extent, especially as a mediator. New security ties with Ethiopia and the US may be undermining that credibility. Djibouti, Somalia's other neighbour, shares a similar relationship. On the one hand, given their Muslim character, Djibouti and Somalis have close ties. On the other, Djibouti, like Kenya, is

increasingly regarded as being connected with US interests. Egypt is another influential country in Somalia, and it greatly fears that Ethiopia will hinder its access to the Blue Nile (Mohammed 2007). In the past, Egypt used Somali affairs to pressure Ethiopia. Finally, Somalia's proximity to the Middle East adds another layer of influence. In particular, Yemen and Somalia share trade routes in the Gulf of Aden. Like the others countries, Yemen has sought its own version of predictability in Somalia.

State-building projects

Approaching present-day dynamics, the remainder of this chapter incorporates an assessment of opportunities and threats in Somalia. Especially since 9/11, events in Somalia have been interpreted largely from a security perspective. This section considers various initiatives to revive a central government and discusses them as part of that securitisation. As described in Chapter One, state building has increasingly become a tactic of US counter-terrorism. Few would disagree that the reconstitution of national governance would improve life prospects for the Somalis while enhancing regional security. However, as the Somalia experience exemplifies, these processes never happen in a vacuum. The interplay of Western fears and regional influences and the dynamics within state collapse make these projects extremely volatile.

Since the UN departure in 1995, several formal and informal state-building initiatives have been undertaken, largely in the form of 'power-sharing accords' (Menkhaus 2006/2007:77). Of these initiatives, two have actually formed governments. The first initiative was the 2000 Arta Process, mediated by the Government of Djibouti. Unlike past processes, this conference claimed not to privilege warlords but, instead, to provide fair representation to the clans and civil society (Marchal 2004:137). Many therefore saw great opportunity in the established Transitional National Government (TNG). Almost immediately, however, others perceived the TNG as a 'platform for Islamist groups' (International Crisis Group 2005b:25). This perception grew as the TNG appealed to its Gulf neighbours for funding and called for an 'Arab Marshall Plan'. Ethiopia and its international supporters, considering the new government a threat, acted to undermine its legitimacy. In 2001, Ethiopian-backed militias challenged 'TNG efforts to extend its presence beyond parts of Mogadishu, leading to a loss of confidence in the TNG within a year of its declaration' (Menkhaus 2003:418). In the international community, the US and others refused to recognise the TNG. Efforts by the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in 2002 to salvage the government failed, and it collapsed the following year.

Meanwhile, with Ethiopia's urging, the international community and IGAD backed conferences in Kenya to establish another transitional government. In October 2004, the TFG was established (Weinstein 2007h). Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, of the Puntland region and a well-known ally of Ethiopia, was named the president of the TFG. Yusuf's election created the perception that the TFG was a puppet for Ethiopian interests. This impression endures and was exacerbated when Yusuf requested a 20 000-strong international force to stabilise Somalia (International Crisis Group 2005a:2). When this idea was presented to the Somali parliament, a physical brawl ensued. The TFG quickly 'came to be perceived by the Hawiye as a vehicle for Darod interests, especially those of President Yusuf's Majerteen clan' (International Crisis Group 2007). Yusuf aggravated Hawiye fears when he chose to base the TFG in the towns of Baydhowa and Jowdar and not in the traditional capital, Mogadishu (International Crisis Group 2005a). As a result, when the TFG finally entered Somalia in 2006, it lacked broad legitimacy and became a source of inter-clan conflict. The international community continues to hail it as an opportunity, but many locals see it as a threat.

The TFG remains in existence but epitomises the frailty of state building, especially with external involvement. Menkhaus (2006/2007:99) argues that the TFG, like past projects, is a result of 'state building without reconciliation'. By pursuing power-sharing schemes, these processes play into inter-clan competition and a legacy of divide-and-rule politics. Menkhaus (2003:409) writes, 'For Somalis, the state is an instrument of accumulation and domination, enriching and empowering who controls it and exploiting and oppressing the rest.' As a result, Somalia is rife with potential spoilers who fear losing from state building. Regional and international actors, with their influence, have also wielded their veto power to block perceived threats. Reconciling these interests is daunting, but it must be the starting point for constituting a viable state. In addition, state building in Somalia, perhaps more so than any other place in the world, requires unconventional thinking about the 'state'.

Political Islam

Meanwhile, alongside formal governance initiatives, new informal types of political organisation have emerged amid Somalia's state collapse. Most poignantly, political Islam has been a growing movement, attracting people from all sectors of society. Somalia's Islamic roots date back to the thirteenth century (Woodward 2003:25) although the present ascendancy of political Islam dates to the end of the Barre regime. During that time,

mosques became semi-sanctuaries from the fighting. Roland Marchal (2004:123) writes, 'So, in the end, in a situation perceived as highly anomic, identification with Islam became a means to seek security: both in one's identity and in the face of a ruthless society.' During the 1990s, emerging Sharia courts were 'widely embraced and supported by local communities as means for restoring the rule of law' (Menkhaus 2004:26). A previous section described how these courts have offered basic security amid state collapse (Le Sage 2005:40). Along with security, other Islamic networks have grown to manage schools and hospitals. In Mogadishu, al-Islah is now an extensive social service network (Menkhaus 2004:63–64). Through very practical functions, Islam has become a political and highly relevant force in Somali life (Shinn 2007).

Recognising this political influence, a group of Sharia courts formed the UIC. Along with expanding their numbers, the courts began securing alliances with influential politicians, including leadership within the Hawiye clan (Le Sage 2004:47). In early 2006, sporadic fighting broke out in Mogadishu between the Islamists and the US-backed alliance of warlords challenging the courts' expansion. After heightened fighting in May to June, the UIC defeated the warlords and began consolidating control over south-central Somalia (Prendergast & Thomas Jensen 2007:63–68). Initially, the courts' administration greatly improved public security in Mogadishu, decreasing crime and lawlessness. They reopened the seaport and airport (Menkhaus 2007). However, the UIC was increasingly hampered by ideological differences and internal mismanagement. Within the courts, a more radical group was gaining power, refusing to negotiate with the TFG and imposing more fundamentalist Sharia law (Marchal 2007). This development added to the challenge of translating the success of micro-level governance into regional-level administration (De Waal 2004a). It was increasingly clear by the end of 2006 that the courts could assist but could not substitute real government (Marchal 2004:137).

The next section will continue the narrative from here, but it is first important to consider outside perceptions and fears about political Islam in Somalia. After 9/11, the US was quick to suggest that Islamists in Somalia likely had ties to al-Qa'eda, potentially even hosting bases (Le Sage 2001). Washington named Somalia's al-Ittihad al-Islamiyya (AIAI) on its terrorist list. Yet further investigation of Islamists in Somalia has shown a more complex picture than was suggested by this initial US alarm. First, Menkhaus (2004:56) writes, 'Somali society has historically been averse to the more puritanical strains of Wahhabism associated with Saudi Islamic practices.' Furthermore, most Somalis are wary of outsiders and traditionally have only weak connections

with the rest of the Islamic world (Black 2007:16). AIAI grew in the early part of the 1990s, but most of their fighters were driven by finance, not ideology. Unable to expand further, its leaders shifted to a long-term strategy of backing growing Islamic social institutions such as schools, hospitals and media (Menkhaus 2004:10). They realised that Islam in Somalia had generally been pragmatic, not ideological. Indeed, the rise of the UIC exemplifies this reality. Meanwhile, by 2001, AIAI was a relatively defunct organisation with no force (Menkhaus 2004:63). Despite the US claims, no evidence was found in 2002 of direct ties with al-Qa'eda or any terrorist bases within the country (De Waal & Salam 2004:246–247).

However, it would be equally naïve to suggest that Islam in Somalia totally lacks elements of extremism. The growth of political Islam, the presence of conservative Salafist movements and continued state collapse all provide openings for jihadist mobilisation. One former AIAI leader, Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys, who became chairman of the courts' assembly, is on the terrorist lists of both the US and UN (International Crisis Group 2007:4). Furthermore, as of 2003, Aweys' protégé Aden Hashi Farah 'Ayro was believed to have formed a small network in Mogadishu (International Crisis Group 2005b:11). This network is accused of committing a series of assassinations of Western and international humanitarian workers (Menkhaus 2005:42). It is unclear how closely 'Ayro and Aweys are now linked, but a small military wing known as Hisb'ul Shabaab emerged within the UIC (International Crisis Group 2007:8). By late 2006, this wing was reportedly gaining influence with fundamentalist elements in the courts, though certainly not control.

Additionally, US intelligence showed that several foreign terrorists have been hiding within Somalia. Their principal target is 'Fazul Abdullah Mohamed, a Comorian national with a Kenyan passport, whom the US accuses of being behind the 1998 bombings of its embassies in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam, and the 2002 attacks on a Mombasa hotel and an Israeli airliner' (Harper 2007). Two others are Abu Taha al-Sudani, a Sudanese national, and Saleh Ali Saleh Nabhan, a Kenyan national; both have al-Qa'eda links (Le Sage 2007). Furthermore, a foiled terrorist plot in Kenya in 2003 was planned in Somalia and involved Somali nationals (Menkhaus 2004:70). Given the right circumstances, such threats could certainly expand. Yet it remains critical to recall that 'the growth of Islamic activism in Somalia is synonymous neither with extremism nor terrorism' (International Crisis Group 2005b:27). Islam in Somalia has historically been local and pragmatic in nature (Black 2007). It would be highly unlikely for an extremist network, especially a foreign one, to expand among the Somali people without serious provocation.

Recent events

not surprisingly, the ascendancy of the UIC in mid-2006 sparked Ethiopian and international alarm. Western diplomats immediately began working, with the Arab League, to establish negotiations between the courts and the TFG (Menkhaus 2007a). In June, meetings held in Khartoum led to mutual recognition and a ceasefire. However, by August, both parties were expressing mistrust of the process. In December, final efforts by the Europeans to salvage talks failed. The TFG, for its part, appeared unwilling to make any concessions (Marchal 2007). Meanwhile, as described above, internal divisions and administrative weaknesses increasingly hampered the UIC. Heavy flooding in the south, the worst in 50 years, added further complication (Menkhaus 2007a). In the interim, despite a UN arms embargo, both sides were receiving an influx of arms involving at least ten different countries.² In December, the US led the UN Security Council in passing Resolution 1725 authorising an African Union (AU) peacekeeping force to protect and train the TFG. Not surprising, the UIC considered this step a direct affront and threatened to attack any 'foreign invaders' (Lyons 2006:26).

During this time, increased tensions between the UIC and Ethiopia further exacerbated the potential for war. The militant faction within the courts increasingly invoked pan-Somali nationalism, promising to reclaim the Ogaden region. On 17 November 2006, Aweys said on Radio Shabelle, 'We will leave no stone unturned to integrate our Somali brothers in Kenya and Ethiopia and restore their freedom to live with their ancestors in Somalia.' Further military rhetoric escalated with reports of Ethiopian troops crossing into western Somalia. Ethiopia continued threatening to attack, citing concern about UIC links to terrorism and reliance on Eritrea (International Crisis Group 2007:5). Then, after a month of skirmishes, on 20 December 2006, full fighting broke out in the western Somali town of Baidoa (Abdulle 2006). By 24 December, both sides had declared war. The Ethiopians quickly overtook Baidoa and marched on Mogadishu, with the UIC in retreat. By the end of 2006, the Ethiopian army, working with TFG forces, had occupied Mogadishu. As the forces continued to push the UIC south, a US AC-130 gunship fired on retreating forces, claiming to target jihadists (Menkhaus 2007c). The US conducted air strikes on 8 and 23 January 2007 (International Crisis Group 2007).

Though the UIC was swiftly defeated and disbanded, the situation in Somalia hardly stabilised. In fact, March and April 2007 brought arguably the worst violence since civil war in the early 1990s (Hassun 2007). The fall of the courts left a power vacuum in the south, which was quickly filled by the

previous warlords (International Crisis Group 2007). 'With the TFG having staked its future on control of Mogadishu, the rest of Somalia drifted back to local clan control or the absence of authority' (Weinstein 2007h). Meanwhile, local resistance to the Ethiopians and TFG grew immediately. The Ethiopian invasion and ensuing occupation humiliated Somalis, particularly the Hawiye. Nationalist sentiment has motivated many individuals to take up arms against the Ethiopian troops in Mogadishu (Black 2007:15). Furthermore, the Ayr and Abgal sub-clans of the Hawiye fear domination by the Darod, who are perceived to control the TFG (Weinstein 2007d). Thus a dual insurgency emerged of both alienated clan fighters and former military elements of the UIC (Cooke & Henek 2007).

Meanwhile, an extremist movement has also resurged, energised by the Ethiopian occupation and especially by US involvement. Now under the leadership of 'Ayro, the former militant wing of the UIC has renamed itself the Popular Resistance Movement in the Land of the Two Migrations (PRM) (Weinstein 2007h). An additional two jihadist groups surfaced in the wake of the invasion: the Brigades of Tawhid and Jihad in the Land of Somalia (Black 2007). During the summer, a further group, the Youth Mujahideen Movement (YMM), emerged and began its own attacks on TFG forces. These various groups are increasingly feared to be linking with foreign fighters. In January 2007, al Qa'eda's Ayman al-Zawahiri issued a statement urging foreign fighters to assist the Somali jihad. In addition, as in Iraq, Somali insurgents have begun posting videos and speeches on Internet websites to recruit allies. However, despite the appeal, foreign fighters still would have to overcome Somalis' mistrust of foreigners and foreign ideology (Black 2007:15–16). As of early summer 2007, there has been no serious evidence of foreign fighters in Somalia. Yet this situation may still change and drastically alter the stakes of the conflict.

From February to April 2007, violent resistance by insurgents against the TFG and Ethiopian installations consistently increased and included targeted assassinations, armed roadblocks and machine-gun attacks. The African Union Mission in Somalia (Amisom), intended to replace the Ethiopians, received only 1 400 troops from Uganda, who have not ventured far from the airport. Fearing a security vacuum with the withdrawal of the Ethiopians, Western governments urged them to stay (Weinstein 2007e). Yet, in those two months alone, 'at least 400 and probably more than 1 000 people were killed in the violence' (Weinstein 2007). According to the UN, nearly a third of Mogadishu's population fled the capital (Abdulle 2007). The TFG declared itself in control of the capital on 26 April 2007, but resistance has since shifted to guerrilla tactics, including roadside bombings and kidnappings

(Kennedy 2007). For the first time, suicide bombings have become a feature of the conflict (Weinstein 2007e).

Since April 2007, continued Ethiopian presence and increasing frustrations with the TFG have fuelled the insurgency (Shinn 2007). In the original report,³ this section concluded here. Updates by Michael Weinstein (2007a, 2007f) of Power and News Interest Report show the existing trends have extended through September. To date, daily asymmetric attacks continue by insurgents against TFG installations and Ethiopian forces. Weinstein (2007b) reports, 'In response, TFG and Ethiopian troops have engaged in indiscriminate return fire, imposition of a curfew, intensive weapons searches, arrests of suspected insurgents and their supporters, and raids on media houses, civil society organisations, mosques, businesses and schools.' A Human Rights Watch (2007) report detailed devastating violations of international humanitarian law by both warring sides against civilians. The resulting violence has increased internal displacement within southern Somalia and has created a humanitarian crisis affecting an estimated 1,5 million people (Oxfam International 2007).

Meanwhile, the TFG has scrambled to regain its waning public credibility and hold on power. In July 2007, after a three-time delay, the TFG commenced the National Reconciliation Conference (NRC), a 45-day inter-clan affair. The NRC opening witnessed increased grenade and mortar attacks by insurgents hoping to disrupt the conference. To its credit, the conference persisted and broad agreements on ceasefire and disarmament of clan militias were initially reported (Weinstein 2007a). However, many heavily criticised the TFG for evading political issues and focusing only on clan disputes. Indeed, the TFG's commitment to the NRC was primarily in response to donor pressure. When the conference did shift to political issues in August 2007 to discuss resource distribution, there was hostile debate that remained unresolved. At the closing of the NRC, the parties had agreed to only the spirit of a ceasefire and to no enforcement mechanism (Weinstein 2007f). Since that time, the TFG has continued to lose hope of regaining legitimate control over state governance.

The NRC was especially doomed by the absence of several opposition parties, including influential leaders from the Hawiye clan and the former UIC. These opposition groups agreed to meet in Asmara, forming the Somali Congress for Liberation and Reconstitution (SCLR). However, hopes of forming a unified group were soon shattered by several key Hawiye leaders' refusal to attend. The weeklong meetings in September further highlighted divisions between nationalists and former UIC leaders in their vision for

the country. The latter continue to call for the establishment of an Islamic state based on Sharia law. The only unifying factor between the opposition groups appears to be resistance to the Ethiopian occupation. At the end of the meetings, several groups announced the formation of the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS) to push both politically and militarily for the withdrawal of Ethiopian troops (Weinstein 2007f).

The SCLR proceedings appear to confirm that any political settlement in Somalia will likely depend firstly on Ethiopian withdrawal from the country. In addition, the clan-based formulas for governance will need to be transformed to both reflect and address changing politics in Somalia. Yet, at the present, the TFG will not give its support because it is unwilling to risk losing power. In addition, new tensions between Somaliland and Puntland have added to President Yusuf's anxiety (Weinstein 2007a). Moreover, still fearing Islamist resurgence, the US and Ethiopians continue backing the TFG. They realise its bleak future, but they lack a suitable alternative to support. The current dynamics are thus unlikely to stabilise in the near future. One Mogadishu resident sums up the predicament that many Somalis continue to face: 'I am caught between two groups—Ethiopians trying to kill me because I am Somali, and insurgents not happy because I am not picking up a gun and fighting with them. I have lost all hope' (Abdulle 2007).

Somalia's future scenarios

This report considers future policy scenarios later, but the following concluding points are worthwhile. First, fear has long existed that 'Somalia may be drawn into the international jihad' (Somalia: War in the Horn? 2007). Though they were vague before the invasion, ties between Somali insurgents and al-Qa'eda have allegedly increased. The potential now for an influx of foreign fighters threatens to give 'operational proficiency' to the insurgency (Black 2007). Furthermore, Mary Harper (2007) argues, 'It is likely that more Somali religious extremists are being born with every US air strike, every Ethiopian soldier on Somali soil.' Somalis, typically averse to jihadism, may see it now as an avenue to assert nationalism. As in Iraq, counter-elites in Somalia may become counter-hegemony, giving the struggle new ideological and international stakes. Such a development will make sustained Western involvement in Somali affairs more likely, creating a cycle of violence.

Even if that scenario were averted, the project of state building remains deeply contested and a likely source of conflict in the short term. The Hawiye clan, in particular, is even more disillusioned with the TFG than before. Without

serious concessions and reconciliation, they will maintain their resistance just as they resist the continued Ethiopian occupation. This situation will likely mean a continued reversion to the conditions civil war of the early 1990s. A power-sharing process and stabilisation force to replace the Ethiopians may possibly mitigate this tension; however, peacebuilding will require deeper transformation. Peacebuilding will necessitate marginalising the profits of plunder and supporting groups interested in stable communities. Chapter Four considers prospects for peace.

A new strategy, however, will ultimately require a fresh look at Somalia's state collapse, something this chapter has attempted to introduce. This chapter has shown that state collapse in Somalia is far more complex and dynamic than has previously been assumed. Past efforts at reviving a central government have misunderstood the contested nature of the state. Meanwhile, Somalis have adapted to their circumstances with informal governance and economic activity. The rise of political Islam should be largely understood among these developments. This realisation would raise new considerations for external actors committed to building states and fighting terror in Somalia. Yet, for the US, at least, many of the same security assumptions persist. The next chapter investigates reasons for the situation and ways in which recent US policy in Somalia has evolved.

CHAPTER 3

UNITED STATES COUNTER-TERRORISM IN SOMALIA

In recent years, US officials have described the Horn of Africa as a ‘front line of the war on terror’ (Esther 2003). Yet concerns about terrorism in the Horn extend back to at least August 1998, with the al-Qa’eda-sponsored bombings of American embassies in Dar-es-Salaam and Nairobi. In October 2000, terrorists attacked USS *Cole* off the coast of Yemen, killing 17 US soldiers (US Institute of Peace 2004). However, the events of 9/11 solidified counter-terrorism as the overriding lens for US policy in the Horn (Prendergast 2003). Moreover, the subsequent focus on failed states, described in Chapter One, gave the region new priority for US policymakers. Somalia was the obvious linchpin of this concern. The combination of state collapse, proximity to the Middle East and emerging political Islam made Somalia a predictable target (Menkhaus 2004:67). In 2001, the Bush Administration was reportedly considering military strikes against Somalia, alleging ties to al-Qa’eda (Menkhaus 2004:68). However, action was abandoned because of insufficient intelligence. In fact, because the US had been without an embassy in Somalia since 1991, US officials realised their severe lack of ‘real-time knowledge and enduring relationships on the ground’ (Cooke & Henek 2007:4).

This chapter examines US policymaking since the re-securitisation of Somalia in 2001. Chapter Two dissected state collapse in Somalia and analysed events leading up to the current violence. This chapter considers both the reaction and contribution of US policy to those events. Furthermore, this policy cannot be studied without taking into account Washington’s regional efforts to cultivate strong military-to-military relationships, especially with Ethiopia. This chapter thus places US Somalia policy in the wider context of America’s changing role in the region. With the UIC takeover of Mogadishu, the US recently shifted to a two-pillared strategy of backing the Ethiopian invasion and supporting the TFG. Policymakers now emphasise state building as a key tactic of counter-terrorism. However, intensifying violence and growing backlash expose contradictions in this strategy. This chapter concludes with an assessment of the arising predicaments for counter-terrorism. Chapter Four assesses future prospects for peace.

Re-securing Somalia

surprisingly, President Bush did not include Somalia in the 'axis of evil' in his January 2002 State of the Union address. Following 9/11, Somalia came under intensive scrutiny as the epitome of a failed state easily exploited by terrorists (Menkhaus 2004:49). On 23 September 2001, President Bush included AIAI in Executive Order 13224 that named and blocked the assets of 27 suspected terrorist organisations (International Crisis Group 2005b:3). Furthermore, officials in Washington indicated that Osama bin Laden might seek sanctuary in Somalia. *The Washington Times* (Gertz) reported on 2 October 2001 that al-Qa'eda was planning a new base of operations in Somalia. Allegations of links between Somalia and terrorism continued. In December 2001, the then US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld remarked, 'Somalia has been a place that has harboured al-Qa'eda and, to my knowledge, still is' ('Wrong Target' 2001). The media also republished unsubstantiated claims by Bin Laden in the late 1990s that he had inspired the 1993 killing of US troops in Somalia ('Bin Laden, Millionaire with a Dangerous Grudge' 2001). This was boosted by the January 2002 release of the Hollywood film *Black Hawk Down*. Invoking images of earlier fighting in Mogadishu assisted the re-securitisation of Somalia.

Meanwhile, Washington authorised military operations to monitor and assess the situation in Somalia. Military overflights with P-3 aircraft conducted surveillance while increased numbers of US ships and submarines patrolled the Somali coastline ('Moving Target' 2001). Reportedly about 100 US Special Forces operated in the country, similar to early incursions into Afghanistan ('US Special Units "Are Already at Work in Somalia"' 2001). Menkhaus (2004:68) writes, 'Sources inside the US government contend that the Bush Administration came close to approving military action in Jan or Feb 2002.' However, investigations found no clear evidence of al-Qa'eda ties or presence in Somalia. The most likely place for a terrorist base, a camp at Ras Komboni on the southern tip of the country, was found abandoned (De Waal & Salam 2004:246). Moreover, aside from a few individuals, no proof was found of ties between AIAI and al-Qa'eda (Menkhaus 2004:65). Furthermore, many now doubt Bin Laden's claims of involvement in the infamous 1993 Mogadishu fighting.

Along with these military considerations, the US immediately took financial action to target individuals suspected of links with terrorism. In November 2001, Washington placed Hassan Dahir Aweys on its terrorist list (International Crisis Group 2005a). The US declared that the suspected terrorist Fazul Abdullah Mohamed was operating within Somali borders (Harper 2007).

Sanctions on individuals, however, soon turned to those on groups. On 7 November 2001, the US Treasury blocked the assets of the largest Somali telecommunications and remittance network, al-Barakaat (Menkhaus 2004:67). According to the November 2001 press release by the White House, al-Barakaat offices 'raise, manage and distribute funds for al-Qa'eda; provide terrorist supporters with Internet service and secure telephone communications; and arrange for the shipment of weapons'. However, evidence has still not been produced for these allegations. De Waal and A.H. Abdel Salam (2004:246) argue, 'This was the financial equivalent of carpet bombing, and thousands of Somalis, especially in the diaspora, lost savings and the ability to remit money back home.' Within the country, al-Barakaat kept money for small and middle-sized traders seeking to avoid robbery and build capital (Marchal 2004). US failure to justify this policy has caused bitterness among many Somalis.

Meanwhile, meta-narratives of danger and threat have continued to pervade Western public statements about Somalia. Analysts have preached future threats, arguing that Somalia is an obvious location where 'terrorists could gather and from which they could burst forth to spread chaos and devastation' (Rotberg 2005a:8). Furthermore, Somalia's geo-strategic location makes it an obvious target of US concern. Its neighbour across the Gulf of Aden, Yemen, provides natural gas and oil to the US and has become a growing yet delicate ally. Historically, Somalia has been seen as a gateway between the Middle East and sub-Saharan Africa. Therefore, Washington ideally seeks a stable government in Somalia with which it can partner. Conversely, however, officials fear that a hostile Islamic regime in Somalia would undermine US interests in the region. It could provide access and advantages to the US rivals in the Middle East, namely Iran and Syria. Given these scenarios, state collapse, especially if semi-predictable, has been a preferred option to an unfriendly government. Until most recently, Washington invested much more in neighbouring states to monitor and contain Somalia (Piombo 2007).

United States counter-terrorism in Africa's Horn

this section turns to US efforts in the wider region to secure access and allies. Former US Ambassador to Ethiopia David Shinn (2006) writes, 'US influence with countries in the region that are involved in Somalia varies from considerably (Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, and Egypt) to very little in nations like Iran, Sudan, Eritrea, and Libya.' To those with which it has influence, the US has been eager to increase its support. These allies have received increased assistance and diplomatic recognition. In addition, they

have been the main beneficiaries of US 'capacity-building' programmes, which give Washington 'even more intimate engagement with governing institutions' (Chandler 2006a:87). In 2003, the US launched the \$100 million East Africa Counter-Terrorism Initiative (EACTI), which includes training for border patrol, coastal security and police activity (Shinn 2004:41). Kenya and Ethiopia have received the majority of this funding. Furthermore, the US subsidised 'comprehensive anti-money laundering/counter-terrorist financing arrangements, including setting up a computer system in selected airports in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda' (Kagwanja 2006:82), giving US officials new regulatory power, without the past constraints of accountability (Chandler 2006a:11–18).

The unique element of this engagement is the prominence of the Pentagon (Piombo 2007:5). In 2002, the Bush Administration established the Combined Joint Task Force–Horn of Africa (CJTF–HOA), 'a semi-permanent troop presence at Camp Lemonier in Djibouti with more than 1 500 US military and civilian personnel in residence' (Ploch 2007:7). The base allegedly includes special operations forces (Barnes 2005:7). Beyond that base, however, CJTF–HOA has set up the essential elements of facilities or 'lily pads' in various locations on the continent, including Kenya and Uganda (Ploch 2007:7). This realignment of US troops has continued. In 2005, the Department of Defence issued Directive 3000.05, prioritising stabilisation operations in failing states. This move was followed by the February 2007 announcement of the new Africa Command (Africom) to strengthen regional stability on the continent (Ploch 2007:1–2). Africom will be led by a four-star general and include an estimated 1 000-strong staff (Trimble 2007:11). Within the Horn, these moves are positioning US military to respond more actively to perceived threats. However, there are fears that increased US troop presence may cause a backlash and become a target for local hostility (Sapolsky & Friedman 2007).

Recognising that risk, US military strategy in Africa has prioritised 'building partnership capacity' (Ploch 2007:17): The Pentagon is priming regional allies to lead in crisis response and counter-terrorism operations. The stated purpose of CJTF–HOA is to 'conduct operations and training to assist host nations to combat terrorism in order to establish a secure environment and enable regional stability'. Thus far, the bulk of its work has been training national militaries in the region, particularly those of Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya (Shinn 2004:41). Through joint exercises, the Pentagon secures strong military-to-military relationships for intelligence sharing and crisis management (Kaplan 2006). The US is further able to strengthen these relationships through the Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA)

and the Group of Eight's (G8's) new Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI), which provide equipment and training for African peacekeepers (Lawson 2007:4). Additionally, CJTF-HOA has undertaken civilian affairs projects in the region, such as building schools. These projects offer another pretext for the US to build relationships and gain familiarity with an area, while trying to improve public image (Hill 2006:634). Through this regional engagement, Washington has secured stronger military alliances to counter perceived threats.

Nevertheless, the durability of this strategy is contested. Undoubtedly, certain risks have the potential to provoke reactionary violence. The privileging of state stability has often given regional governments a pretext to justify repressive and illiberal practices (Kagwanja 2006:73). The US has clearly been less critical of regimes that are cooperating in the war on terror. Menkhaus (2007) thus contends, 'Because almost every government in the region is to varying degrees cooperating with the US in the war on terror, popular anger at repressive or unresponsive regional states is easily conflated with anti-Americanism.' This situation is further complicated by the militarising of US presence in the region, breeding suspicion and memories of colonialism. The Pentagon's increasing influence has conversely meant a diminishing of the traditional mechanisms of diplomacy (US Institute of Peace 2004). This not only empowers regional militaries but also privileges military approaches to addressing security issues. In the Horn, Washington's alliance with Ethiopia is the primary example of these dynamics.

United States–Ethiopian ties

US–Ethiopian ties date back to 1952 when Ethiopia became America's largest Cold War ally in the Horn. Ethiopia received the most US military aid of any country in sub-Saharan Africa during the 1960s and 1970s (Woodward 2003:135). These close relations were halted after Mengistu Haile Mariam took power in 1974 but have been rekindled since his overthrow in 1991. Most recently, with renewed interest in the Horn, Washington has turned to its old ally. Since 9/11, 'Ethiopia has been the United States' closest ally in the Greater Horn' (Prendergast & Thomas-Jensen 2007:66). This alliance is reinforced by the Zenawi regime's own domestic struggles against Islamic insurgents, including the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) and AIAI.

In this alliance, Ethiopia has received significantly increased US military assistance and training. From 2002 to 2005, Ethiopia received \$16 billion

in foreign military financing, more than twice the amount received during the previous 11 years (Centre for Defence Information 2007). Furthermore, the Ethiopian military has been a key beneficiary of trainings conducted by CJTF-HOA, including at least three new anti-terrorism battalions (Shinn 2004:41). Furthermore, *The New York Times* (Gordon & Mazzetti 2007) reported on 7 April 2007 that the Bush Administration had allowed Ethiopia to purchase arms from North Korea in violation of UN sanctions. In addition to military aid, Ethiopia has received increased development assistance and reportedly over \$460 million in food aid in 2005 (Prendergast & Thomas-Jensen 2007:66). These developments have created a tight partnership clearly recognised by the region's inhabitants (Tynes 2006:111).

In Ethiopia, the Zenawi regime has at times used this counter-terror relationship to avert criticism for illiberal practices, including imprisoning its political opposition. US silence has bred local resentment. Terrence Lyons (2006:29) writes, 'Furthermore, the close association of the United States and Ethiopia complicates relationships between Washington and other regional actors, notably Eritrea and a range of Somali groups.' US backing of Ethiopia in regard to the disputed border has inflamed Eritreans (Prendergast & Thomas-Jensen 2007:66–67). In Somalia, the US and Ethiopia are mostly seen as inseparable. Given most Somalis' enmity toward Ethiopians, this perception puts Washington in a dangerous position. The recent Ethiopian invasion was thus predictably seen as US-inspired. In fact, the US clearly gave a 'tacit green light to invade Somalia' (International Crisis Group 2007:7). Marchal (2007) argues, 'Intervention would not have been possible without the American consent and, most of all, American funding.' This association presents danger for Ethiopia. Being seen as a pawn for US interests 'runs the danger of creating Muslim-Christian tensions where none exist, and exacerbating these divisions where they do' (Mohammed 2007). Violent extremists trying to permeate the region may easily exploit these divisions.

United States policy in Somalia from 2002 to June 2006

This chapter now returns to policies and dynamics within Somalia. After the initial anxiety following 9/11, US efforts to gain access to Somalia hardly subsided. While securing regional allies, Washington was actively identifying potential partners and rivals within Somalia. First, sharing Ethiopia's fears of the TNG in 2002, the US implicitly opposed the government by refusing it recognition. In 2004, the US reportedly considered labelling the TNG a state sponsor of terrorism, 'a move that could have meant devastating political and economic restrictions on its leadership and commercial sponsors'

(International Crisis Group 2005b:26). Meanwhile, on the partnering side, Washington financed the establishment of several counter-terror networks. In the Puntland region, US assistance helped develop intelligence services for surveillance and the arrest of suspected terrorists (International Crisis Group 2005a:9). In southern Somalia, the US began paying several militia and business leaders to monitor suspected terrorists.⁴ These individuals were paid to carry out sporadic snatch-and-grab operations. Although these efforts had some success, they remained 'piecemeal and ad hoc, a problem complicated by rapid turnover of personnel' (International Crisis Group 2005a:16).

More significantly, these snatch-and-grab operations did little to challenge the societal rise of political Islam. In fact, they may actually have contributed to the popularity of the UIC. By 2006, the US was paying Somali militants up to \$150 000 a month for their support. Within Mogadishu, this fact was widely known and resented. Several of these militants had formed a coalition, reportedly called the Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counterterrorism (Prendergast & Thomas-Jensen 2007:68). Targeting Islamists, the alliance was drawn into confrontation with the emerging courts (International Crisis Group 2007:7). In May 2006, conflict escalated and fighting broke out in Mogadishu between the groups (Lyons 2006:17). The local population, largely equating the courts with security and the US-backed warlords with the status quo, backed the UIC. Menkhaus (2007) writes, 'The complete defeat of the Alliance in June 2006 left the US with no effective eyes and ears in Mogadishu.' It also left the US with even less public support.

Back in Washington, Somalia finally resurfaced in the media. *The Washington Post* (Wax & De Young 2006) broke the story of US support for Somali warlords on 17 May 2006. Later that month, the Somalia political affairs officer at the US embassy in Kenya, Michael Zorick, was transferred after voicing disagreement with the policy (Hull 2006). Facing public pressure and especially UIC control of Mogadishu, the State Department shifted to its current state building rhetoric. Before, Washington had been backing the TFG, but with little focus. For example, the US contributed only \$250 000 to the \$10 million IGAD process that established the TFG (Prendergast & Thomas-Jensen 2007:68). Yet in summer 2006, State officials began articulating a two-pillared policy of building democratic institutions and counter-terrorism. Spokesman Sean McCormack (2006) said:

'We believe that these two things go hand in hand in fighting terrorism and then building up the institutions in Somalia, because if you have a well-governed state with strong governing institutions, you are likely not going to have a safe haven for terrorism.'

The US established the International Somalia Contact Group with the goals of supporting the TFG and counter-terrorism and regional stabilisation (Frazer 2006).

These shifts were largely reactionary and meant to mitigate the surge of the UIC. A proactive strategy, however, would require real-time knowledge and institutional engagement, two components that were still deeply lacking. As of the end of 2006, the US still had 'no full-time, senior-level leadership in Washington or in the region charged with directing policy' (Cooke & Henek 2007:4). This is especially remarkable given that plans to invade the country were drawn up a mere four years earlier. Furthermore, Ambassador Shinn (2004:42) argues, 'The US has allowed its language and area expertise [of the Horn] among foreign affairs personnel to degrade to dangerous levels.' Washington continued relying mostly on Ethiopia and Kenya for intelligence, even though both have obvious biases. More dangerously, the lack of expertise allowed formulaic perceptions of political Islam, state collapse and the new 'state-building' policy. Nothing makes 'involvement' become 'intrusion' swifter than a seeming lack of cultural or historical sensitivity.

United States policy in Somalia from June 2006 to September 2007

Though initially expressing a pragmatic approach to the UIC, Washington was immediately concerned by the courts' expansion beyond Mogadishu. In a June 2006 meeting in Addis Ababa, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Jendayi Frazer and Rear Admiral Richard Hunt reportedly committed to support Ethiopian action 'if jihadists took over' (Snow 2007). Over the following months, Washington insisted on cautious dialogue between the TFG and UIC. However, US officials, particularly Frazer, remained sceptical of prospects for negotiations. At the UN Security Council, US representatives began advocating an African stabilisation force to avoid conflict and protect the TFG. US officials argued that a force of this kind was needed because of the courts' 'continued military expansion'. Notably, the initial draft of Resolution 1725 did not exclude frontline states from contributing troops, leading many to believe it was 'a cover for Ethiopian involvement' (International Crisis Group 2007:7). Although the final draft excluded frontline states, the UIC perceived it as a direct affront to their rule (Lyons 2006:26).

Then, in December 2006, Frazer publicly stated that the UIC was now 'controlled' by members of al-Qa'eda. Frazer remarked, 'The top layer of the courts are extremists. They are terrorists' (International Crisis Group 2007:4). This allegation, as discussed in Chapter Two, was exaggerated. In fact, while

the militant wing of the UIC had gained influence, the courts still lacked organisational ties with al-Qaeda or any institutional involvement in terrorism'. Still, Frazer's timing the statement with the Ethiopian advance solidified perceptions of US backing for the invasion. Indeed, given US–Ethiopian ties, it is unlikely that the intervention would have happened without US sanction (Marchal 2007). As fighting broke out, the State Department offered minimal criticism, even though the invasion clearly breached several tenets of international law. Rather, the State Department's spokesman McCormack (2007) actually downplayed the ensuing violence by reiterating that Somalia 'had two decades worth of violence, war, humanitarian crises, warlordism and essentially chaos'. *The New York Times* (Mazzetti 2007a) later reported that certain Pentagon officials saw the invasion as a blueprint for the use of surrogate forces in the future for counter-terrorism.

Yet, regardless of US complicity in the Ethiopian offensive, Washington certainly saw it as an opportunity. On 7 January 2007, US AC-130 gunships began firing on remote regions in southern Somalia, claiming to target jihadists retreating from Mogadishu (Menkhaus 2007). More air strikes followed the next day and on 23 January (International Crisis Group 2007). The primary targets of the strikes were 'three "high-value" al Qaeda associates accused of organising the 1998 embassy bombings in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, and the 2003 hotel and airlines attacks in Mombasa, Kenya' (Cooke & Henek 2007:3). There have been no definitive reports on the results of the strikes, but most analyses are highly critical. The three suspects are still believed to be at large, many innocent civilians were killed and anti-Americanism increased ('Somalia: War in the Horn?' 2007). For many Somalis, the air strikes solidified the role of the US in the invasion and collapse of public order (Harper 2007). They have been used as a rallying cry by extremists intent on capitalising on counter-hegemonic resistance (Prendergast & Thomas-Jensen 2007:69).

Meanwhile, the US has found itself in an increasingly awkward position: identified with an unpopular Ethiopian occupation and a worsening situation. Right after the invasion, Washington pressed for the deployment of the African stabilisation force to replace the Ethiopians, promising \$14 million in initial support (Shinn 2007). However, only Uganda, seeking to boost its reputation with the US, sent 1 400 troops ('Uganda: America's Friend' 2007). At the same time, Washington continued mobilising support for the TFG while promoting inclusive national reconciliation (Frazer 2007). The European Union was frustrated that reconciliation seemed to be taking a back seat to backing the TFG (Weinstein 2007e). US officials made it a priority only after realising that the TFG could not survive without greater inclusion. On 7

April 2007, Frazer made a surprise visit to Baidoa, delivering this message to President Yusuf (Weinstein 2007g). Washington appointed a special envoy, Ambassador John Yates, to work with the TFG and coordinate US policy (Nguyen 2007). Still, TFG officials prefer to minimise reconciliation, fearing they may lose control. Given Western fear of Islamists re-emerging, the TFG believes it can defy these demands without losing US support (Marchal 2007). The US is thus frozen between a vulnerable state-building project and new terrorist threats, the likely result of incoherent strategy.

In the original report, the current section concluded at this point.⁵ However, developments that have since taken place between May and September are worth noting. One is that the US special envoy to Somalia has brought a more sophisticated and sober approach to the situation. Washington seems to have a greater realisation of the waning credibility of the TFG. However, without considerable alternatives, US officials have continued to press the TFG to become more inclusive and conciliatory. US officials have worked through the International Somalia Contact Group to support the NRC and prepare for elections in 2009 (Yates 2007). At the same time, US officials continue pressing and offering incentives for other African countries to send troops to support Amisom. US officials believe that a stronger peacekeeping force is needed to allow for Ethiopian withdrawal. Yet, as of October 2007, no African state appears to be willing to send troops into such an explosive situation.

The other major development has been escalating hostility between the US and Eritrea. Although the two countries were once working partners in the war on terror, Washington has increasingly accused Eritrea of meddling in Somali affairs and funding Islamist groups, including jihadists (Swan 2007). In August 2007, US Assistant Secretary of State Frazer reported that the US was considering placing Eritrea on the list of states sponsoring terrorists (Mazzetti 2007b). Threats by both sides have made for a tense situation with fears that violence in Somalia could expand to a rekindled border war between Eritrea and Ethiopia. Top US officials have already made several trips to the region in fear of escalating border tensions. A regional perspective of the unfolding events around Somalia demands continued research and monitoring.

Counter-terrorism predicaments

washington now finds itself in a situation it has hoped to avoid, that of supporting an unpopular government against mounting resentment, which has only added to the appeal of international extremist movements.

The continuing violence in Somalia 'is easily portrayed as one front in a global insurgency against a US agenda of dominating the Muslim world' (Mohammed 2007). Al-Qa'eda's Ayman al-Zawahiri made that very case in a speech in January 2007, connecting the resistance in Somalia to that in Afghanistan and Iraq. Several Internet videos recruit foreign fighters for Somalia by invoking the role of the US in the conflict (Black 2007:13–15). The presence of foreign fighters would greatly change the dynamics on the ground, likely triggering more US strikes and sustained involvement. As yet, there has been no evidence of foreign participation, but insurgents have adopted tactics from Iraq (Moss & Mekhennet 2007). Peter Kagwanja (2006:82) argues that paradoxically, US military involvement provides a tempting target for al-Qa'eda, yet it prompts a greater rush in Washington 'to maintain stricter surveillance'. In a sense, the two feed off each other.

In 2005, the International Crisis Group (2005b) reported that the Somalis themselves had provided the greatest defence against Islamic extremism, not foreign initiatives. Somalis' suspicion of foreigners and their ideologies may be the best protection against jihadism (Black 2007:16). Yet, at the same time, this mistrust is applied to the US and its intentions in the region. The danger is that strikes and snatch-and-grab operations increasingly make the US a target of Somali resentment, one that can be radicalised. De Waal and Salam (2004:257) argue, 'Confrontation will only nurture intolerance, jihadism may again become the sorcerer's apprentice of war.' However, this possibility presents a predicament because Washington will not adopt a passive position when it has intelligence of highly sought terrorists in Somalia. An effective counter-terror strategy must surely include short-term tactics to apprehend dangerous suspects. One needs to ask what particularly it is about US tactics that causes local antagonism. Conversely, one needs to know how Washington can achieve its short-term goals while minimising a backlash that undermines a long-term strategy.

A new dynamic of US operations is lack of public information and, consequently, lack of public accountability. David Chandler (2006b) argues that Western states are increasingly seeking to 'deny the power they wield' in the non-Western world, in what he labels 'empire in denial'. By focusing on 'partnership' and by employing surrogates, the US downplays its political role. Chandler (2006a:21) calls this method 'the politics of the evasion of responsibility'. The problem in Somalia's case is that this evasion perpetuates suspicion, and violent extremists can easily manipulate the ensuing confusion. For example, Somalis almost fully associate the US with the Ethiopian invasion. However, believed US concealment may actually incite anger because accountability has thus been removed. Alternatively, transparency

would at least undercut confusion about US intentions. Most importantly, it could better position the US to show clear leadership, expanding the International Contact Group for Somalia and uniting regional actors (Cooke & Henek 2007:5).

Nevertheless, another predicament involves US use of state building as a tactic for counter-terrorism. Washington's role in the overthrow of the UIC, associated with stability by many Somalis, has deepened resentment. Moreover, persisting to defend the TFG without condition will likely continue to fuel conflict in the short term (Menkhaus 2006/2007:94). Without substantive transformation, the TFG will continue to disillusion Hawiye individuals, making them easy allies for former UIC militants. Although Washington fears leaving a security vacuum, it must set and enforce clear conditions for its support for the TFG (Cooke & Henek 2007:4). Processes of power sharing among not only the rivaling clans but also the various political groups are essential if the TFG is ever to be a credible governing body (International Crisis Group 2005a:18). In fact, as the next chapter explains, these processes should probably precede establishing a comprehensive central government. The rigid and rushed insistence on the Westphalian model puts constraints on reconciliation (Murithi 2005:45).

Simply, the predicament that Somalia exposes is that the very processes of seeking control may hold the seeds for later insecurity. This chapter has shown that US policymaking toward Somalia is driven by efforts to normalise and regulate dynamics. As Chapter One showed, US officials perceive the greatest threat as the 'unpredictable' or, from a more critical perspective, the 'uncontrollable'. Without a more nuanced assessment, the UIC was quickly put in this category. However, as this chapter documented, US efforts to gain control have contributed to new levels of violence and instability. Local resentment is particularly stoked by the reliance on surrogates and lack of public transparency. The current shift to tactical state building is falling prey to the same backlash, especially given the volatility of the Somali 'state' described in Chapter Two. This comment is not to argue against state building but to problematise its recent application in relation to counter-terrorism. State building is a deeply important and highly volatile process; those on the outside who involve themselves in it must be well prepared to accept the often erratic consequences of that involvement.

CHAPTER 4

PROSPECTS FOR PEACE IN SOMALIA

As violence persists in Somalia, US officials have held that reviving a central government is now essential not only for counter-terrorism but also for peace. They contend, quite sensibly from a theoretical perspective, that only legitimate and functional governance can bring a halt to the fighting. Paradoxically, however, as the preceding chapters have shown, it is the current fusion of 'counter-terrorism' and externally driven state building that is fuelling intensifying violence. On the streets of Mogadishu, the TFG is no longer seen as just a front for the Darod clan, but also now for the Ethiopian 'occupiers' and their American allies. This view has spurred a violent backlash of Somali nationalists, Hawiye loyalists and an emerging extremist network. With Ethiopian troops unable to withdraw soon, their presence will likely continue to incite violent resistance. Chapter Three highlighted the way in which this development exposes complex contradictions for US counter-terrorism in the region. This chapter shifts to the interests of the Somalis and their primary desires for peace and security. It investigates how recent developments have interacted with the realisation of those goals.

On the surface, the Somalia experience debunks the post-9/11 US tendency to conflate state building with conflict management. In fact, the two can be counterproductive, especially when employed primarily for security objectives (Menkhaus 2004:18). Chapter One introduced the theoretical dilemmas of state formation and external involvement in that process. First, this chapter returns to that literature, evaluating its merits in the light of dynamics in Somalia. In particular, the Somali experience shows the unique and often misunderstood role of peacebuilding in this domain. The recent securitisation of state building has largely overlooked the necessity of cooperative and communicative ties across divided communities. Second, realising this gap, this chapter examines prospects for reconciliation in Somalia and especially considers future scenarios. Third, it concludes by identifying future considerations for US policy in Somalia. Failure to thoughtfully integrate conflict management into state building will at best create a fragile government whose legitimacy is deeply contested. At worst, it will spur greater violence with hostility directed not only at the internal elites but also at their perceived external patrons.

Modern conflicts of state building

As discussed in Chapter One, the practice of state building necessarily involves conflict; it is the process of forging new systems of control and order. Huntington (1968:41) famously wrote that political violence in the developing world is essentially rooted in the struggle to achieve modernity. US officials have used this same notion to characterise current violence in Somalia. The implicit extension of this analysis is that eventually, with some external support, fighting will give way to state consolidation. Yet this takes for granted that a particular state identity is instinctive or intuitive for a given people. In fact, many of the borders of the developing world, as those of Somalia, were arbitrarily established during colonial rule (Murithi 2005:45). Given the violence entailed to build or even maintain these states, one needs to ask whether investing in sub-state or in trans-state polities would be more suitable.

The Somali experience provides further challenges to the Western analysis. One reason is that Somalia's lack of central government since 1991 proves that there is no inevitability to state making. In fact, Somalia has survived for 16 years with sub-state governance and an informal (and often illicit) economy. This situation has hardly been ideal given the persistent poverty, but it has provided basic stability. In Somaliland, communities have actually established a semi-functioning administration and achieved some economic growth. These developments draw the critical distinction between central government and governance (Menkhaus 2006/2007:82). For Somalia, the latter has organically arisen and matured without the former. These realities challenge the traditional definitions of state-ness and its transformations. The definitions of *state* provided by Weber, Tilly and Fukuyama could all apply in part to sub-state governance in Somalia. Yet they provide little nuance to dissect the interplay of governance and government on various societal levels. There is a need for updated theory that recognises the challenges of today's 'failed state' context.

In that context, as Somalia highlights, many groups actually see traditional state building, especially when externally propelled, as a threat. First, some groups are profiting from the absence of law and order. The emergence of a central authority threatens to regulate and even stop their illicit economic activities. More significantly, however, others fear state formation because it may be used to harm them and their communities (Ayoob 1995:32). Especially in places with disparate social or ethnic groups, state consolidation may be perceived as a winner-takes-all circumstance (Keohane 2003:280–287). In Somalia, inter-clan animosity easily spills into the political arena as each

group fears that the others will gain advantage. For the people of Somalia, their only experience with central government has come with divide-and-rule policies dating back to colonialism. Therefore, the state is seen not as a source of stability but as a tool of power and domination. Without an emphasis on reconciliation or innovative approaches to governance, it comes as no surprise that state building faces wide resistance.

This security predicament is exacerbated by external involvement, which brings new incentives, pressures and constraints. The influx of money and resources in a 'failed state' context guarantees international state builders no shortage of willing partners. It equally assures them agenda-setting power. One danger, however, is that this influence can actually supersede local institutions. To secure their external patronage, local actors may respond more to international pressure and timelines than to their domestic constituencies. This situation may lead to illegitimate and unpopular governments, such as the TFG in Somalia.

For outside actors, this state of affairs may not be a concern if their priority is predictability or stability (Kagwanja 2006), not legitimacy. According to David Chandler (2006a), Western state-building projects are primarily a means to install mechanisms for regulation and surveillance. The author (2006a:37) writes, 'Rather than being a barrier to external interference, sovereignty becomes a medium through which Non-western States and societies become integrated into networks of external regulation.' Indeed in Somalia, US 'state-building' assistance is first about gaining 'eyes and ears', access and allies rather than actually advancing functional governance.

Yet, although the resulting regimes may bring predictability in the short term, this securitisation of state building is proving to be deeply unstable for the states involved and their international backers. For developing countries, balancing international (largely Western) pressures with local sensitivities may be nearly impossible (Ayoob 1995:30), especially when Western pressures include an emphasis on empowering the security apparatus of the emerging state. Increasing military and police assistance often implicitly enables repressive state practices. Activity of this kind has the potential to incite violent backlash against not only local governments but also their perceived international supporters. As Robert Pape (2003:343–362) indicates, nothing inspires terrorism more than perceptions of foreign military occupation or involvement.

Furthermore, providing international 'state-building' assistance may be seen as backing one group against its rivals. In Somalia, this perception has drawn

the US into inter-clan hostility while internationalising enmity. In this way, suspicion about US involvement is easily manipulated by counter-elites and in Muslim countries, Islamist movements. Resentment feeds radicalisation. Without relationships on the ground first being changed, state building is always a violent gamble for all involved.

Peacebuilding perspective

Reducing the risks of violence in state building may be possible, but it requires new consciousness of peacebuilding. This section examines the role of peacebuilding, which is defined as the work of transforming relationships to foster communicative and cooperative ties across groups. The recent assumption has been that it will follow the establishment of central government. However, the contested nature of the state in Somalia shows that, in fact, peace and state building are often 'mutually antagonistic enterprises' (Menkhaus 2004:18). As described above, the rush to erect a government can actually exacerbate group divisions and fuel violent backlash.

In Somalia, the international community has thus found itself trapped, urging the TFG to pursue reconciliation. Yet reconciliation is not something that can simply be affixed to state building. The nation-states one knows today all required basic ties that made a national identity even worth considering. Before investing so heavily in state projects, external actors should identify whether or not such ties do exist and, conversely, which potential conflicts may arise. Given an unfavourable climate, it may be wiser to invest in strategic peacebuilding rather than to bankroll these projects that have little chance of succeeding. Beyond targeted mediation, this means supporting initiatives—economic, social and educational—that build relationships across divided communities.

Yet where this sequencing is not possible and state-building projects are underway, it still may be possible to integrate effective peacebuilding. In the past, writers distinguished between the tasks of state building and nation building. The latter involves the ongoing development and promotion of a shared sense of national identity (Chesterman 2004:4). These processes include initiatives to build sustained relationships among disparate groups. In addition, they mean creating a national space in which competing groups agree to a common ground and some degree of shared interest. Creating such a space and fostering a shared stake in the 'nation' are important steps toward conflict management.

Still, peacebuilding concerns more than identity issues; it involves addressing longstanding grievances. For people to give the state legitimacy, the state must take up issues of importance to them. For Somalis, this means addressing land grabbing and inequalities dating back to the 1980s. Avoidance of these grievances reinforces public cynicism about state-building projects. Acknowledging them earlier might weaken the appeal of potential spoilers. Meanwhile, peacebuilding additionally concerns changing the environment in which these interactions take place. Stopping the flood of small arms and light weapons is critical to reduce the easy choice of violent resistance.

Many of today's state-building conflicts stem from the controversial involvement of external actors. A peacebuilding perspective is helpful here. The first point to consider is how external incentives and pressures may constrain the ability of local actors to overcome group divisions. The US-backed Ethiopian invasion aimed at overthrowing the UIC clearly exacerbated those divisions. Of course, the stated justification for the invasion was security, not state building. However, as the US now promotes the latter, it must recognise its own role in obstructing that very process. The tendency has been to portray Western involvement 'as above politics' (Chandler 2006b:485); yet local actors hardly see it that way. In fact, the lack of transparency about US policy feeds suspicion.

For good reason, many suspect US commitment to state building is simply a veneer for its security operations. It is a naïve for Washington to believe it can be a credible reconciler or mediator without first overcoming this trust gap. Moreover, this mistrust highlights that the Ethiopian invasion has created new tensions between outside actors and Somalis. In a sense, the US needs to take steps to reconcile and restore relationships with aggrieved Somalis. Without efforts to build new relationships, the US will continue to function with little credibility and limited on-the-ground intelligence (Cooke & Henek 2007). Repeatedly talking to the same actors and avoiding others offers little hope for creative transformation.

Future prospects for Somalia

Given these perspectives, this section turns to future prospects for Somalia and potential for peace. First, as violence continues, the TFG has finally realised, partially because of international pressure, that it must become inclusive. It is widely believed the TFG will collapse if it fails to reach out to clans other than the Darod, businessmen, civil society and even former

members of the UIC political wing (Shinn 2007). Most importantly, the TFG needs to bridge the divide with the opposition that has coalesced in the SCLR and now the ARS. Yet the task of reconciliation could not be more delicate. On the one hand, gaining widespread allegiance from Somali society will likely require a process whereby the TFG is reduced to its parts and the makeup of the central government is re-negotiated (Marchal 2007). The TFG is unlikely to accept the risks of any such reduction. Therefore, the NRC stuck to a clan-based formula for participation and focused mostly on clan disputes. TFG leaders are clearly reluctant to risk losing their power while believing their international backers cannot afford to abandon them.

In addition, effective reconciliation requires far more than distributing political offices. Ultimately, it must address 'the future economic dispensation in Somalia—control of the monetary authority, mechanisms for contracting, land tenure system' (De Waal 2007). At the NRC, the TFG was not even willing to acknowledge these political issues. When they finally did so in August 2007, hostile debate ensued, which suspended the reconciliation conference. Still, having that debate in a sensible and inclusive manner is a prerequisite for a viable political settlement. The failure of past state-building initiatives to do so has undermined their legitimacy (Menkhaus 2006/2007:77).

At the same time, many of the TFG's adversaries have been reluctant to engage in reconciliation until the Ethiopian 'occupiers' withdraw. The ARS appears to be content to evade any negotiations and to continue undermining the TFG until that takes place. Immediately after the invasion International Crisis Group (2007) wrote, 'The early withdrawal of Ethiopian forces from Somalia is a critical element in stabilising the situation.' Ten months later, the persistent presence of Ethiopian troops continues to incite resentment among most Somalis. The Ethiopians, for their part, are eager to withdraw, but they remain because of concern in Addis Ababa and Washington about leaving a 'security vacuum'. The Amisom force supposed to replace them has received only 1 400 troops from Uganda. Burundi, Ghana and Nigeria have all pledged troops but have remained unwilling to send them until there is any semblance of peace to keep (Weinstein 2007c). Furthermore, most observers believe Amisom lacks a clear mandate and, more importantly, popular support (Shinn 2007). The Ugandan troops have largely been a sideshow, keeping close to the airport in Mogadishu.

At least in the short term, the Ethiopians will remain, although they face increasing pressures. The number and intensity of insurgent attacks against Ethiopian and TFG installations continue to increase. On 24 April 2007, the ONLF attacked a Chinese oil exploration site in Ethiopia, killing nine

Chinese and 65 Ethiopian workers (Weinstein 2007d). In recent months, the ONLF has claimed responsibility for further attacks on Ethiopian soldiers and installations (“Skirmishes” in Ethiopia’s Ogaden’ 2007). In response, the Ethiopian army has committed massive crimes against civilians in the Ogaden region, including public executions and rampant sexual violence and the burning of villages (Zarifi 2007). The result has been a massive humanitarian crisis. Continued tensions in the Ogaden seem to confirm the fear that the Ethiopian occupation in Somalia is exacerbating domestic tensions within Ethiopia (Mohammed 2007).

Ethiopia thus finds itself in a catch-22 situation: The stakes are too high to withdraw and, at the same time, too high not to. At the moment, without changes in Amisom, Ethiopia will remain. In a best-case scenario, this would allow the TFG to rapidly gain competency, expand its reach and establish some basic rule of law. To do so, however, the Ethiopians will have to reconcile with the Hawiye clan as they did briefly with a fragile ceasefire in mid-April 2007. A more likely scenario, however, is that the Ethiopian troops will continue to be the object of roadside explosions, targeted assassinations and the occasional suicide bombing. Such events may eventually force Ethiopia to withdraw. Anticipating such actions, the UN discussed the deployment of its own peacekeepers (Wornip 2007) but most countries were reluctant to support a clearly politicised mission. With international fatigue growing over recent months, a UN force now seems even more unlikely. In fact, even as displacement grows, the international community appears to be largely unwilling to take any serious action toward resolving the humanitarian crisis. Thus any Ethiopian withdrawal will probably be protracted and muddled, creating unrealistic expectations that a weak Amisom force will find difficult to meet.

The most likely scenario in the meantime is that Somalia will continue reverting to the tense, lawless conditions prevalent before the rise of the UIC. In most parts of the country, this deterioration has already occurred and inter-clan fighting is taking place to re-establish control of territory. Without significant changes, the TFG will continue collapsing. The potential for clan-based warfare such as that of the early 1990s looms large (Hassan & Barnes 2007). However, the new feature of the Somali landscape is the growing extremist network. Somalis are typically averse to foreign ideology, but frustration at military occupation is overriding that attitude. Insurgents in Mogadishu have taken to using Iraq-like tactics and their attacks have been intensifying. Evidence shows that foreign fighters are seeking to enter Somalia (Black 2007:16–17). It is unclear what role these new political dynamics will play in the continued disintegration of central authority.

In the short term, the best hope to halt these developments would be the withdrawal of Ethiopian troops. Still, the volatile reconciliation process is even more critical to establish a basic consensus for governance and order. Nothing will alienate extremists more than bridging the divisions among Somalia's clans, businessmen, civil society members and Islamic leaders. The recent reshuffling of top government officials, including the position of the prime minister, offers a small window of opportunity to reach out to disillusioned groups. Furthermore, it provides occasion for the TFG to rethink its refusal to engage in serious talks with the SCLR, and now the ARS. Fostering contacts and opening communication could create momentum for a political process in which many external stakeholders would surely invest. Yet such steps toward a viable political solution mean shifting from a state-building concentration to one of power sharing and peace building. Unfortunately, this does not fit easily in the current war-on-terror paradigm.

Future prospects for United States Somalia policy

Primarily because of its leverage and profile, US policy will continue to have a significant impact on the above scenarios. Building on the previous chapter, this section considers prospects for US future policy. First, Washington must acknowledge that it still operates with a serious deficit of credibility and relationships with many local actors. By branding the UIC 'terrorists', censuring the SCLR and eschewing the ARS, the US has stifled its potential to mediate a viable political solution. A deep public resentment at the perceived US backing of warlords in Mogadishu and now the unpopular Ethiopian occupation persists. If this mistrust is not addressed, a cloud of suspicion will remain over any US activity. More importantly, this cloud extends to those collaborating with Washington, especially the TFG.

Turning to the future, the US could react by scaling down activity in Somalia and trying to extricate itself from the country, as it did in 1995. This action is unlikely, not least because the US remains concerned about the presence of several high-risk terrorists in the region. In fact, many expect more US air strikes against these targets. Furthermore, as in Iraq, the growing extremist movement and potential influx of foreign fighters will likely provoke greater US military activity. The question is whether Washington will continue to rely on surrogate forces for its counter-terror operations. Given the domestic politics of US troop deployment in Iraq, this will likely be the preferred course of action. There is no reason to think that US military assistance to and training in Ethiopia will stop in the short term. Anticipating the eventual

withdrawal of Ethiopian troops, US officials will continue pushing for African allies to send troops to bolster Amisom.

However, the strategy of surrogate forces will likely continue exacerbating the suspicion that strengthens the insurgency. On the one hand, the US is blamed for the actions of its surrogates on the ground, even if it was not specifically involved. On the other, its surrogates are connected with the anti-American sentiment that is especially acute in Muslim countries. In Somalia, this reciprocal dynamic is deepened by the fact that the US surrogate is the country's historic enemy. Consequently, the insurgency in Somalia will likely grow, including an extremist network that is backed by international funds and, possibly, fighters. It is worth considering how transparency about US intentions alone could reduce such public resentment. If Washington continues down that path, it will likely arrive in a situation similar to that in Iraq today: being targeted by extremists and being caught in the midst of sectarian violence. However, a pivotal difference exists from Iraq: There are no US troops in Somalia, and thus US action in the region is largely evading domestic scrutiny.

Another similarity though between the situation in Somalia and that in Iraq is that the US has fused its counter-terror goals with a new emphasis on state building. At present, Washington finds itself in the tenuous position of backing and funding the TFG while urging it to 'reach out' (McCormack 2007a). US officials have pressed heavily for more reconciliation because they realise the TFG will not survive without becoming more inclusive (Yusuf 2007). Yet the US has limited leverage because the TFG leadership believes Washington will not abandon it (Weinstein 2007c). To date, US officials have given it little reason to think otherwise. Washington increasingly recognises that the TFG has little support but without an alternative, it will keep backing the TFG in the short term. Perhaps officials hope that the TFG will make a breakthrough if it is given enough time. However, this is increasingly unlikely.

If Somalia continues its spiral into political collapse, Washington will be forced to consider several alternatives and policy shifts. One is making its support for the TFG conditional on several benchmarks for inclusion and power sharing. Washington needs to develop a coherent 'carrots and sticks' package to push the TFG toward more robust political reconciliation. In particular, to make 'sticks' effective, the US must signal a real willingness to withdraw its political support. Washington must decide when and under what conditions backing the TFG is no longer worth the costs. Only by so doing can the US begin to restore real leverage over Somali politics. These potential sanctions should be juxtaposed with economic and security incentives. Washington

can also give President Yusuf and his cadre greater confidence to negotiate with the opposition without completely risking their political survival.

At the same time, such a policy shift necessitates new openness to engage with actors previously rebuked by Washington. US officials should reach out to groups disillusioned by recent events and the current Ethiopian occupation. Although justifiably troubled by certain individuals, the US should approach the ARS as a unified political opposition, not a terrorist threat. If steered effectively, the formation of the ARS may in fact set the stage for political bargaining that defuses the current insurgency. In addition, the US should cultivate its channels with non-political actors who hold influence in Somali society, such as businessmen and civil society leaders. In addition, engagement, both private and public, with Islamic leaders could go a long way toward overcoming a legacy of mistrust. Yet, for such initiatives to succeed, Washington will need to put more institutional resources toward its Somalia policy. The appointment of John Yates as special envoy to Somalia was an important start. Providing institutional resources must be followed by applying regional expertise and hiring and training new staff for the State Department, USAID, the Pentagon and the CIA (Shinn 2004:42).

Still, the US must remain cautious about taking a unilateral lead in mediation or political negotiations given its partiality in the situation. As this report has shown, perceptions of Washington's role in the current political chaos have fuelled widespread resentment. For this reason, coordinated regional diplomacy has never been more essential. The Arab League, for instance, could exert critical leverage with the ARS, especially if the TFG should take serious steps toward political negotiations. Regional governments, notably Kenya and Sudan, can then help foster a renewed mediation initiative among Somali groups. However, such a regional strategy hinges on the support of both Ethiopia and Eritrea, the perpetual spoilers in Somali affairs. The current US approach of backing one while rebuking the other has only entrenched the conflict. More importantly, it has antagonised Eritrea and reduced any space for constructive engagement. Just as with the TFG, the US needs to rethink its rigid position toward Eritrea to maximise leverage. The US cannot expect to change dynamics within Somalia dramatically without transforming its relationships in the wider region.

Finally, the continuing violence in Somalia should force US policymakers to reconsider the current application of state building as a tactic of counter-terrorism. There may be no inherent contradiction, but there are practical ones when one tries to combine building states and fighting terror. Both are needed goals, but Washington would be wiser to separate them in

strategy unless there is far more planning. More extensive preparation and transparency would allow the US to be more upfront with local populations about its intent. It would help to deflate suspicions of imperialism. Most importantly, perhaps, it might allow strategies—both in counter-terrorism and in state building—to be driven less by ideology and more by honest, on-the-ground judgments.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this report has been to discuss the interplay of the two tenets of US strategy in Somalia: counter-terrorism and state building. Chapter One described how the war on terror has reclaimed the state as its unit of analysis, problematising failed states. Subsequently, US officials have stressed 'state-building' projects as a means to stabilise, monitor and mollify arising threats. Yet this view has overlooked that state building is a delicate and often divisive process. Chapter Two illustrated these dilemmas in Somalia, where central government is largely seen as a 'winner-takes-all' (Keohane 2003:280) instrument for 'rent-seeking patrimonialism' (De Waal 2007). Given the colonial legacy of divide-and-rule policies, each clan fears the other will use state power for subjugation. Therefore, initiatives for state building have mostly been 'conflict-producing exercises' (Menkhaus 2006/2007:94). In the midst of consequent state collapse, alternative forms of governance have emerged to meet Somali needs. The most prominent development has been the rise of political Islam, including that of the UIC, which overtook Mogadishu in mid-2006. For various reasons, this development sparked international and US concern. However, failure to comprehend Somalia's state-building dilemmas has fed counterproductive responses.

Chapter Three analysed the trajectory of US policy in response to perceived security threats in Somalia. After the 9/11 attacks, Bush Administration officials quickly identified Somalia as a haven for terrorists. The combination of failed state, political Islam and proximity to the Middle East made the country an obvious target (Menkhaus 2004:67). Yet, after a 'decade of disengagement' (Cooke & Henek 2007:4), Washington primarily paid surrogate forces to gain access: first, an alliance of Mogadishu warlords, and now the Ethiopian army. The predicament is that these forces fuelled instability at the same time that the US proclaimed its commitment to state building. The continued Ethiopian occupation has undermined the TFG's public legitimacy and antagonised its opponents.

Moreover, a growing armed movement is being mobilising by both the occupation and the suspicion of US involvement. Extremists in particular

have benefited from the inter-clan antagonism stirred by hasty state building. As Chapter Four predicted, the ensuing violence is gaining a self-propelling momentum that makes the needed reconciliation increasingly more difficult. Perhaps only a dramatic shift to regional diplomacy and a peacebuilding agenda can now mitigate conflict and salvage US strategy. Yet, in the bigger picture, there are several lessons that US policymakers can take from the Somalia experience.

Lessons for United States strategy

First, as this report has argued, the post-9/11 merger of counter-terrorism and state building has not been well planned and is thus proving to be largely counterproductive to both goals. The former has entailed incursions into the society while the latter involves efforts to reshape that society. The US' pursuing these goals simultaneously without transparency or credibility breeds suspicion about the country's imperialism. In state building, the role of external actors is sensitive enough without involving securitisation. Controversial counter-terror activity limits US credibility to pursue civilian affairs.

Furthermore, as in Somalia, a reliance on surrogates for counter-terrorism adds to public suspicion. Although using surrogates has its advantages, including minimal risks to US personnel, it gives Washington less control over public relations. This lack provides extremists with space to manipulate public perceptions of US policy. In many Somali eyes, the US and Ethiopia are now equally to be blamed for the Ethiopian occupation. Above all, nothing inspires backlash more than perceptions of foreign military occupation, especially in Islamic countries that view US policy as anti-Muslim.

For counter-terrorism, this lack of transparency has left the US in a largely passive position when it tries to discredit the insurgency in Somalia. One largely accepted tenet of counter-insurgency theory is the importance of managing information flows toward winning hearts and minds. According to *Quadrennial Defense Review* (2006), 'Victory will come when the enemy's extremist ideologies are discredited in the eyes of their host populations and tacit supporters.' Yet reliance on surrogates limits US ability to engage in any kind of information operations. In Somalia, Washington's primary communication with locals comes through the barrel of Ethiopian and TFG guns or through AC-130 air strikes. Greater transparency would not suppress anti-Americanism, but the US could engage in a more public battle of ideas and incentives. To do so, Washington would need to devote greater

institutional resources to the integration of information operations. This step includes the widespread use of the media and the Internet to articulate US vision and, especially, to dispute extremist ideology. Locals cannot be expected to support Washington's wishes without knowing specifically how they will ultimately benefit.

Transparency is the first step towards rebuilding credibility, another basic tenet of counterinsurgency. Winning hearts and minds concerns the right messaging and gaining people's trust in the integrity of that message. There are few places in which US credibility is so lacking as in Somalia. A legacy of inconsistent interventions and covert campaigns has left a cloud of mistrust over US involvement. Overcoming such a legacy requires first humility and then initiative to rebuild relationships across the divides of a given society. This is not an impromptu process of simply buying allies or backing a partisan group; it requires long-term presence and investments on the ground. Local actors need to trust that the US is willing to keep long-term commitments. Further, rebuilding trust cannot rely too heavily on the military, the current trend of US engagement throughout Africa. The military surely has a role to play, but its presence evokes discourses of violence and limits the space for creative dialogue. Military relationships need to be combined with a reinvigorated commitment to diplomacy. Washington can no longer deny its deeply *political* role in the developing world.

The same applies to state building where US participation necessarily entails bestowing privileges on some actors at the expense of others. As in Somalia, this action can fuel more instability than state stability. The volatility of state building should make US officials pause before making it a formulaic tactic for counter-terrorism. In Somalia and elsewhere, Washington is now stuck trying to patch together ad hoc 'reconciliation' to prevent further political collapse. The larger lesson here is that a peacebuilding perspective must precede that of state building. Strong states are built primarily by cultivating cooperative and communicative ties across a society. For US counter-terrorism, too, the existence of such ties is probably the best possible arrangement to monitor asymmetric threats and collect useful intelligence.

Yet, for Washington, peacebuilding requires a shifting of priorities. First, the US must adapt to the increasing number of non-state actors who may hold even more societal leverage than state actors. Second, the US must be willing to take greater risks to push mediation and reconciliation whenever possible. Finally, and most importantly, US strategists will need to recognise the inherent contradictions of using military might to fight terror and build states.

Future imperative

Looking to the future, probably the most urgent task facing Western countries is raising the profile of a public conversation about the situation in Somalia, and encouraging it. With no US or EU troops deployed, the Ethiopian invasion and ensuing violence have hardly received the public scrutiny warranted by the scale of suffering. This vacuum has allowed policymakers to function with little domestic accountability. Moreover, it has been enabled by a significant shortage of linguistic, historic and cultural expertise in Somali matters on the part of the West. A handful of academics are committed to Somalia, but they are not enough. Because of the dangerous conditions, few new academics have conducted fieldwork there in the last decade. These conditions are unlikely to change soon, but the number of academics working on Somali issues urgently need to be increased. This step includes supporting and elevating the work of Somali researchers.

The call for researchers is reinforced by several research questions that still demand attention. First, given current efforts at reconciliation, what can be learned by past initiatives to overcome Somalia's divides and those of other societies? In particular, who are the key actors who have the power to move reconciliation forward and, conversely, to derail it? 'Reconciliation' has become a buzzword for the international community as state-building projects collapse, but little thought has been given to the exact needs of the process. The interplay of governance and economy in Somalia is related to this topic, but it has not received enough attention. Alex de Waal (2007) in particular has identified outstanding land grievances as a primary driver of conflict. One needs to ask how addressing these land issues can be synchronised with political reconciliation. Finally, forward-looking research is needed to consider the role of external actors and groups in promoting a political solution, or failing to do so. What are the prospects for regional mediation, and how can AU peacekeeping be made more effective? How might resolution of the Ethiopia–Eritrea conflict open creative possibilities for Somalia?

This research can help shape more sophisticated and nuanced US policy in Somalia. However, policies will always be informed by the larger strategy and its basic assumptions. This report has examined many of those assumptions surrounding counter-terrorism and its latest tactic, state building. These include the privileging of military tools to address state weakness. In this regard, US strategy has prioritised military-to-military relationships for surveillance and surrogate operations. Yet, as Somalia attests, over-militarised strategy can incite backlash and prove to be counterproductive. In the light

of violence in Iraq, many US officials are already rethinking this strategy. The imperative that lies ahead for policymakers and researchers alike is the crafting of a strategy that both responds to local realities and imaginatively envisions a shared future. In an age of terror, it is predictable that one would want to control the unknown and suppress the unpredictable. Yet security through the barrel of a gun only breeds more insecurity. The sooner we realise this contradiction and begin an authentic search for alternatives, the better.

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Notes

- 1 This monograph was originally written as an MA dissertation at the University of Bradford's Peace Studies Department.
- 2 Of the ten countries sending arms to Somalia, those providing to the UIC include Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Arab Jamahiriya, Saudi Arabia, and the Syrian Arab Republic. Those providing arms to the TFG include Ethiopia, Uganda and Yemen (UN Security Council 2002). A letter dated 21 November 2006 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to Resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia was addressed to the President of the Security Council, UN Security Council S/2006/913 (22 November 2006):213.
- 3 The original end date for research on this report was 1 June 2007, but this version has been updated with events through September 2007.
- 4 Key individuals paid by the US for counter-terrorism included 'Mohamed Omar Habeeb (a.k.a Mohamed "Dheere," regional "governor" of the Middle Shabelle), Bashir Raghe (a northern Mogadishu businessman), Mohamed Qanyare Afrah Hussein Aydiid, and Generals Mohamed Nur Galal and Ahmed Hili'ow Addow' (International Crisis Group 2005b:10).
- 5 Research for the original report had the end date of 1 June 2007. However, this section has been updated to consider events through September 2007.

