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Counterinsurgency in Somalia: Lessons Learned from the African Union Mission in Somalia, 2007-2013

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JSOU Report 14-5
September 2014

Joint Special Operations University
7701 Tampa Point Boulevard
MacDill AFB FL 33621

https://jsou.socom.mil

Report Documentation Page

Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.

1. REPORT DATE	2. REPORT TYPE	3. DATES COVERED
SEP 2014		**00-00-2014 to 00-00-2014**

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE	5a. CONTRACT NUMBER
Counterinsurgency in Somalia: Lessons Learned from the African Union Mission in Somalia, 2007-2013	5b. GRANT NUMBER
	5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER

6. AUTHOR(S)	5d. PROJECT NUMBER
	5e. TASK NUMBER
	5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER

7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)	8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER
Joint Special Operations University,7701 Tampa Point Boulevard,MacDill AFB,FL,33621	

9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)	10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)
	11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)

12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT
Approved for public release; distribution unlimited

13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

14. ABSTRACT

15. SUBJECT TERMS

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT **unclassified**	b. ABSTRACT **unclassified**	c. THIS PAGE **unclassified**	**Same as Report (SAR)**	**130**	

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Foreword

Since its descent into civil war in 1988, Somalia has been steeped in decades of violence. Fourteen peace conferences sponsored by the international community failed to end the conflict and rebuild state institutions. Attempts to increase security, primarily through United Nations peacekeeping missions, failed to create a successful peace process. The Battle of Mogadishu fought in 1993 by United States military forces, in support of a United Nations humanitarian assistance mission, vividly displayed the extent of anarchy and violence in the country.

Ms. Bronwyn Bruton and Dr. Paul Williams bring their expertise in governance, conflict mitigation, and Africa, to this analysis of Somalia's attempts to establish security and build state institutions while facing the Harakat al-Shabaab insurgency. By every measure of state effectiveness—income generation and distribution, execution of the rule of law, and ability to provide basic human security—Somalia has little or no capability. In the aftermath of the attacks on the U.S. on 9/11, fears grew that Somalia would become a safehaven for al-Qaeda and al-Qaeda affiliates increased.

The authors address the roots of Somalia's long-running conflict and examine the often conflicting motivations of the large range of actors: local, national, regional, and international. This context is essential for understanding the evolution and sustainment of Harakat al-Shabaab. This insurgency threatens the nascent federal government and the strengthening of the state. With its links to al-Qaeda, Harakat al-Shabaab remains a security challenge for the entire Horn of Africa.

First deployed in 2007, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), with a current force of 22,000 uniformed personnel, is the African Union's largest ever peace support mission. AMISOM is notable for a number of reasons, especially the high level of regional involvement in addressing Somalia's political and security vacuum. Deployment and sustainment of AMISOM requires multilayered international partnerships among the United States, United Nations, European Union, African Union, and key troop providing countries including: Uganda, Burundi, Kenya, Djibouti, Sierra Leone and Ethiopia.

While AMISOM's goal was to protect Somalia's weak transitional national government and stabilize the security environment, its mission went well beyond traditional peacekeeping to include warfighting, counterinsurgency operations, and humanitarian assistance. The AMISOM approach may come to characterize future operations.

Ms. Bruton and Dr. Williams deftly analyze the complexity of countering the al-Shabaab insurgency. We offer this monograph as a resource for anyone faced with the challenges posed by al-Shabaab, similar insurgencies, and complex multinational operations.

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Kenneth H. Poole, Ed.D.
Director, Center for Special Operations Studies and Research

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Acknowledgements

The authors would like to acknowledge the many individuals and institutions who gave their time to discuss these issues and especially those individuals who provided detailed feedback on earlier versions of this document. Any remaining errors are our own. We are also grateful for financial support from the Joint Special Operations University, without which this project would not have been possible. Special thanks are also due to JSOU's three anonymous reviewers who offered useful suggestions on the draft version of this study. Dr. Williams would also like to acknowledge financial support provided by the SOAR initiative at the Elliott School of International Affairs at the George Washington University. Thanks are also due to Adrienne Chuck and Sam Fishman for their research assistance during the project.

About the Author

Bronwyn E. Bruton is deputy director of the Africa Center at the Atlantic Council. She has authored a series of prominent reports and journal essays on the Horn of Africa, including the 2009 Foreign Affairs essay, "In the Quicksands of Somalia," and the widely-read 2010 Council on Foreign Relations special report, *Somalia*: *A New Approach*. Her articles and editorials on the Horn of Africa are regularly featured in *Foreign Affairs*, the *New York Times*, the *International Herald Tribune, Foreign Policy* magazine and other prominent publications. She provides regular expert commentary on African political affairs for major international media outlets including: the BBC, PBS, NPR, ABC, NBC, *USA Today*, CTV, CCTV, Bloomberg, *the London Financial Times, Newsweek, The Economist* and others. She has lectured at the Council on Foreign Relations, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, the United States Institute for Peace, Harvard University, the Brookings Institute, Carnegie Endowment, the National Defense University, Chatham House (London), the U.S. Africa Command (Commander's Speaker Series), the World Bank, and the World Affairs Council.

Ms. Bruton has extensive field experience in Somalia. She managed the National Endowment for Democracy's multi-million dollar portfolio of small grants to local and international nongovernmental organizations operating in east and southern Africa, and managed post-conflict political transition programs in Africa for the U.S. Agency for International Development. She has also served as a policy analyst on the international affairs and trade team of the Government Accountability Office. She holds a Master of Public Policy, with Honors, from the University of California at Los Angeles.

Paul D. Williams is associate professor and associate director of the Security Policy Studies Master of Arts Program in the Elliott School of International Affairs at the George Washington University. He also serves as a Non-resident Senior Adviser at the International Peace Institute (IPI) in New York City and a Visiting Professor at the Institute for Peace and Security Studies in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. He co-manages the Providing for Peacekeeping Project (www.providingforpeacekeeping.org), which aims at generating and disseminating data and analysis to support efforts to improve the quality of troop and police contributions to UN peacekeeping and fill key capability gaps in those missions. He is currently working on a book-length study of the African Union Mission in Somalia.

A selection of his recent books include *Providing Peacekeepers: The Politics, Challenges and Future of UN Peacekeeping Contributions* (Oxford University Press, 2013), *War and Conflict in Africa* (Polity, 2011), *Understanding Peacekeeping* (Polity, 2nd ed. 2010), *Security and Development in Global Politics: A critical comparison* (Georgetown University Press, 2012), *Enhancing Civilian Protection in Peace Operations: Insights from Africa* (National Defense University Press, 2010), and *The International Politics of Mass Atrocities: The Case of Darfur* (Routledge, 2010). Dr. Williams holds a Ph.D. in International Politics from the University of Wales, Aberystwyth.

Map of Somalia
(source: Central Intelligence Agency)

Map of Mogadishu
(source: www.mapcarta.com)

Introduction

This monograph provides a detailed case study of how the African Union's (AU) largest ever peace support operation—the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)—sought to achieve its objectives. Though AMISOM activities continue, this monograph covers the period from its initial deployment in March 2007 through December 2013. It is based on an analysis of AMISOM's genesis and evolution and its principal partners—the various forms of federal authorities in Somalia—and its principal opponent—*Harakat al-Shabaab* (the youth). Also included is an analysis of U.S. engagement with Somalia during this period.

The study does not offer a comprehensive assessment of the multiple forms of broader international engagement with Somalia but instead focuses on the AMISOM experience. Nor does the study seek to advance one simple argument about AMISOM or impose a single theoretical framework for analyzing the mission. Pushing one argument or framework makes little sense because AMISOM and the international context in which it operated evolved in significant ways between 2007 and 2013. Instead, the study is based on a historical and political analysis of the key players and seeks to draw out key strategic and political lessons from AMISOM's experiences.

Over the last two decades, Somalia's many violent conflicts have posed a series of security challenges and political headaches for numerous actors within the Horn of Africa and beyond, including the United States. This study focuses on the security challenges in Somalia presented by the rise of the Harakat al-Shabaab movement since 2005. This movement was started by a small group of militants, some of whom had ties to al-Qaeda. Within a few years it gained control over more than 40,000 square kilometers of territory and some five million people, and attracted recruits from many parts of the Somali diaspora and beyond. At times, it was also able to pose an existential threat to the federal authorities in Mogadishu and managed to inflict severe losses on its regional military opponents. Although it has now been dislodged from the major urban centers and is experiencing internal splits, al-Shabaab has not been completely defeated and it is possible that it could be resuscitated as a resistance movement.

Deployed to Mogadishu in early 2007, AMISOM was tasked with protecting key figures in Somalia's transitional governing institutions, mainly

from their principal opponent: al-Shabaab. To that end, between 2007 and mid-2012, AMISOM grew from an initial deployment of some 1,500 Ugandan soldiers confined to a few bases in Mogadishu into a multidimensional force of nearly 18,000. This force included soldiers, police, and civilians from a variety of African states whose theater of operations spanned all of south and central Somalia. By December 2013 the mission's authorized strength had once again been increased to just over 22,000 uniformed personnel.

There are several reasons why AMISOM is an important case study for analysts and practitioners of counterinsurgency, particularly in Africa but also beyond the continent. First, AMISOM's experiences and evolution have exemplified both the positive and negative aspects of the multi-layered international partnerships that emerged between various actors, all of whom shared an interest in stabilizing Somalia. Among the key players in this story were the AU and the key AMISOM troop- and police-contributing countries (Uganda and Burundi, and then later Kenya, Djibouti, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria), the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), the Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), as well as the U.S., Ethiopia, and Turkey. AMISOM's experiences thus hold important lessons about the difficulties posed to peace operations when strategic coordination between key stakeholders is lacking.

Second, as the only peace operation launched under AU command and control between 2007 and late 2012, AMISOM became the central practical barometer of subsequent debates about the emerging African peace and security architecture as well as UN-regional cooperation with respect to peace operations on the continent. As the mission gradually transitioned from being perceived as a failure by some analysts to a relative success story, international talk of "an AMISOM model" started to proliferate. It influenced discussions on how to respond to a variety of crises, most notably in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, and the Central African Republic. As a consequence, the key lessons learned from AMISOM and how best to understand "the AMISOM model" have considerable relevance well beyond Somalia.

Third, AMISOM became the biggest and most complex peace operation ever conducted by the AU. As such, it starkly exposed the limits of the AU's capabilities (material, financial, and bureaucratic) and reiterated the importance of finding workable partnerships with various external actors, most notably the UN, the EU, and several key states: Ethiopia, the U.S., and later

Kenya. AMISOM's experiences thus exposed some of the practical problems that occur when political ambitions outrun the material capabilities of the organizations concerned.

AMISOM posed a particularly difficult set of challenges because it was never an "ordinary" peacekeeping operation. Rather than monitor a peace agreed by the conflict parties, AMISOM effectively took sides and engaged in a variety of activities including VIP protection, warfighting, counterinsurgency, as well as facilitating humanitarian assistance in a city—and later wider region—torn apart by war and political disputes. This significantly complicated efforts to support it through international mechanisms and programs which were designed primarily to assist more traditional UN-style peacekeeping operations. Moreover, AMISOM's warfighting remit naturally generated a considerable number of casualties.

> *AMISOM posed a particularly difficult set of challenges because it was never an "ordinary" peacekeeping operation.*

The precise number of AMISOM's fatalities remains unavailable to the public. Although the African Union handled compensation for the dead and injured (often via EU funds), its policy was that only the troop-contributing countries could declare these figures, and they did not do so. In late 2012, a public debate emerged over a claim made by a senior Kenyan official that 2,700 AMISOM troops had been killed.[1] Debate was reignited in mid-2013 when a senior UN official claimed that AMISOM had suffered approximately 3,000 fatalities.[2] The UN did not endorse this figure and AMISOM spokesmen refuted it, claiming instead that fewer than 500 peacekeepers had been killed, but they still refused to declare a definite number.[3]

Whatever the true figures for fatalities and injured AMISOM personnel, they are certainly far higher than those sustained in most peace operations, and this has major repercussions for weighing the political and human risks involved in conducting such missions. Quite simply, AMISOM would not have occurred and certainly would not have endured without the commitment and perseverance of several thousand soldiers from Uganda and Burundi and their political leaders. Both countries proved willing to take on a risky operation and mandate and suffer large numbers of casualties without withdrawing. On the other hand, their decision not to reveal the numbers of casualties probably fed suspicions that the numbers were extremely high and discouraged other countries from contributing.

Fourth, collaborative international efforts to stabilize Somalia provide further evidence of the importance of utilizing U.S. Special Operations Forces not solely to remove certain individuals from the battlefield, but also to achieve "sustained political-military effect" to shape and influence environments and populations by working alongside and empowering indigenous local and regional forces.[4] The Somalia case highlights many areas where there is considerable room for improvement on that score.

To address these issues, this study is divided into six sections. The first provides an overview and analysis of the Somali authorities, focusing particular attention on the two iterations of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) led by Abdullahi Yusuf and Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed respectively, key personalities within these transitional institutions of government who were meant to be protected by AMISOM but were also supposed to support AMISOM by creating a new and effective set of security forces. While, by and large, AMISOM achieved the former task, at no stage were the Somali security forces effective partners in the fight against al-Shabaab.

The second section then provides an overview and analysis of AMISOM's principal opponents, the Harakat al-Shabaab movement. After charting al-Shabaab's rise in Mogadishu and across much of south and central Somalia, this section then analyzes al-Shabaab's organizational dynamics and its military activities. In the third section we summarize the genesis of AMISOM, focusing on how the mission emerged from the various regional efforts by the IGAD and Ethiopia to address Somalia's conflict in general and the rise of the Union of Islamic Courts in particular.

The fourth section then explains how AMISOM evolved from its initial deployment into Mogadishu in March 2007 to the most recent phase of its activities across most of south and central Somalia in support of the new Federal Government of Somalia, established in September 2012. It does so by dividing AMISOM's evolution into five broad stages.

In the penultimate section, we turn our attention to the U.S. and its role in Somalia's conflict and examine the ways in which various U.S. Government agencies pursued their objectives in Somalia and how the U.S. Government provided support to AMISOM in particular. The final section discusses the main strategic and operational lessons that can be learned from this case.

1. Recreating a Central Government in Somalia

Somalia gained independence from its Italian and British colonizers in 1960. For the next nine years, Somalia was governed by an elected but corrupt democracy. In 1969, the government fell to a military coup led by General Siad Barre, who held Somalia in dictatorship until the end of the Cold War, with alternating support from the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Siad Barre imposed harsh restrictions on the practice of Islam and his ethnic nepotism and land seizures created a system of violent clan rivalry. In 1988 these rivalries broke out into open warfare, and in January 1991 Barre's regime collapsed, pushed out of Mogadishu by forces of the United Somali Congress (USC). When two rivals within the USC squabbled over the presidency, they instigated a period which Somalis call *burbur* (catastrophe) and the country descended into further protracted violence.[5]

Since 1991, international actors have sponsored 14 peace conferences in an effort to recreate the institutions of the Somali state, but the atrocities of the civil war period have not been documented, reparations have not been made, the divisive question of land reform remains entirely unsettled, and clan reconciliation remains a distant fantasy. As a result, none of the so-called peace efforts of the 1990s bore fruit. This led to a prevailing conventional wisdom that Somalia's conflicts were so entrenched as to be insoluble.

In the wake of the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, fears that Somalia's anarchic territories might provide a safe haven for al-Qaeda led to renewed interest by some external actors in a state building project. In November 2002, IGAD—with funding from the European Commission and political support from the AU, the Arab League and the UN—convened a Somali Reconciliation Conference, in Eldoret, Kenya.[6] Like previous efforts, the Eldoret conference failed to resolve the underlying drivers of the Somali conflict and aggravated the clan factions' feuding. The conference turned into a two-year run of negotiations. But in August 2004, IGAD succeeded in creating a Transitional Federal Charter and nominating a unicameral, 275-member Transitional Federal Parliament (TFP) composed primarily of faction leaders or "warlords," many of whom were suspected

of engaging in criminal activities and of committing atrocities following the civil war.

The charter outlined a five-year mandate for the TFG that would, theoretically, lead to a new Somali constitution and a transition to a representative government following national elections in 2009. It called for a decentralized system of administration in Somalia that would be headed by the TFG, but inclusive of existing state governments and regional administrations, such as Somaliland and Puntland. The Transitional Charter established Islam as the national religion of Somalia and it was based on the Islamic shari'a law, but nevertheless it established a quota requiring 12 percent of parliamentary seats be filled by women members of parliament.[7]

The Transitional Charter was instantly criticized in Somalia for its inclusion of the 4.5 formula: a quota system intended to equally allocate power to each of Somalia's four majority clans (Dir, Darod, Hawiye, and Rahanweyn), while giving a half-share allowance to historically disenfranchised minority clans (such as the Gaboye, Tumal, Yibir, Jaji, Yahar and the ethnic Bantus: the "0.5" in the formula). The 4.5 formula had been applied to previous governments and, though intended by the donors to create a level playing field between the clans, had proven ineffective at balancing clan interests and was widely despised in Somalia as an undemocratic ethnic quota system.

A former warlord, Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, was elected by the TFP to serve as the transitional president of Somalia from October 2004 until 2009. Yusuf was at the time the president of the Puntland region of Somalia, and was well-known to Ethiopia and to Washington for his efforts to defeat the radical *Al-Ittihad al-Islamiya* (AIAI) movement during the 1990s.

In contrast to the earlier Transitional National Government (TNG), which had been dominated by the Mogadishu-centered Hawiye clan, the TFG's top leaders and security forces were dominated by members of a coalition between Yusuf's Darod/Majerteen clan (based in Puntland) and the Hawiye/Abgal clan. This group was predominantly pro-Ethiopian, pro-federalist, and anti-Islamist.[8] The TFG moved into the Somali town of Jowhar and then Baidoa in June 2005.

The 4.5 formula required Yusuf to select his prime minister from a rival clan, rather than his own Darod/Majerteen sub-clan. He chose a relatively unknown "technocrat" (a veterinarian) from the Hawiye/Abgal subclan, Ali Mohamed Gedi. Yusuf and Gedi clashed from the beginning, and worse, Gedi's strong personal ties to the ruling regime in Addis Ababa cemented

rumors within the Somali population that the TFG was an Ethiopian proxy regime. Gedi's attempt to mend fences by adopting a posture of inclusiveness also backfired when, attempting to satisfy a host of competing clan constituencies, he appointed an unwieldy 90-member cabinet. This huge cabinet and the rancor between Yusuf and Gedi rendered the TFG utterly dysfunctional throughout Yusuf's entire five-year term in office.

Another problem was that the TFG was a donor-driven institution with little public support in Somalia. One of President Yusuf's predictable first acts was to visit African Union officials in Addis Ababa to advocate for the deployment of 20,000 peacekeepers to enable his government to take control of Somalia.[9] His appeals were partially successful: in March 2005, IGAD proposed the deployment of a peace support mission to Somalia (see section 4). But the IGAD mission to Somalia (IGASOM) failed to gain traction in the AU, and the troops failed to materialize. Yusuf's efforts to send foreign troops onto Somali soil nevertheless caused an irreparable schism within the TFG parliament, and Yusuf himself was derided in Somalia as an Ethiopian puppet. Support for the transitional government plummeted still further. The parliament feared to set foot in Somalia, and was forced to remain a government-in-exile in Nairobi until June 2005, when it tentatively relocated to the Somali town of Jowhar, where it sought the protection of warlord Mohammed Dheere. It then moved on to Baidoa, where in February 2006, the parliament was finally able to obtain its first quorum on Somali soil, in a re-purposed grain warehouse.

The threat of a Darod-led government with foreign military backing sparked a violent reaction in the Hawiye territories of southern Somalia. In Mogadishu, leaders of the Hawiye clan formed an alliance of convenience with a network of long-standing and clan-oriented Islamic community courts. They formed a unified and publicly popular opposition to a clique of Hawiye warlords who supported the TFG, and were already notorious for *Balkanizing* Mogadishu (by setting up criminal fiefdoms and taxing the flow of goods and people at illegal roadblocks throughout the city). Disastrously, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) also reportedly began to engage in covert operations against a small faction of the Islamic Courts: specifically, against a poorly-organized but radical Islamist youth militia which had begun a campaign of assassinations of TFG sympathizers. The CIA also enlisted a disreputable clique of Mogadishu warlords to assist in the capture of suspected al-Qaeda operatives. In February 2006, these warlords

announced their CIA connections and formed a public partnership: the Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counterterrorism (ARPCT).[10]

The Supreme Council of Islamic Courts

The ARPCT's debut confirmed popular suspicions of American collusion with the warlords (many of whom held ministerial posts in the TFG) and precipitated a violent popular revolt. There were four months of bloody street battles, in which the 11 autonomous Islamic Courts of Mogadishu joined forces with clan leaders and the business community, until finally the ARPCT was defeated. On 5 June 2006, a new governing coalition emerged in Mogadishu, calling itself the Supreme Council of Islamic Courts (SCIC).

The SCIC's rise to power was lucky rather than planned. Put simply, the warlords would not have been defeated without a strange coincidence of factors—the growing influence of the shari'a courts as a grassroots source of order in Mogadishu, the business community's willingness to invest in public security, and the clan-based backlash against international counterterror and state-building efforts.[11] The SCIC also inherited power more or less by default, since it was the only sub-faction of the Hawiye/Islamist alliance with any administrative capacity to govern. Nevertheless, the SCIC rose to the challenge. When the expulsion of the warlords from Mogadishu produced widespread euphoria, the Islamic Courts model was rapidly replicated across the southern half of the country, where isolated warlords in towns and villages were no match for the now better organized and energized SCIC. By the end of September 2006, the SCIC's military forces had captured most of southern Somalia, including the lucrative deep-water port of Kismayo and the strategic town of Belet Weyne (near the Ethiopian border), and were pressing hard toward the northern region of Puntland.

The rise of an apparently effective grassroots political movement in Somalia astonished American policymakers, who had largely remained on the sidelines of the IGAD effort to create the TFG and became attentive to the Somali conflict only after the rise of the SCIC. The clan dimensions underlying the popular resistance to the TFG were poorly understood, and Washington's assessment of the situation was further clouded by the presence of Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys who was the head of the SCIC's *shura* (council). Though Aweys was widely revered and generally considered a moderate figure in Somalia—he was often called "the father of Somali Islam"[12]—he

was also a prominent figure in the AIAI radical movement of the 1990s, and was suspected by the U.S. and Ethiopia of having ties to al-Qaeda. To the George W. Bush administration, Aweys appeared to be directing the radical militia arm of the SCIC. In late December 2006, Assistant Secretary of State for Africa Jendayi Frazier publicly announced her conviction that the SCIC was being led by al-Qaeda.[13]

The Ethiopian army had been massing its troops just over the Somali border since mid-July, and in August sent its troops to the town of Baidoa to "protect" the TFG authorities. The entry of Ethiopian troops into Somalia outraged many Somalis and the SCIC leadership alike. The SCIC feared that an invasion of Mogadishu was imminent, and in late October, SCIC Chairman Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed made a televised declaration of *jihad* against all Ethiopian soldiers in Somalia. Hassan Dahir Aweys, in his capacity as chairman of the SCIC shura, subsequently called for the overthrow of the Ethiopian regime.

The Ethiopian Intervention and Its Aftermath

By 13 December the SCIC controlled all of southern Somalia. The TFG was all but encircled within its final stronghold, the town of Baidoa, protected by Ethiopian troops and a coalition of defeated but Ethiopian-allied warlords, including Barre Hiiraale (the warlord of Kismayo) and Mohammed Dheere (the warlord of Jowhar). On 20 December, after a final flurry of peace overtures and negotiations between the SCIC and TFG, a battle broke out at Baidoa. The Ethiopian army engaged, fighting escalated over several days, and the SCIC suffered extensive territorial losses during a conventional battle near Baidoa. Hundreds of youth soldiers were killed, and by 26 December the SCIC was forced into full retreat (see section 4). Popular disgust over the loss of life at Baidoa diminished public support of the SCIC, whose members were forced to flee south toward the Kenyan border. On 28 December Mogadishu easily fell to the Ethiopian army, and by the following day the Ethiopian army had installed the TFG in Mogadishu's presidential palace, Villa Somalia.

The TFG was already known by the derogatory Somali nickname *daba dhilif*, which translates roughly as a "government set up for a foreign purpose" or a "satellite government."[14] As discussed in section 2, by the end of December, the AU had mandated AMISOM to maintain the TFG's hold

Figure 1. Demonstrators in Mogadishu protest foreign interference. Photo used by permission of Newscom.

on Villa Somalia and the port. But the Ethiopian army stayed in Mogadishu and remained the visible guarantor of the TFG's safety, patrolling the city's streets. Ethiopian soldiers were accused of committing a wide range of atrocities, including firing mortars on civilian hospitals, press institutions, and houses, and rape, theft, kidnapping, and murder of Somali civilians.[15]

Among many Somalis, these strikes established the U.S. as an instigator of the Ethiopian invasion, which provided a propaganda opening for al-Qaeda and precipitated a flood of foreign jihadi fighters into Mogadishu. By early 2008, confidential Somali sources[16] estimate that some 2,000 foreign fighters had entered Somalia, approximately 40 percent of them from the Somali diaspora. While the moderate members of the SCIC fled into Eritrea and Djibouti—where they established allied political movements called the Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia—the hardline elements of the SCIC regrouped, and more were trained by the new foreign fighters in the use of remote-controlled detonations. Suicide bombings and other un-Somali tactics became increasingly common.

On 21 March 2007, a Somali mob dragged the bodies of Ethiopian and TFG soldiers through the streets of Mogadishu and set them on fire.[17] Over the next two years, outrage over Ethiopian atrocities—particularly the systemic use of rape—prompted more than 20 members of Minnesota's Somali diaspora to return to Mogadishu to fight the Ethiopian and TFG forces. Their possession of U.S. passports raised the specter of home-grown terrorism and heightened concerns about Somalia's conflict in Washington.[18] Even members of AMISOM began to hear the name of al-Shabaab, which emerged in the midst of the public anger as a popular resistance movement.

By the end of 2007, Ethiopian casualties escalated to an unsustainable level: Somali sources living throughout Mogadishu at that time estimate that Ethiopian forces suffered approximately 200 casualties (wounded and fatalities) each week.[19] The TFG remained hopelessly swamped in political infighting—Prime Minister Gedi was fired and in his place came a parade of four prime ministers over the next five years. Ethiopia, losing patience with the TFG and increasingly doubtful that the African Union would succeed in deploying an adequate peacekeeping mission to relieve Ethiopian forces, began to look for an exit strategy. By the end of March 2008, the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) claimed to have drawn down to approximately 2,500 troops, mostly based in Mogadishu and Baidoa (although Somali sources dispute this figure).[20] Nevertheless, the operation was still a financial drain for Ethiopia, which prompted the government in Addis Ababa to call for international assistance to reimburse its costs. Ethiopia was also thought to have concluded by early 2008, in the face of rising public support for al-Shabaab, that a military solution in Somalia would not be possible.[21]

The TFG Under Sharif Sheikh Ahmed

Ethiopia's increasing desire to extricate its troops from Somalia sparked new efforts to negotiate a peace. In September 2007, the moderate factions of the SCIC had formed the Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia (ARS), initially to fight the TFG. Eventually the ARS split into two parts: a faction in Djibouti (called the ARS-Djibouti) that was open to reconciliation with the TFG, and the Eritrean faction that continued to oppose it (the ARS-Asmara). Between May and June 2008, the ARS-Djibouti met with the TFG to discuss the terms of a peace deal.

This dialogue—known as the Djibouti Peace Process—was facilitated by the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative, Ambassador Ould-Abdallah, and unfolded in four rounds of talks which officially began in May 2008. It culminated in a series of agreements signed between the TFG and the ARS-Djibouti faction on 9 June, 26 October, and 25 November respectively.[22] Ethiopia supplied the political impetus for the talks, and "placed heavy pressure on the Yusuf wing of the TFG to embrace the accord, and when this failed it pressured Yusuf to resign, clearing the way for the formation of a new government."[23] Among other things, the 9 June Agreement endorsed the territorial integrity of Somalia, requested a ceasefire, and established a Joint Security Committee and High-Level Committee to oversee political cooperation.[24] It also called for Ethiopian withdrawal and the replacement of Ethiopian troops with a UN international stabilization force to deploy within 120 days. The stabilization force was to be made up of troops "from countries that are friends of Somalia excluding neighboring states" as specified in paragraph 7a, and "UN forces" as specified in paragraph 7b of the agreement. Naturally, the signatories also called for external actors to fund the plan and for an international conference to be held within six months aimed at addressing Somalia's reconstruction and development.

The Djibouti Agreement was completed on 19 August with great international fanfare. A cessation of hostilities officially took effect from 26 October 2008 but its effects were negligible.[25] Only a small fraction of the Islamist opposition was represented in the Djibouti Process. The ARS-Asmara faction (led by the influential Hassan Dahir Aweys) condemned the agreement, and al-Shabaab intensified its violent insurgency in the capital.

The election of the former SCIC head, Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, to the TFG presidency on 31 January 2009, was initially celebrated in Somalia, but the enthusiasm was short-lived. A few months before his election, Sheikh Sharif had written to the UN Secretary-General to protest the conduct of the AMISOM troops:

> AMISOM has been using tanks and heavy artillery indiscriminately against the population of Mogadishu. As a result, according to the latest estimates, over 100 people, including children, women, and elderly have been killed; more than 300 others have been wounded, and about 3000 have fled their homes, where Ethiopian troops and the TFG militias have been looting their homes … It is obvious

that AMISOM had used unnecessary force and targeted heavily populated quarters and markets far away from the fighting area(s) which can only be taken as deliberate mass killing. Since AMISOM had not come with the consent of the Somali people, lately we have been spending a significant amount of time and efforts to convince our people to accept AMISOM as a peace keeping force, but the latest terror has seriously damaged the image of the mission of AMISOM in Somalia … We consider this AMISOM action as a war crime; therefore we urgently request the UN as well as AU to send an impartial fact find [sic.] mission at the earliest possible time to investigate these atrocities and swiftly bring the culprits to justice.[26]

Figure 2. TFG soldiers patrol Mogadishu. Photo used by permission of Newscom.

Somali sources residing in Mogadishu in 2008–2010 estimate that pro-government forces, including AMISOM, were responsible for the vast majority (probably more than 90 percent) of civilian casualties in the city during this period.[27]

Ethiopian forces withdrew from Somalia in early 2009, and it was hoped that their departure would deflate the insurgency. But this did not happen. In some towns, notably Merca and Kismayo, the ENDF's withdrawal left the local warlords exposed to the growing strength of al-Shabaab who immediately took over those towns or were invited by rival clans to drive their opponents out. In Mogadishu, al-Shabaab moved quickly to occupy the security vacuum left by the Ethiopian's departure and launched an assault on Villa Somalia. While this assault was repelled, over the next year, the civilian harm attributed to AMISOM forces became a dominant narrative in Mogadishu and on Somali-language web sites. But the UN resisted any acknowledgement of civilian suffering. Partially, this was due to a lack of detailed knowledge of events on the ground. Amadou Ould-Abdallah, who served as UN Special Representative from September 2007 to July 2010, was virtually the only international diplomat who visited Mogadishu and who engaged on a direct and regular basis with the TFG during this time. As a result, he was given an unprecedented authority to speak on behalf of "the international community."

Initially, the strategy of deputizing Ould-Abdallah as the principal international interlocutor proved useful, insofar as it created a strong impression of political unity in support of the TFG on the part of the UN Political Office in Somalia (UNPOS), the U.S., the European states (especially the United Kingdom, Italy, and France), and the regional actors (particularly IGAD and its member states). In reality, however, there were considerable differences of opinion on matters of policy. But the strategy ultimately backfired when Ould-Abdallah's personal reputation in Somali became tarnished.

In February 2009, after local newspapers reported civilian casualties inflicted by AMISOM, Ould-Abdallah accused Somali reporters of genocidal intentions and called for an international boycott of the Somali press (see section 4). By April 2009, he had been publically accused of brokering an illegal deal to ensure Kenya and Norway access to Somalia's off-shore oil resources (a deal that was rejected by the Somali parliament).[28] Ould-Abdallah's conduct led to widespread accusations among the Somali public and parliament that the United Nations had "hijacked" the Somali peace process.[29] Somali anger rebounded onto Sheikh Sharif's administration. Instead of being perceived as an Ethiopian proxy, the TFG became viewed as a client of the UN, with equally deadly consequences. Humanitarian workers rejected assistance from AMISOM, and refused to be seen interacting

Instead of being perceived as an Ethiopian proxy, the TFG became viewed as a client of the UN, with equally deadly consequences.

in Somalia with AMISOM or UN staff, and instead engaged directly with the warlords and insurgents. The Islamist opposition thrived on such news: al-Shabaab now controlled the majority of southern Somalia's territory, and a new Islamist coalition emerged to fight Sheikh Sharif's TFG—Hizbul Islam, a coalition of four Islamist clan groupings, led by Hassan Dahir Aweys, who returned from his exile in Asmara in April 2009.[30]

By the time that Sheikh Sharif took office, all the towns outside Shabelle region had already been taken over by al-Shabaab, leaving only Mogadishu and the president's home town of Jowhar. Sheikh Sharif did not possess a personal militia to use as a nucleus of the TFG army, but rather relied on the militias of various clan and religious factions. Sheikh Sharif's election also ushered in a period of unprecedented corruption within the TFG. The merging of the ARS-Djibouti with the existing TFG had doubled the size of the parliament to an absurd 550 members.[31] The vast majority of these members of parliament lived on international per diems in hotels in Nairobi.[32] They rarely set foot in Somalia, and had no contact whatsoever with their local "constituencies." (Somalis frequently mocked the inability of those parliamentarians to so much as set foot in their sub-clan villages or neighborhoods, for fear of assault.)

The majority of the TFG ministries consisted of single appointees: *briefcase ministries* that provided no services.[33] The parliament was often unable to gather a quorum to conduct business. TFG troops and police also became associated with illegal roadblocks and looting. They were also accused by AMISOM of selling their weapons and ammunition on the black market and sometimes of selling information about AMISOM's activities to al-Shabaab.

A particularly embarrassing incident along these lines involved Sheikh Sharif's elite personal guard, three of whom publically defected to al-Shabaab in July 2010. The soldiers claimed that they had quit in protest of AMISOM's indiscriminate shelling of civilians.[34] There were rumors in Mogadishu, however, that Sheikh Sharif had stopped paying his bodyguard several months earlier.[35] After the TFG unilaterally extended its own transitional mandate by two years, subsequent UN investigations revealed that some 70 percent of TFG revenues disappeared during Sheikh Sharif's administration.[36] The

offices of the president, prime minister and speaker of the parliament were accused of diverting the bulk of those funds to undisclosed destinations.

Problems in the Fight Against Al-Shabaab

The TFG's failure to make headway against al-Shabaab during this period, from January 2009 until mid-2011, stemmed, in part, from the Western mischaracterization of the conflict and the TFG's lack of domestic legitimacy.

First, the Somali conflict was often mischaracterized by a range of international actors. While Washington government officials and members of the Western press consistently described the violence in Somalia as a conflict between a Western-backed government and a terrorist movement, most Somalis perceived the conflict as a struggle between two sets of radicals, both of them funded and directed by foreigners. The TFG was indeed viewed as the Western proxy, bankrolled primarily (if indirectly, though that distinction was certainly lost on the average Somali) by Washington. But TFG president Sheikh Sharif was widely viewed as an Islamist radical who remained strongly sympathetic to al-Shabaab, and was waiting to impose a similarly harsh ideology on Somalia. Leading figures of the TFG's purported ally, the moderate Islamist movement *Ahlu Sunna wa'al Jama* (ASWJ), privately characterized Sheikh Sharif as a "terrorist" and "criminal," and expressed that, while it was perfectly possible to negotiate with a figure such as al-Shabaab's Muktar Robow, it would be impossible to conduct a dialogue with Sheikh Sharif.[37]

Under pressure from Ethiopia, one faction of the ASWJ was in March 2010 persuaded to sign a Framework for Cooperation Agreement with the TFG, but neither Washington nor Addis Ababa's diplomacy could prevent the agreement from rapidly crumbling. The International Crisis Group contemporaneously noted that: "Nothing highlights the general ineptitude of the TFG in forging political alliances and achieving wider reconciliation better than the botched power-sharing agreement with the ASWJ."[38]

In the public imagination, both Sheikh Sharif and al-Shabaab's leader, Ahmed Godane, were war profiteers, funded by foreigners who sought to plunder and subdue Somalia.

While the vast majority of Somalis appeared ambivalent toward al-Shabaab's ideology and its harsh, *Wahhabi* interpretation of Islam, the TFG was viewed as overtly parasitic, brutal and corrupt—by any measure, a worse

alternative to the Islamists who had at least resisted the Ethiopians and brought some degree of law and order to their lives. Within this context, the Western narrative describing al-Shabaab as "terrorists" and the TFG as Somalia's "legitimate" government appeared both offensive and absurd.

The TFG's lack of domestic support had profound second-order effects. First, across south central Somalia, the TFG had nothing resembling a cohesive fighting force let alone an army. It had little more than a conglomerate of militias loosely held together by their commanders or warlords who were either in the TFG or had close allies in it. The TFG was thus unable to garner and retain the loyalty of the troops that were supposedly under its authority (if not its direct command). Persuading such a force to confront the better organized and, at times, better equipped and more motivated al-Shabaab was difficult.

Second, without an effective identification system, it was impossible to know the exact numbers of the so-called TFG forces. In March 2010, then-President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed's Chief of Staff, Abdullahi Jama, indicated that the "international community" had initially provided stipends to support between 17,000 and 18,000 troops.[39] However, following an audit by PricewaterhouseCoopers in late 2009 (the first of many to reveal substantial diversion of international revenues by TFG officials), the number of stipends was sharply reduced to support between 6,000 and 7,000 troops.

When Abdullahi was asked why it was commonly reported that the TFG was unable to muster more than 3,000 troops to fight, he admitted that the TFG did not distribute the stipends directly; rather they were given to "officers."[40] Those "officers" who were responsible for passing the money on to the troops were actually militia leaders that the TFG was attempting to buy-off with monies intended for troop stipends. Not surprisingly, the stipends often failed to reach the troops. At the time, the TFG forces were not regularized but a loose collection of clan militias whose leaders shifted their loyalties at will. Moreover, because the rank and file fighters perceived their money to be coming directly from these militia leaders they remained loyal to them and not to the TFG. The TFG clearly recognized the problems with this arrangement but did not alter it. (Indeed, senior TFG officials admitted they were unable to disarm their own Minister of Defense, "Inda'ade," who had defected from an alliance with al-Shabaab but remained fully armed because the TFG could not afford to buy off his militia's "technicals."[41] Inda'ade later

resigned from the TFG after accusing the president of trying to assassinate him.)

In 2008, the UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea estimated that 80 percent of materiel provided to TFG forces was diverted to the black market and al-Shabaab.[42] Further illegal sales of TFG equipment in Bakara Market were contained in the 2010 report.[43] AMISOM was forced to strictly ration supplies of ammunition to TFG soldiers to try to prevent them from selling it to buy food and *khat*.[44] The subsequent shortage of ammunition further diminished the TFG forces' ability to combat al-Shabaab: when their ammunition was expended the soldiers often deserted the frontline. The lack of medical care facilities also discouraged Somali soldiers from engaging in risky operations because if they were injured they would usually have to rely on friends and relatives.[45]

The lines between the TFG and al-Shabaab forces were thin to begin with. Many of the TFG's troops had family members serving in the insurgency, and habitually used their mobile phones to forewarn al-Shabaab militias of troop movements and attacks. Al-Shabaab forces were also able to gain access to most of Somalia's communication networks and to hack into AMISOM communications.[46] At one stage, AMISOM commanders unwittingly contributed to al-Shabaab's knowledge by using an unencrypted Yahoo email account to transmit operational plans back and forth between Mogadishu and Nairobi.[47]

By November 2009 the UN Monitoring Group put the number of TFG armed forces at 2,900, which was equal to the number of individuals who were effective and on the government payroll.[48] It suggested an approximate 3,500 additional troops also existed but had not been vetted, trained or registered. In addition, some 6,270 government-aligned troops were estimated to exist: 1,160 clan militiamen (in Mogadishu), who were supposed to be integrated into the NSF; 960 so-called "grey" soldiers, Siad Barre-era former Somali Army soldiers (over age 39); 650 soldiers trained in Djibouti who returned to Somalia in October 2009 who were then undergoing reintegration training; 500 Coast Guard personnel and 200 Air Force personnel who were at their homes but willing to reassemble; some 3,000 soldiers located near the border with Ethiopia, who reportedly had received basic field training from the Ethiopian Army and approximately 1,000 police who were in Luuq, southern Somalia.[49]

With training programs taking place in Uganda, Ethiopia and Djibouti, and equipment and financial support coming from a variety of donors (particularly the European Union's training mission), by mid-2011 the Somali National Security Forces had enlarged to approximately 10,100 troops, excluding ostensibly allied militia fighters.[50] This was progress but remained well short of the envisaged 25,000-strong Somali National Army with a 12,000-strong police force, a 3,000-strong National Security Agency (to run intelligence and counterterrorism operations) and a custodian corps of 5,000 (to provide judicial protection and protect courthouses and prisons).

In 2012, the Somali security forces remained in a dire state. Among the long list of challenges facing the Somali army, perhaps the most severe and urgent were problems of unresolved clan loyalties and more operational issues of command and control. These problems were particularly acute at the level of senior officers, between clan leaders, warlords, and the official military commanders; they also involved an absence of collaboration between the existing brigades of the Somali National Army. An additional problem was that different components of the army had received different types of training, mostly abroad, and there were poor levels of training for noncommissioned officers. Salaries were also unreliable. Most had been provided in the form of $100 per month stipends paid by the U.S. and Italy to some but not all Somali soldiers. The forces also lacked modern basic weaponry—with many ostensibly Somali National Army weapons belonging to warlords, clans, and individuals—and effective logistical and medical support capacity. Finally, there remained major problems with recruitment, created by this long list of issues.

Endemic corruption and lack of legitimacy also profoundly undermined international willingness to support the transitional government. Though the TFG was widely regarded in Somalia as a Western proxy, the Obama administration was careful to provide only limited and indirect financial support to the TFG, and senior officials did not engage directly with TFG leaders. Public opinion of the government was so low that even soldiers paid by the TFG could not be relied upon to fight on its behalf.[51]

Though the U.S. strategy was ostensibly to enhance TFG legitimacy so that it could provide a viable alternative to al-Shabaab rule, Washington and Europe's refusal to provide adequate resources to the TFG aggravated its incapacity, creating a vicious cycle (see section 5). The TFG's performance was so dismal during 2009 that U.S. and EU policymakers were primarily

worried about the possibility that the TFG would "fail" or "collapse," leaving AMISOM peacekeepers in Mogadishu with no government to support—or to legally justify their presence.[52] It was arguably in May-July 2009 that AMISOM was also at its weakest, controlling only five of Mogadishu's 16 districts. Nevertheless, the fact that AMISOM successfully halted al-Shabaab's offensive to overrun Villa Somalia in the wake of the Ethiopian withdrawal demonstrated that al-Shabaab could be defeated in battle—as long as AMISOM was provided with the requisite military capabilities.

2. The Insurgents: Harakat al-Shabaab

The Rise of al-Shabaab

All but a tiny fraction of Somalis are Muslim, and Islam has been the preferred vehicle for political protest in Somalia since the colonial period. The rise of not one but several Islamist movements in Somalia in the wake of international efforts to create a new central government (al-Shabaab, *Hisbul Islam* and *Ahlu Sunna wa'al Jamaa*) is hardly surprising. By the early 2000s, shari'a law was warmly viewed in Somalia as a potential alternative to the socially divisive clan system as well as the excesses and corrupting influence of various "warlord" factions.[53]

The vast majority of rural Somalis preferred to practice a heavily Africanized version of Sufi Islam that incorporated pagan elements such as ancestor worship and animal sacrifice. Some scholars argue that radical Islamist tendencies have been visible in Somalia since the 1960s.[54] Most, however, trace the rise of the Wahhabi strand of Islam in Somalia to the collapse of the Siad Barre regime in 1991 and the subsequent rise of Saudi-funded *madrassas* (Muslim schools) and Islamic charitable institutions as the primary provider of Somalis' welfare, educational and health services.

Despite the billions of dollars that were spent promoting Wahhabi ideology in Somalia since 1991, however, this strand of Islamist extremism made little headway before 2006. Arguably its closest adherents were an al-Qaeda linked movement called AIAI, which briefly controlled parts of Somalia in the mid-1990s, in the wake of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) operations, but failed to gain cultural traction. Al-Qaeda core operatives attempting to work in Somalia, moreover, were alienated by the country's harsh terrain and the perceived venality, infighting, and laziness of the Somali militants.[55] From mid-1996, military operations conducted by Ethiopia added to the list of disincentives, and by 1997, AIAI was defunct.

By the early 2000s, southern Somalia was host to a small number of Islamic militants. These militants were almost entirely Somali nationals—either elder-generation Somalis who had been connected to AIAI in the 1990s, or youths who had been radicalized in the Somali madrassas. Within these ranks there were a few foreigners, a few Isaaq-clan transplants from the northern territory of Somaliland (who were perceived as all but foreign

in the south), and a few Somalis whose experience in AIAI or the madrassas had sent them onward to Afghanistan, where they had been exposed to al-Qaeda. These militants met occasionally and debated the future of the jihad in Somalia, but they lacked cohesion and immediacy of purpose.[56] Throughout the late 1990s and the early 2000s, even as the Islamic Courts network flourished as a source of neighborhood law and order, they remained disorganized and irrelevant.

It was not until early 2005 that a group of fighters gathered in Mogadishu and began to assassinate Westerners and TFG sympathizers. These fighters took their inspiration in part from ideas about global jihad and in part from grievances local to Somalia. The TFG's arrival in Somalia provided these militants with both an immediate objective and a host of accessible foreign-linked targets. Within months, the visible interplay between the U.S. CIA and the Mogadishu warlords leant a global dimension to the clan-based power play between the Darod and Hawiye to take control of the new government (and to capture its donor-funded spoils).[57] Harakat al-Shabaab emerged as a key military faction in the fight against the warlords, and gained a fashionable reputation among many youngsters in Mogadishu, in part because of its focus on discipline and order.

After the SCIC took control of Mogadishu in mid-2006, Aden Hashi Ayro's clique established itself as the SCIC's primary militia and for several months they exerted significant influence on SCIC legal and social policy.[58] But their bans on khat and soccer were unpopular, and as the tenor of their strict doctrine became clear, public enthusiasm for the SCIC began rapidly to wane.[59] The radical faction was then blamed for tactical stupidity during the battle of Baidoa in late December 2006, where in a single battle, Ethiopian forces quickly killed hundreds of ill-prepared Somali youths who had been sent to stop them by the SCIC leadership.[60] It was also in this period between September and December that the first suicide attacks took place against the TFG and Ethiopian forces. Al-Shabaab would subsequently go on to pioneer this method of warfare in Somalia, assuming responsibility for almost all such attacks since that time.[61] By early January 2007, the radical faction had been "nearly eradicated" by the Ethiopian army.[62] Public support for the radicals—and the Islamic Courts movement as a whole—had also plummeted.

Ethiopia and its allies were astonished and elated by their easy victory over the SCIC. (The capture of Mogadishu had been expected to drag on

for weeks.) In their surprise, both Ethiopia and the U.S. made key strategic errors. Ethiopia chose to occupy Mogadishu in an effort to implant the TFG in power. The ENDF's violent occupation of Mogadishu, including its repeated use of heavy artillery within the city and the reported mass rape of Somali civilians, sparked intense public anger and over the course of several months created strong public support for the disgraced radical remnants of the Islamic Courts, not least because al-Shabaab was seen as one of the only actors who could avenge the Ethiopian actions.[63] The U.S. airstrikes against fleeing SCIC targets in January 2007 were also a tactical blunder; not only did the strikes miss their targets they also reportedly killed several civilians.[64] The United States' kinetic intervention was widely perceived by the Somali public as being cruelly gratuitous, and added credence to the jihadi accusations of U.S. interference and neo-imperialism. Al-Qaeda sensed an opening and sent fighters and funds to support al-Shabaab, and the movement's rhetoric began to take an increasingly transnational tone, while the jihadi foreigners provided the local radicals with important tactical skills (including the use of remote-controlled improvised explosive devices (IED) and suicide bombings) that had previously been unknown in Somalia.

By mid-2007, the name al-Shabaab had come to symbolize a new populist and militaristic movement. In March 2007, in a pre-recorded audio tape played on Mogadishu's Radio Koran, a man claiming to be al-Shabaab's leader, Aden Hashi Ayro, called on all Somalis, but especially the youth, to rise up against Ethiopian and AMISOM troops. A wave of suicide bombings followed, resulting in scores of Ethiopian casualties. On 26 March, a car packed with explosives detonated in the middle of the Ethiopian military installation at Eel-Irfiid (some five kilometers from Mogadishu), reportedly killing 63 soldiers and wounding another 50.[65] On 19 April, another car bomb was detonated at the Aslubta Ethiopian military base, killing 30 soldiers and wounding approximately 200.[66] The Ethiopians responded with indiscriminate force: in a battle with al-Shabaab at Shalan Sharaf, in the Shirkole area of Mogadishu, they used white phosphorus bombs, killing approximately 15 al-Shabaab fighters and 35 civilians.[67] The UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea, which documented each of these incidents, claimed that the use of phosphorus bombs and other forms of indiscriminate retaliation were not isolated, though the Ethiopian authorities denied all such reports.

Public support for al-Shabaab intensified as rumors of Ethiopian brutality against Mogadishu's civilian population spread abroad. By May 2007,

the militia had gained full or partial control over six out of Mogadishu's 16 districts. In the initial stages of its intervention, until January 2007, Somali sources estimated that Ethiopia had deployed approximately 18,000 troops in Somalia, concentrated in Baidoa and Mogadishu (roughly 12 percent of its 150,000 strong army).[68] These were supported by thousands of clan militia across the country who were on the Ethiopian payroll. By June 2007, however, in the face of mounting casualties and a full scale insurgency, Ethiopia was forced to increase its troop levels to approximately 24,000.[69] These numbers did not decrease until after Ethiopia's formal withdrawal from Somalia in January 2009—and even then, Ethiopia reportedly retained more than 18,000 troops in Somalia and including the border region.[70]

In March 2008, the U.S. designated al-Shabaab a terrorist organization, asserting that some of its leaders were responsible for the 1998 attacks on the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. The designation provided legal justification for a kinetic strike on the senior al-Shabaab leader and al-Qaeda associate Aden Hashi Ayro, who was killed less than two months later, on 1 May 2008, by a U.S. strike.[71]

The designation of al-Shabaab as a terrorist group despite the movement's visibly domestic orientation, the rote Western media description of any political opposition to the TFG as radical or terrorist in nature, and the strike on Ayro evidenced the U.S. Government's unwillingness to coexist with the Somali opposition. Predictably, al-Shabaab's senior leadership turned to the Arab world for military and financial resources to oppose Ethiopia and the TFG,[72] and from 2008 onward, attempted to bolster their credentials in the Arab world by depicting themselves as fighters in al-Qaeda's global war. The ideology of al-Shabaab, as articulated by its shura, increasingly became representative of the beliefs of other radical, violent, jihadist Sunni Islamic movements.[73]

Neither Ayro's death nor the departure of Ethiopia's troops from Somalia in January 2009 diminished al-Shabaab's momentum. In August 2008, al-Shabaab fighters supported by Ras Kamboni forces re-took the strategic port town of Kismayo (having abandoned it to TFG forces in January 2007), while in January 2009, Ethiopian troops abandoned control of Baidoa to TFG forces, who were quickly overtaken by al-Shabaab. Between May and July 2009, al-Shabaab launched a concerted offensive in Mogadishu, taking control of additional districts and pushing the TFG and AMISOM back to the seaport. The onslaught was widely thought to have gravely endangered the

TFG, bringing the militants within rifle shot of the TFG's stronghold in Villa Somalia. Al-Shabaab maintained these positions for many months obliging TFG officials to keep their windows covered and to walk without lights after dark for fear of snipers.[74] On 11 July 2009, al-Shabaab succeeded in landing four mortars inside of Villa Somalia, killing three Ugandan peacekeepers and wounding eight others.[75]

By the end of July 2009, al-Shabaab controlled virtually all of the territory of southern Somalia and most of Mogadishu, with the exception of a small "Green Zone" between Villa Somalia, the airport, and the seaport. But even this zone was freely traversed by the militants after dark, when AMISOM troops retreated inside their bases. The majority of the districts "controlled" by AMISOM and the TFG were not regularly patrolled by either force, and were also largely accessible to the militants during the day.[76]

Organizational Structure

Al-Shabaab's structure was highly decentralized but topped by a surprisingly well-organized bureaucracy; it was certainly the most extensive and effective administrative structure that has existed in southern Somalia since the collapse of the Siad Barre regime in 1991. Roland Marchal summarized al-Shabaab's accomplishment in the following terms:

> Through the routinisation of a number of processes, al-Shabaab has been able to build what we should call local administrations. The way it did this is not radically different from what some clan factions or governments claimed to do in the past. Yet, in many regards, al-Shabaab seems to do better than previous attempts. Clan sensitivities are considered in a more realistic and neutral way and corruption is much less apparent, while the Jihadi organization [reconstructs] a public sphere and shows people the authority cannot be manipulated (for long) through clan and personal networking.[77]

This should not come as any surprise since among relatively successfully and durable insurgencies there are frequently sustained attempts to create "counter-state" social formations. Here, the goal is "not simply [to] inflict military losses on the enemy but to destroy the legitimacy of its government and to establish a rival regime through the creation of parallel hierarchies."[78] As political scientist Zachariah Mampilly has shown, in order to prosper,

rebel movements such as al-Shabaab must work to provide a degree of "effective governance" to civilian populations in the areas under their control.[79] In this sense, al-Shabaab has been a quite extraordinary movement, at one stage presiding over an area the size of Denmark with approximately five million inhabitants.[80] Its achievements were particularly notable when placed in the context of the sexual violence, killings, and extortion regularly practiced by TFG security forces and warlords.[81]

Al-Shabaab was directed by an executive shura of between 8 and 10 members, with a larger shura of 35 and later 45 members which could be summoned as required.[82] Its emir remains Ahmed Godane, an Isaaq-clan Somalilander, close associate of Aden Hashi Ayro, and a veteran of the Afghanistan wars. Under the shura were a number of functional ministries (including ministries of defense, finance, and information) that engaged in administering the laws set by the shura and ensuring a degree of consistency across the regional administrations. Its justice system was devolved into three layers: the militia commander, who presided over specific checkpoints and roadblocks; the local level; and the regional level. The centerpiece was the series of regional (*Wilaayada*) and district courts run by al-Shabaab.[83] Although not without their problems, the relative success of these institutions allowed commercial activity in al-Shabaab regions to flourish, which, in turn, enhanced the regular tax revenue stream that the organization could call upon.[84] Control of Kismayo port probably remained the most lucrative of al-Shabaab's assets.

The ministry of information was especially well-developed and funded in its capacity as al-Shabaab's propaganda wing. Since 2005, al-Shabaab employed a range of media outlets and websites such as Hegaan, Kata'ib, Al Hesba, and Al Qimmah. The Al-Kata'ib Foundation in particular produced sophisticated video content that was displayed on a wide range of English, Somali, and Arab-language websites. The information ministry also controlled, at the height of al-Shabaab's strength, more than a dozen Somali radio and television channels, including Radio Koran and the al-Andalus radio stations. The organization also had its own newspaper, *Millat Ibrahim,* and numerous Twitter accounts. Al-Shabaab's media operations were so effective that in early 2010 the AU and UN hired a group of contractors to develop AMISOM's strategic communications, in large part to counteract al-Shabaab's propaganda.

Al-Shabaab's military arm consisted of three principal layers. Its top leadership, the *qiyadah*, is thought to revolve around a small group of Afghanistan veterans, former members of AIAI, and ideologues from the Somali diaspora. Beneath these were a cadre of foreign fighters (the *muhajirin*), whose numbers were estimated to be anywhere from 200 to 2000, most hailing from Kenya's Swahili coast, Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, Yemen, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Saudi Arabia. Beneath these in stature are the various ranks of the local Somali fighters (*ansar*), which tended to operate in squadrons of seven to eight men. Probably in 2009, al-Shabaab also established an internal secret police force—the *Amniyat*—to deal with disciplinary matters and discourage defections. This unit targeted families of defectors and deserters and quickly established a reputation for ruthlessness. It was kept under the direct control of Ahmed Godane.[85]

Force Composition

Al-Shabaab's strength has sometimes been greatly exaggerated, and descriptions of its numbers have usually been unhelpfully vague. At its height, al-Shabaab probably hosted 1,000 foreign fighters.[86] In addition, it could call on the support of around 5,000 trained Somali fighters (those who had graduated from a formal two-week indoctrination program in a training camp and were subsequently isolated within an indoctrinated militia group, often under the command of a foreign fighter). These fighters, often recruited from among Somalia's historically unarmed minority clans, regarded al-Shabaab's weapons and training as a welcome means of tilting the balance of power away from the dominant clans. They formed the backbone of al-Shabaab's resistance to AMISOM and the TFG.

Alongside the indoctrinated fighters were the large and relatively competent ranks of the Rahanweyn clan militia. These fighters numbered at least several thousand.[87] However, they remained specifically loyal to Sheikh Muktar Robow—whose own commitment to al-Shabaab was frequently tested by his personal conflicts with the emir Ahmed Godane and conflicting responsibilities to his clan. For example, after al-Shabaab's failed Ramadan Offensive of 2010, in which Rahanweyn militia bore the huge brunt of the casualties, Robow responded to clan pressure and pulled his Rahanweyn fighters out of Mogadishu.[88] Robow also consistently facilitated the delivery of Western humanitarian relief in his clan territories.

Beneath the Rahanweyn ranks were perhaps 10,000 clan or bandit militia who were either informally allied to al-Shabaab (often by default, as a result of clan opposition to the TFG), or paid (initially by the day, but later on, as al-Shabaab's standards disintegrated under pressure, with the right to set up roadblocks or otherwise collect spoils from the locals). The number of these day laborers fluctuated wildly with al-Shabaab's fortunes. Al-Shabaab's ability to provide a degree financial stability to poor youths through regular pay, including life insurance, was probably the primary motivation for joining al-Shabaab.[89] In the early years, al-Shabaab also paid militias according to the type of activities they would conduct: $20 for a hand grenade attack, $30 for killing a soldier, and $100 for a road bomb or mortar attack. This at a time when the TFG forces hardly received any pay at all.[90]

There was also a strong generational component: many Somali youths blame the elder generation for the destruction of Somalia. Membership in al-Shabaab personally empowered these youths—indeed the infamous child judges were responsible for many of al-Shabaab's worst excesses, including amputations and execution by stoning—but it was also a statement of revolt against Somali society and the failures of the clan system. As al-Shabaab's success grew, it also attracted *shifta* (bandits) who were not persuaded by the group's ideological message but saw affiliation as a means to protect their criminal enterprises.

Finally, very large numbers of clan factions and militia acquiesced to al-Shabaab's presence on their territories. This latter group was never included in estimates of al-Shabaab's military strength, but their years-long tolerance of the radical militia was significant and constituted a form of support. Their numbers encompassed the vast majority of the citizens of southern Somalia from mid-2007 through the onset of the Somali famine in October 2011. During this period, there were only a small handful of public protests against al-Shabaab, and very few instances in which al-Shabaab was actively driven by clan militias out of a village or town. This occurred most often in central Somalia, where a rival Islamist movement emerged and became nominally allied with the TFG.[91]

Force Posture

From 2007 onward, al-Shabaab was engaged in three distinct projects. One of these was to gain or maintain "control" of territory in southern Somalia.

The second was a mostly urban campaign of guerrilla warfare and suicide attacks against the ENDF and later against AMISOM and the TFG forces (see section 5 for a summary of al-Shabaab's

> *Al-Shabaab leaders instead constructed a very careful strategy of assessing local clan power dynamics, which they tried to manipulate in order to negotiate their entry into new territory.*

urban force posture and guerrilla tactics). The third and most divisive project, pursued only by a minority of al-Shabaab's supporters and militia, was the embrace of al-Qaeda and the global jihad.

Al-Shabaab's "control" of most of southern Somalia's territory from mid-2007 through most of 2011 alarmed Washington. But as noted above, this was not simply a product of the movement's military strength. Al-Shabaab militias rarely chose to engage in frontal confrontations with TFG or AMISOM forces, and very rarely had to fight against local clans. Al-Shabaab leaders instead constructed a very careful strategy of assessing local clan power dynamics, which they tried to manipulate in order to negotiate their entry into new territory. This technique often involved systemically destabilizing the dominant clan by supplying its rivals with weapons. The leadership chosen for any given town would either belong to the dominant clan, or was entirely foreign to the local clan composition. Al-Shabaab's skill in manipulating clan dynamics, and the contributions that its fighters made to improving general safety and security, allowed the militants to keep only small contingents of fighters on the outskirts of its villages and towns. This both discouraged fraternization with the locals and facilitated flight when required.[92] When approached by larger conventional forces, the militants simply melted into the bush, confident in their knowledge that neither AMISOM nor the Ethiopian forces had the troop capacity to hold large swathes of territory.

Analysts of the Somali conflict have regularly—and rightly—observed that an important source of al-Shabaab's strength was the TFG's weakness and its illegitimacy among many locals. Local communities tolerated al-Shabaab largely because they perceived the TFG and warlord factions as a more threatening alternative. One of its common tactics was to threaten local Somalis who worked for the TFG as well as their families.

At the same time, al-Shabaab does deserve some credit for its military accomplishments. During the May 2009 and the October 2010 offensives,

several thousand al-Shabaab militia were able to pose an existential threat to the TFG; coming within 100 yards of Villa Somalia and at several points nearly severing Villa Somalia's access to the port. Although ultimately al-Shabaab's forces did not have the power to dislodge the larger and better-equipped AMISOM forces defending established positions, it was not at all clear at the time that AMISOM would inflict such a major blow as to leave al-Shabaab in turmoil.[93] Indeed, throughout the stalemate period of the Somali conflict, officials in Washington were concerned about the possibility that AMISOM would be forced to desert Mogadishu and leave its heavy weaponry in the hands of al-Shabaab.[94]

Al-Shabaab's drive to expel AMISOM was ultimately over-ambitious. The human cost of the Ramadan Offensive (2010) drastically undermined support for al-Shabaab within the Rahanweyn clan constituency and took the shine off its military reputation. It also paved the way for AMISOM to make military advances in early 2011, especially when combined with the influx of additional troops that were deployed to Mogadishu in the aftermath of al-Shabaab's July 2010 Kampala bombings. These events were also a precipitating factor in al-Shabaab's withdrawal from Mogadishu in August 2011. The stalemate, too, proved harder for al-Shabaab to bear. This was arguably because al-Shabaab was more directly dependent upon maintaining at least some level of local support, while the TFG and AMISOM forces were isolated behind their lines, externally supplied, and almost entirely insulated from the public.[95]

Relations with al-Qaeda

From its inception, al-Shabaab has had relations with al-Qaeda members, particularly from the latter's east African wing. However, al-Shabaab's unavoidable interaction with the Somali clan system also constrained its relations with al-Qaeda. The small group of al-Qaeda members was, from the start, determined to link al-Shabaab's fight against the TFG and AMISOM to the global jihad. This transnational faction was dominated by foreigners—including trained jihadists from Afghanistan and Pakistan but increasingly raw volunteers from Kenya—who were not accountable to any local Somali constituency and whose tactics were frequently characterized by an absolute disregard for Somali welfare. Alongside the transnational faction was a much larger nationalist faction, led by Somalis who may or may not

have been personally sympathetic to the Wahhabi form of Islam, but whose conduct was nevertheless heavily constrained by their reliance on a local clan constituency as the source of their personal power.

From 2007 onward, the transnational faction of al-Shabaab controlled an extensive flow of money and expertise from abroad, but nevertheless exercised relatively little autonomy. Most of the faction's overtures to al-Qaeda were rhetorical. In a June 2008 video, Godane offered greetings and praise to al-Qaeda leaders and praised the perpetrators of the 9/11 terror attacks on the U.S. In March 2009, Osama bin Laden responded with an audio tape, titled *Fight On O Champions of Somalia*, that urged the Somali people to rebel against TFG leader Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, whom bin Laden described as a surrogate of al-Qaeda's enemies. In September 2009, the al-Shabaab propagandist Omar Hammami, also known as Abu Mansour the American, was featured in a video entitled *At Your Service, Oh Osama*, which pledged al-Shabaab's loyalty to al-Qaeda. But it was not until February 2012 that Godane released a video announcing the merger of the two organizations. In January 2012, al-Shabaab's media wing, the Al-Kata'ib Foundation, released a video in which its newly-appointed leader for Kenya, Sheikh Ahmed Iman Ali, urged Kenyans to participate in jihad either locally or in Somalia.[96] For all of al-Shabaab's rhetorical commitment to al-Qaeda, the relationship has yet to result in a single strike on Western targets.

There is no doubt that the expertise of the foreign fighters supplied al-Shabaab with vital tactical, administrative and financial advantages. They helped develop al-Shabaab's administrative architecture and channeled funds, sometimes to impose a very harsh *Salafist* interpretation of Islam that was uncomfortable for many Somalis and was probably not preferred by the militia's rank and file. Beyond this, however, the "transnational" faction did not control the organization, and al-Shabaab remained focused on its domestic objectives: resisting AMISOM and the TFG, and developing its various counter-state governance structures.

Even al-Shabaab's major act of transnational terrorism, which killed 74 viewers of the televised World Cup matches in July 2010 in Uganda, was clearly aimed at local residents of Kampala, and was apparently intended to undermine the Ugandan public's support for AMISOM. No foreigners seem to have been targeted in the attack, though one American was incidentally killed. Occasionally, foreign fighters appeared to take action without the consent of the majority—as in December 2009, when a suicide bomber who had

travelled to Somalia from Denmark killed 23 onlookers and medical students at a graduation ceremony—but these actions were widely condemned by the public and by members of al-Shabaab alike.[97] After the graduation ceremony bombing, crowds burned al-Shabaab's black flag, prompting al-Shabaab's spokesman to publically condemn and disown the attack.[98] Notably, during this period and up until the attack on Westgate Mall in September 2013, al-Shabaab also refrained from any similar signature attack on neighboring Kenya, though that country's Western expatriate population was a favored target of al-Qaeda and was readily accessible to al-Shabaab operatives.

By mid-2013, debate continued over the extent to which al-Shabaab forces maintained a significant presence in the countryside of southern Somalia and several key coastal locations such as Baraawe, or whether the movement had shifted some of its forces north toward the Golis mountain range in Puntland. The location of al-Shabaab's main forces had significant implications for any reconfiguration of AMISOM's force posture. Al-Shabaab's attacks on AMISOM during 2013 generally assumed the form of harassment of AU convoys between Mogadishu and its sector bases as well as in the outskirts around Kismayo. In addition to this, al-Shabaab continued to carry out some spectacular suicide attacks within Mogadishu, perhaps most notably its assassination attempt on the new president Hassan Sheik Mohamud in September 2012, and a concerted attack on the regional courthouse in April 2013. In June, al-Shabaab operatives also carried out an attack on the UN's compound in Mogadishu. Following an internal purge of al-Shabaab's leadership by Ahmed Godane in late June 2013, in September, al-Shabaab operatives were also suspected of carrying out a spectacular assault on the Westgate Mall shopping complex in Nairobi, Kenya. Reportedly conducted by four al-Shabaab fighters, this attack killed 67 people in addition to the four attackers and stimulated considerable debate about the parlous state of Kenyan security forces and the country's vulnerability to similar attacks.[99] It also generated a more heated international debate about the state of al-Shabaab's intentions and capabilities under Godane's new leadership structure.[100]

A Note on Somali Piracy

Although not fundamental to the AMISOM story, piracy has made a significant contribution to the political economy of the Somali conflict and generated revenues for a variety of local actors. Piracy had been a perennial

problem off the coast of Somalia, but reached epidemic proportions beginning in 2006, when the Puntland regional government stopped paying salaries to its coastguard, and when counterfeiting by the

Since 2008, more than 620 vessels have been attacked, over 175 private and commercial ships have been hijacked, and more than 4,000 crew and passengers taken hostage for ransom...

TFG and the Ethiopian intervention caused massive disruptions to the Somali economy. Since 2008, more than 620 vessels have been attacked, over 175 private and commercial ships have been hijacked, and more than 4,000 crew and passengers taken hostage for ransom, often for many months at a time and under inhumane conditions.

The collective international response to Somali piracy was unprecedented: to date, more than 40 states have participated in naval country-piracy operations, either independently or as part of three international coalitions: the EU Naval Force (EU NAVFOR) Somalia Operation Atalanta, NATO's Operation Ocean Shield (Task Force-508), and the U.S. Central Command's Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) Combined Task Force 151 (CTF-151). These naval efforts were combined with several highly effective coordination and information sharing mechanisms: EU NAVFOR's maritime Security Centre-Horn of Africa (MSC-HOA), the Shared Awareness DE-confliction Initiative (SHADE), and the U.S.-led Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS). These efforts dramatically enhanced international maritime coordination capacity, and since 2012, substantially reduced the incidence of piracy off the Horn of Africa. But the cost was also enormous, approaching an average of $2 billion per year.[101]

Somali piracy was largely based out of the northern Puntland region and to some extent in the central Somali districts of Mudug and Galmudug. In later years, less prolific pirate groups were also based in al-Shabaab held territories in south Somalia. It is doubtful, however, that pirate ransoms were a major source of income for al-Shabaab. Since 2005, pirates were variously estimated to have earned between $300 million and $400 million in ransoms. Al-Shabaab might have taken 5 or 10 percent of the ransoms earned on its territory as taxes or rent, but such amounts would have represented a small percentage of the movement's total income. In some cases, pirate groups were also strategically aligned with al-Shabaab. The UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea described the linkages as clan-based, pragmatic, linked

to specific geographic locations, and often characterized by competition.[102] Because international efforts to counter Somali piracy took place in international forums and at sea, AMISOM enjoyed little practical benefit from these operations. Since 2012, pirate incidents off the coast of Somalia have dramatically decreased, and al-Shabaab receives relatively little, if any, of its current revenues from pirate operations.

3. The Genesis of AMISOM

AMISOM's original rationale was to protect Somalia's TFG. As discussed in section 1, the TFG was the product of an internationally-sponsored reconciliation process conducted under the auspices of the IGAD at a time when IGAD was trying to take a more proactive role in conflict management in the region's two key cases of Somalia and Sudan.[103] AMISOM was authorized as the successor of the IGAD peacebuilding force for Somalia (IGASOM), which had been proposed in 2005 but failed to deploy, and to provide an exit strategy for the Ethiopian forces, which had deployed instead to protect the TFG.

IGASOM is Authorized

IGASOM was first proposed by the newly inaugurated TFG President Abdullahi Yusuf who wanted external assistance to support his government. Shortly after assuming office he visited Addis Ababa to ask the AU to deploy 20,000 peacekeepers to help him consolidate his government and disarm Somalia's 55,000 clan and bandit militiamen.[104] Although the AU did not carry out Yusuf's request for a 20,000-strong force, in January 2005 IGAD proposed the deployment of a 10,500-strong Peace Support Mission to Somalia known as IGASOM which would facilitate the entry of Somalia's new government into its capital city, Mogadishu.[105]

On 12 May 2005, the AU's Peace and Security Council endorsed IGAD's proposal and authorized the deployment of IGASOM. The AU also requested the UN Security Council grant an exemption to the arms embargo imposed against Somalia to facilitate the deployment of the mission, and stressed the need for AU member states and the UN to provide IGASOM with political, financial, and logistical support.[106] Later that year, the African Union Peace and Security Council also made clear that it envisaged the deployment of an AU peace operation to take over from IGASOM.[107] However, the IGASOM proposal died for several reasons. Although it was initially meant to provide regional ownership of the crisis, neighboring states to Somalia were subsequently excluded from being troop-contributing countries because of the potentially negative political ramifications. This left only Sudan and Uganda as willing potential contributors. While Uganda did conduct pre-deployment training for its contingent, Sudan did not. Furthermore, IGAD

did not have the resources to support such an operation. As a consequence, IGASOM did not deploy.

The Islamic Courts Take Mogadishu

Even without IGASOM, the TFG moved onto Somali soil in mid-2005 but was unable to establish a presence in the capital city. Approximately a year later, a major alteration of the political terrain occurred on 5 June 2006 when the Union of Islamic Courts took control of Mogadishu.[108] It did so by defeating the newly formed ARPCT, described by one respected analyst as "a group of U.S.-backed militia leaders posing as a counterterrorist coalition."[109] The Islamic Courts had started operating in Somalia in early 1994. The Courts were clan-based entities, and thus poorly networked, and they were largely funded by Somalia's business community as a means of providing law and order as well as a degree of security for commerce within certain zones. Politically, the Courts represented a "broad mosque," bringing together individuals from the moderate and fundamentalist ends of the Islamic spectrum. The Courts enjoyed a renaissance in 2003 under the leadership of Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, a geography teacher who won Somali hearts and minds by negotiating the release of a young man whose life was threatened by one of the kidnap-for-ransom gangs then plaguing the countryside.[110]

Shortly after taking control of Mogadishu, the court leaders announced the formation of a SCIC, with an individual who met Osama bin Laden in early 2001, Hassan Dahir Aweys, as the head of its shura, and Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed as the administrative head. Somalis speculated at the time that Sheikh Sharif was appointed primarily to appease Western officials, who were alarmed by Aweys' leadership role within the Courts. The SCIC opposed the proposed IGAD operation as tantamount to a foreign invasion by Ethiopia, and hoped to position itself as a more attractive "bottom-up" alternative to the struggling TFG. To that end, the SCIC quickly set out to demonstrate its credentials; the seaport and airport in Mogadishu were reopened, rubbish and roadblocks were cleared from the streets, squatters were evicted from government buildings, and the city enjoyed a degree of stability unseen since the start of the civil war in 1991. The U.S. and the UN were impressed and urged the TFG to negotiate a power-sharing arrangement with the SCIC. But the SCIC then attempted to strengthen its bargaining position by capturing

as much of Somalia's territory as it could. It was an unwise political gambit that was perceived as military aggression by Somalia's neighbors.

While Mogadishu's residents may have enjoyed the newfound stability, other actors were distinctly worried about the SCIC's expansion. The U.S. led an initiative to establish an informal International Contact Group to coordinate its allies' responses to Somalia.[111] The Bush administration's only pressing policy objectives in Somalia were to capture or kill those individuals involved in bombing the U.S. embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam in 1998, and to deny al-Qaeda a safe haven (see section 5). It was, however, deeply alarmed by the rise of a populist Islamist movement with Aweys at its head. Washington's key concern on the latter score was probably that Aweys' protégé, Adan Hashi Ayro, was the key leader of al-Shabaab, which since 2005 had been broadcasting its links with al-Qaeda, assassinating rivals, and kidnapping and murdering foreigners in Somalia (see section 4).[112] The problem for the U.S., however, was that despite the SCIC leadership's connections with al-Qaeda, Washington's public denunciation of the courts as being dominated by terrorists and its dismissal of the Union of Islamic Courts' achievements, such as bringing a semblance of order to Mogadishu, outraged many Somalis.[113]

Enter Ethiopia

The other state that was seriously concerned by developments in Mogadishu was Ethiopia. Ethiopia and Somalia had long suffered from historical animosities and rivalries, particularly stemming from tensions over the Ogaden region in eastern Ethiopia (which

Ethiopia and Somalia had long suffered from historical animosities and rivalries, particularly stemming from tensions over the Ogaden region in eastern Ethiopia...

contains a large ethnic Somali population) and suspicion borne of religious differences. Since August 1996, Ethiopian troops had engaged in a series of military incursions aimed at degrading Islamist bases in Somalia, particularly those of AIAI, which Ethiopia's Prime Minister Meles Zenawi believed were fermenting trouble in eastern Ethiopia. During August 2006, Ethiopian troops entered Baidoa, ostensibly to support the TFG authorities but also to create a buffer zone in case more radical voices within the SCIC gained

the upper hand and incited irredentist violence in eastern Ethiopia. Meles Zenawi articulated the logic behind Ethiopia's move shortly after the SCIC's takeover of Mogadishu in the following manner:

> We are aware of course, that the Union of Islamic Courts is a union of desperate forces. There are those Somalis who have supported the establishment of such courts because of the desperation that came as a result of the absolute chaos and lawlessness in Mogadishu. So, in a sense, for many supporters of these courts, the issue is one of order and stability. We understand their desire and we have nothing against that desire … As regards the implications of the resurgence of terrorist groups within Somalia, on the security and stability of Ethiopia, naturally, like any country, we reserve the right to defend ourselves against all attempts to destabilize our security and stability.[114]

It was in this turbulent political context that the idea of an African peace-keeping force was resurrected; specifically, when UN Security Council resolution 1725 (6 December 2006) authorized IGAD and AU member states to "establish a protection and training mission in Somalia." The African force was mandated to: monitor the progress of and ensure the safe passage of those involved in the political dialogue between the SCIC and the TFG authorities; maintain security in Baidoa; protect members of the TFG as well as their key infrastructure; and train the TFG's security forces and help re-establish the national security forces of Somalia.

By 10 December, however, negotiations with the transitional government had all but collapsed, and Sheikh Sharif made clear the SCIC's intention to capture Baidoa from the TFG.[115] Two days later, the SCIC's military chief, Sheikh Indha'adde, and his (al-Shabaab) deputy, Sheikh Muktar Robow, issued an ultimatum to the Ethiopian troops to leave the country or face forcible expulsion, and began moving their forces toward Baidoa.[116] A brief war of (often confusing and contradictory) words followed, and fighting broke out between the SCIC forces and Ethiopian troops near Baidoa on 20 December. Here, in a single battle, Ethiopian forces quickly killed hundreds of ill-prepared Somali youths who had been sent to stop them by the SCIC leadership. Public support for the SCIC crumbled, and by 29 December Ethiopian and TFG soldiers had installed the TFG in Mogadishu. The SCIC's forces were routed and their leaders and militia scattered across the

country. As they retreated, the U.S. Air Force attacked SCIC forces in an unsuccessful attempt to kill al-Qaeda operatives thought to be working with them.[117] At this stage, Somali sources estimate that 18,000 Ethiopian troops were concentrated in Baidoa, Kismayo, and Mogadishu. Other sources put the figure much higher; the Swiss Peace Foundation, for instance, reported that Ethiopia maintained an estimated 40,000 troops in Somalia.[118]

Ethiopia justified its military operation as an example of collective defense under Article 51 of the UN Charter, since it took place at the behest of the TFG, which was at the time the internationally recognized authority for Somalia.[119] Ethiopia's critics, on the other hand, claim that its government simply used the rhetoric of some Somali extremists as justification for destroying the SCIC, which was its real objective.[120] Regardless of the legal justifications for the Ethiopian advance, Islamists around the world depicted Ethiopia as a crusading state which had, with Western collaboration, engaged in what one respected scholar called, "the ultimate provocation."[121] Meles Zenawi was depicted as the modern-day Abraha al-Ashram—an Ethiopian ruler of pre-Islamic Yemen who in A.D. 570 tried to demolish the Ka'ba shrine in Mecca—"the would-be Ethiopian destroyer of Islamic holiness."[122] On 5 January 2007, for example, Osama bin Laden's deputy Ayman al-Zawahiri issued a videotaped message entitled, *Help Your Brothers in Somalia!* that called for jihadists to supply fighters, money, and expertise against Ethiopia.[123] The rampant human rights abuses perpetrated during Ethiopia's occupation of Mogadishu deepened Muslim outrage.[124]

Why AMISOM?

This was the political maelstrom that AMISOM deployed into. But why did AMISOM succeed in deploying where IGASOM had failed? Several factors are important here. First, there were a series of regional concerns about the security situation in Somalia. Although the IGASOM mission had failed to deploy, there was still a pressing need felt among several IGAD members to protect Somalia's TFG and to provide an exit strategy for Ethiopia's forces. A related factor was the growing concern about transnational terrorism in the region, particularly in the wake of the 1998 U.S. embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania when some of the perpetrators were thought to be hiding in Somalia. Also prevalent were regional concerns about Somalia's growing presence as a source of arms proliferation and piracy, which would

negatively impact the region's economy. Such concerns were exacerbated by the steady flow of refugees that had left Somalia since the early 1990s, the majority of which remained in the Horn. Appeals to pan-African solidarity were also made regularly by AU and IGAD leaders, but these generally failed to generate troop commitments from most African states.

Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that AMISOM owes its existence to one African state, Uganda, without which there would have been no mission. Ugandan policy on national security issues is well known for the dominance of the presidency and President Museveni—who has held power for 27 years—in particular.[125] In the case of Somalia, President Museveni clearly saw AMISOM as an opportunity to exercise regional leadership more generally, especially given the absence of African Union control on the ground in Somalia. The deployment of the Ugandan People's Defense Force (UPDF) to Mogadishu also provided an opportunity to repair its reputation after its interventions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (1998-2003) had been widely criticized,[126] and its controversial role at home, particularly with regard to the 2006 presidential elections and its activities in the Karamoja cluster. The Somalia deployment also provided an important opportunity for the UPDF to attract significant training, military financing, and equipment options, especially from the United States. This was part of President Museveni's broader image management strategy of maintaining positive relationships with Uganda's principal donors.[127] The strategy was apparently successful inasmuch as U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Africa Johnnie Carson described Museveni in 2010 as "duly elected in free and fair elections," despite his own Department of State's findings that Uganda's last elections had been marred by serious irregularities.[128]

In Burundi, which became the second troop-contributing country to AMISOM in December 2007, a similar debate was underway. Senior Burundi officials said that participation in AMISOM would allow the country to express its gratitude for the external assistance it had received to end its civil war and enhance Burundi's status on the international stage, in part through increasing the professionalism of its military.[129] In March and April 2007, Burundian officials repeated their willingness to deploy about 2,000 soldiers to AMISOM but admitted they could not do so without significant logistical, training, and financial assistance. Burundi was so strapped for resources that it was unable to send a 30-man reconnaissance team to Somalia in February 2007. The government in Bujumbura therefore compiled a 20-page

list of requests that it considered necessary to achieve such a deployment, including trucks, bulldozers, aircraft, helicopters, as well as office supplies, sleeping bags, personal equipment, and optical equipment such as night vision goggles. Importantly, these items would need to be compatible with those of the UPDF to ensure effective interoperability. They were provided by the U.S., which also built a major new operations and training center in Burundi. Financially, Burundi sought assistance to enable it to provide its troops with salaries of $500 per month and a monthly per diem of $750 per capita.[130] Military planning began before parliamentary approval was secured. Some observers suggested that an additional motivating factor was to deploy ex-rebel fighters that had supposedly been reintegrated into the army outside the country.[131]

4. The Evolution of AMISOM

It was into Mogadishu's war-torn landscape that the African Union decided to deploy what would become its largest ever peace operation. It took this decision despite lacking most of the capabilities necessary to sustain such a mission in the field. As the AU Commission Chairperson, former President of Mali, Alpha Oumar Konare, put it:

> I am fully aware of the challenges facing our Organization. Indeed, unlike the United Nations, the AU does not have a system of assessed contributions to fund its peace support operations; we rely to a very large extent on the support of our partners. This means that the funding of our operations remains precarious. I am also aware of the limitations of the Commission with respect to its management capacity to oversee large-scale peace support operations, as clearly demonstrated by the AMIS operation [in Darfur, Sudan]. Finally, the challenges of an operation in Somalia, a country that has been without central Government for the past 16 years and where security remains precarious, cannot be underestimated … Yet, the African Union cannot abdicate its responsibilities vis-à-vis Somalia and fail its people. The African Union is the only Organization the Somali people could readily turn to as they strive to recover from decades of violence and untold suffering. We have a duty and an obligation of solidarity towards Somalia.[132]

Hence, while political pressures convinced the AU to act, it decided to deploy AMISOM without having the requisite management and support capabilities in place. Perhaps most significantly in the initial stages, the AU did not have an effective mission planning team. The few planning staff at the AU Peace Support Operations Division (PSOD) had received most of their experience serving in much more benign peace operations, and most of them had not been to Mogadishu. To fill this gap, the EU and U.S. helped establish the Strategic Planning and Management Unit (SPMU) within the AU to plan and manage the organization's peace operations. This was a major step forward, but it only achieved initial operating capacity of 19 planners in September 2007.

It was thus with uncertain and incomplete planning that AMISOM was mandated by the AU Peace and Security Council on 19 January 2007 and later endorsed by the UN Security Council.[133] It was tasked with providing protection for senior TFG officials (but also some international visitors to Mogadishu) and assisting in the process of reconciliation as well as the implementation of Somalia's National Security and Stabilization Plan. Later, the mission carried out a wider range of activities including conducting enforcement operations against al-Shabaab as well as a range of civil-military assistance projects (including delivery of water and medical services to the local population), policing tasks, and training support to TFG security forces (see boxes 1 and 2). Since it deployed to Mogadishu in March 2007 with some 1,650 Uganda troops, by mid-2012 it had grown in fits and starts to nearly 18,000 personnel primarily from Uganda, Burundi, and Kenya (see figure 3). By December 2013, AMISOM had an authorized strength of over 22,000 uniformed personnel contributed primarily by Uganda, Kenya, Burundi, Djibouti, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, and Ethiopia (which officially joined the mission in January 2014).

Box 1: AMISOM's Mandate (January 2007)
Source: AU document PSC/PR/Comm(LXIX), 19 January 2007

• to support dialogue and reconciliation in Somalia, working with all stakeholders,

• to provide, as appropriate, protection to the Transitional Federal Institutions and their key infrastructure, to enable them carry out their functions,

• to assist in the implementation of the National Security and Stabilization Plan of Somalia, particularly the effective re-establishment and training of all inclusive Somali security forces, bearing in mind the programs already being implemented by some of Somalia's bilateral and multilateral partners,

• to provide, within capabilities and as appropriate, technical and other support to the disarmament and stabilization efforts,

• to monitor, in areas of deployment of its forces, the security situation,

• to facilitate, as may be required and within capabilities, humanitarian operations, including the repatriation and reintegration of refugees and the resettlement of internally displaced people, and

• to protect its personnel, installations and equipment, including the right of self-defense;

Box 2: AMISOM's Mandate (August 2007)
Source: UN Security Council Resolution 1772, 20 August 2007

(a) To support dialogue and reconciliation in Somalia by assisting with the free movement, safe passage and protection of all those involved with the [all-inclusive political] process referred to in paragraphs 1 to 5 [of resolution 1772];

(b) To provide, as appropriate, protection to the Transitional Federal Institutions to help them carry out their functions of government, and security for key infrastructure;

(c) To assist, within its capabilities, and in coordination with other parties, with implementation of the National Security and Stabilization Plan, in particular the effective re-establishment and training of all-inclusive Somali security forces;

(d) To contribute, as may be requested and within capabilities, to the creation of the necessary security conditions for the provision of humanitarian assistance;

(e) To protect its personnel, facilities, installations, equipment and mission, and to ensure the security and freedom of movement of its personnel.

During more than six years of operations AMISOM evolved, and its evolution has reflected both the changing context in Somalia and international responses to the country's many problems. This section provides a chronological overview of the mission's major stages. These stages were not neat, nor did they necessarily reflect an official change in mandate. But they do illustrate the different strategic contexts in which AMISOM operated between March 2007 and late 2013.
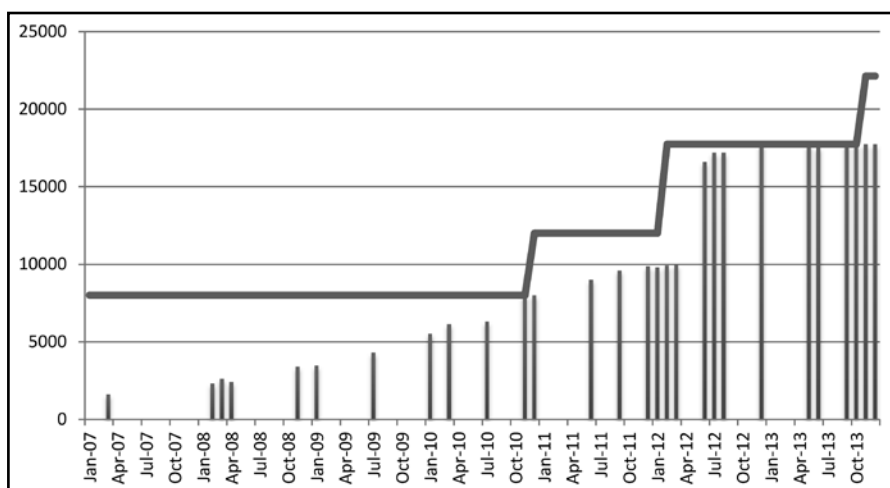
Figure 3. AMISOM authorized and deployed strength, 2007-13.[134]

Box 3: AMISOM's Major Troop- and Police-Contributing Countries	
Major Troop-Contributing Countries (arrived)	*Major Police-Contributing Countries (arrived)*
Uganda, March 2007 Burundi, December 2007 Djibouti, December 2011 Kenya, June 2012 Sierra Leone, April 2013 * Ethiopia (declared its intention to join AMISOM in November 2013 and did so in January 2014).	Uganda, August 2012 (Formed Police Unit) Nigeria, September 2012 (Formed Police Unit)

Stage 1: Entry (March 2007-January 2009)

Until the Ethiopian troops began to withdraw from Mogadishu in January 2009, AMISOM operated alongside but distinct from the ENDF. AMISOM soldiers protected key members of the TFG and a number of strategic locations in the city from armed opposition. These included the air and sea ports, the presidential palace at Villa Somalia, and the K4 junction linking them. In doing so, the mission worked closely with the ENDF. For instance, the two forces shared the task of covering the four sides of the Villa Somalia boundary. Although AMISOM was a separate deployment to the ENDF, and unlike the ENDF did not attempt to patrol Mogadishu's streets or the notorious Bakara Market, its forces were targeted by some local armed factions from the day of their deployment. Some of the hostility came from local factions vying for control of the airport and its environs, into which AMISOM had deployed. But it was also targeted by al-Shabaab forces who suspected AMISOM had joined the ENDF. Thus, for al-Shabaab militants, both the ENDF and AMISOM were perceived as proxies of the United States. AMISOM suffered its first fatalities on 5 May as a result of a roadside bomb which killed five Ugandan soldiers.

It was not until late 2007 and early 2008 that Ugandan troops were joined by soldiers from Burundi. According to one insider within the AU Peace and Security Council Secretariat, "the danger of AMISOM being seen as a proxy for U.S. strategic interests in the 'War on Terrorism' made most PSC [AU Peace and Security Council] members reluctant to contribute troops."[135] Part of this suspicion was driven by the arrival in Mogadishu of two private contractor firms run out of the U.S., namely DynCorp International and Bancroft Global Development.

In January 2007, the U.S. Department of State contracted DynCorp International to help equip, deploy, sustain, and train soldiers from the vanguard Ugandan and Burundian contingents of AMISOM.[136] The United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office also contracted DynCorp to obtain and transport military and nonmilitary materiel to the deployed UPDF contingent. Overall, DynCorp provided over 80 percent of the initial AMISOM fleet by delivering and managing more than 100 new and remanufactured commercial, military, and armored vehicles. The commander of Uganda's land forces, Lieutenant General Katumba Wamala, went on record to say that DynCorp's services:

> ... right from deployment up to now have enabled us to achieve what many critics looked at as a mission impossible. DynCorp International stood with us even during the most challenging time of the deployment and did not waver even when one of the aircraft was shot at.[137]

The second U.S.-based firm was Bancroft Global Development. This firm was first approached by Ugandan leadership and invited to work with the UPDF contingent in Mogadishu in November 2007 but did not take up a contract with the U.S. Department of State until early 2010.[138] The Ugandans were well aware their Somali campaign would get them into unknown military territory, especially with regards to the challenges of urban warfare. This is where they sought Bancroft's expertise. After a few reconnaissance trips, Bancroft deployed an initial team of four advisers into Mogadishu in early 2008. Within four months, their team had expanded to 12. After being impressed with their work in the field, Burundi approached Bancroft in August 2008 to provide them with similar assistance. During these early operations, Bancroft self-funded its activities in Mogadishu through its investment arm, Bancroft Global Investments, as part of a risky but ultimately lucrative business plan to establish themselves as reliable partners of AMISOM. It appears that most of the confusion surrounding the U.S. Government's involvement with Bancroft stemmed from the fact that some of the funding coming from Uganda and Burundi was drawn from part of their broader bilateral assistance packages with the U.S. Government. Hence from November 2007 until early 2010, when Bancroft was awarded a contract by the U.S. Department of State, funding for its operations in Somalia

came from a combination of Bancroft resources and the contributions from Uganda and Burundi.

Perceptions of U.S. involvement combined with the fact that the mission was deploying to an active war zone and did not have a reliable source of funding deterred some potential troop-contributing countries—including Nigeria and Ghana—from deploying. Uganda and Burundi thus struggled alone in Mogadishu. Not surprisingly, AMISOM's small force of less than 2,500 troops left it unable to gain any territory. Instead, it concentrated on consolidating its positions and getting to know the TFG and the local population. AMISOM efforts to engage the local population were severely hampered, however, by the public's fear of retaliation from al-Shabaab. UN and nongovernmental humanitarian workers also refused protection from AMISOM, fearing that any visible association with the "peacekeepers" would endanger their lives and severely restrict the delivery of services.

Ethiopian troops, on the other hand, were engaged in almost constant battles with al-Shabaab fighters and incurred significant casualties and financial costs. In April 2008, Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi remained

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vague on the subject stating only that "hundreds" of his soldiers had been killed or injured, and in monetary terms the campaign had cost "substantial amounts"—although he went on to say that it had not cost "hundreds of millions of dollars," and that Ethiopia had maintained its presence in Somalia "without breaking our back economically."[139] By late March 2008, Ethiopian officials claimed they had reduced the number of their troops in Somalia to approximately 2,500.[140] Somali sources claim that the number of Ethiopian troops in country at that date was actually closer to 24,000, mostly based around Mogadishu and Baidoa. The 2,500 figure seems unlikely, but regardless of the precise numbers of Ethiopian troops deployed, Addis Ababa clearly needed an exit strategy quickly. It came in the form of the Djibouti Peace Process.

Facilitated by the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative, Ambassador Amadou Ould-Abdallah, the process culminated in a series of agreements signed between the TFG and the ARS-Djibouti led by Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, former leader of the SCIC, on 9 June, 26 October, and 25 November respectively.[141] The political impetus for the process came from

Ethiopia, which was desperately seeking a way to withdraw its soldiers from Mogadishu, save face, and leave behind at least potentially stable (and non-irredentist) authorities. To that end, Ethiopia "placed heavy pressure on the Yusuf wing of the TFG to embrace the accord, and when this failed it pressured Yusuf to resign, clearing the way for the formation of a new government."[142]

Among other things, the 9 June Agreement endorsed the territorial integrity of Somalia, requested a ceasefire, and established a Joint Security Committee and High-Level Committee to oversee political cooperation.[143] It also called for Ethiopian withdrawal, and the replacement of Ethiopian troops with a UN international stabilization force (which must not include soldiers from any of Somalia's neighbors) to deploy within 120 days. The stabilization force was to be made up of troops "from countries that are friends of Somalia excluding neighbouring states" (agreement paragraph 7a) and "UN forces" (agreement paragraph 7b): an important provision, given the widespread Somali belief that Kenya and Ethiopia were partisan actors in the conflict. It is therefore noteworthy that Kenyan forces officially joined AMISOM in June 2012, while Ethiopia troops were integrated into the mission in January 2014, although their negotiations to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the AU continued. On 26 October 2008, both parties reaffirmed their commitment to political cooperation and reconciliation as well as the implementation of a cessation of hostilities. On 25 November, they also signed an agreement involving plans to reconfigure the TFG, including doubling the size of its parliament to incorporate members of the ARS-Djibouti and civil society groups.

At this stage, calls for a UN force to take over from AMISOM were intensifying. When AMISOM was mandated in early 2007, the AU had envisaged that after six months a UN peacekeeping operation would take over from AMISOM, but this did not happen for a variety of reasons. Indeed, in November 2007 UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said that deploying UN peacekeepers to Somalia was "neither realistic nor viable"—the security situation was so bad that it was not even possible to send a UN technical assessment team.[144] The decision was denounced by African leaders, particularly Kenya's president Mwai Kibaki, who bluntly criticized the UN's indifference to the sacrifice of African soldiers: "The perceived reluctance of the United Nations Security Council to engage with Somalia has been a

matter of great concern for those of us who suffer the greatest consequences of the conflict."[145]

On 20 May 2008, AMISOM adopted a new *Strategic Directive* which defined the operation's mission statement in the following terms: "AMISOM will conduct a Peace Support Operation in Somalia to stabilize the security situation, including the takeover from Ethiopian Forces, and to create a safe and secure environment in preparation for the transition to the UN."[146] Much of AMISOM's motivation to take on the UN mantle was financial, however; the UN Blue Helmets were compensated at a higher rate than AU troops, and the transition to a UN peacekeeping force would raise danger pay rates across the board, including for humanitarian relief workers (see box 4).

The major push for the UN to assume AMISOM's role came in late 2008 from the AU and the George W. Bush administration, both of which feared the creation of a "security vacuum" in the wake of Ethiopia's withdrawal. The result was that in mid-November 2008, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon recommended that an International Stabilization Force (ISF) of "approximately two brigades" be deployed to Mogadishu.[147] Intended to unfold in four phases, the ISF was supposed to support the implementation of the Djibouti Agreement and create conditions for the deployment of a multidimensional UN peacekeeping operation.[148] By mid-December, however, the Secretary-General had to inform the UN Security Council that while he still believed only "a multinational force" was "the right tool for stabilizing Mogadishu," only 14 of the 50 countries approached had responded to his request for contributions. Of these, only two offered funding (the U.S. and the Netherlands). None of them pledged any troops or offered to assume the lead nation role. He went on to note that this was particularly "disappointing" since it stood "in such sharp contrast to the exceptional political will and commitment of military assets which Member States have shown in respect of the fight against piracy."[149] Since late 2008 various coalition forces conducted an anti-piracy and maritime security operation across the Gulf of Aden. The central actors have included the EU's Operation Atalanta, as well as units from NATO, the Combined Maritime Forces, and individual states such as China, Japan, Russia, India, and others (see section 3).

With the death of the ISF concept, the Secretary-General explored other options to prepare for the security vacuum expected after the Ethiopians withdrew. In addition to advising that the UN continue its contingency planning for a potential UN peacekeeping operation, he proposed three

Figure 4. AMISOM patrol. Photo used by permission of Newscom.

Figure 5. AMISOM on patrol, Mogadishu. Photo used by permission of Newscom.

steps.[150] First, AMISOM should be reinforced through bilateral support to Uganda and Burundi; support at the mission-level in the area of logistical, medical, and engineering capabilities; and the transfer of some $7 million worth of assets from the UN peacekeeping mission in Eritrea and Ethiopia (UNMEE), including prefabricated accommodation, electricity generators, air-conditioning units, ablution units, and soft-skin vehicles.[151] He also suggested the UN should bolster its support for AMISOM by providing an additional logistics support package and continuing to assist AU planning and deployment preparations through its planners team in Addis Ababa. Second, the UN should build the capacity of the Djibouti Agreement signatories to restore the security sector and the rule of law by training and equipping 5,000 joint TFG/ARS-Djibouti forces, a 10,000-strong Somali Police Force, and other justice and corrections personnel. The third step involved the Security Council establishing a maritime task force which could support AMISOM operations, host a quick-reaction force, and serve as an operational platform for any envisaged UN peacekeeping operation. As it turned out, none of these initiatives materialized.

Stage 2: Stalemate (January 2009-September 2010)

In the end, the ENDF agreed to fully withdraw from Mogadishu by mid-January 2009 and from Baidoa a few weeks later.[152] AMISOM stayed put despite the lack of a UN mission. Residents of northern Mogadishu poured onto the streets to celebrate an Ethiopian departure that few believed would occur. Politically, the new phase in AMISOM's journey was marked by the election of Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, the former leader of the SCIC, as president. The Djibouti Peace Process was viewed locally as heavily manipulated by the UN while Sheikh Sharif's rise to the presidency was seen as a local triumph and a tacit redemption of the SCIC. After much international pressure, TFG President Yusuf had resigned, thereby ending a months-long standoff with the Prime Minister.[153] This paved the way for the reconstruction of a new TFG.

In military terms, however, the resulting security vacuum generated two significant reactions. First, some of AMISOM's external partners were anxious that the force would be unable to defend itself and/or might be left with a situation in which there was no transitional government in Mogadishu to support. They subsequently called for plans to be drawn up to support

AMISOM's potential withdrawal. Second, al-Shabaab forces took advantage of the ENDF's withdrawal to occupy almost all of the positions previously held by the Ethiopians. Although the Ethiopians left behind TFG forces in some key locations such as the Ministry of Defense, sports stadium, and pasta factory, these troops quickly melted away and al-Shabaab fighters moved in. Some of these positions were extremely close to AMISOM. From that point on, intermittent firefights took place around AMISOM's bases as AMISOM and TFG forces fought against al-Shabaab. The strategic result of these encounters was a bloody stalemate with neither the TFG supported by AMISOM nor al-Shabaab able to decisively defeat the other, although control of Mogadishu's various districts fluctuated as the TFG and al-Shabaab both gained and then failed to hold new sectors of the city.

Fighting during this period displayed a number of major characteristics. First, although al-Shabaab conducted some larger assaults, its forces made much greater use of asymmetric tactics, notably snipers, IEDs, and suicide bombings, with two suicide attacks in February and September 2009 inflicting particularly high numbers of casualties upon AMISOM. Its forces also targeted civilians suspected of supporting the TFG. Al-Shabaab also deliberately engaged in tactics designed to provoke AMISOM into causing civilian casualties. Unfortunately, AMISOM often played into their hands by responding with indiscriminate fire into civilian populated areas. In a typical scenario for much of 2009 and 2010, al-Shabaab forces would fire a couple of mortar rounds at AMISOM positions from Bakara Market and then withdraw. On 11 July 2009, for instance, four mortar rounds even landed inside Villa Somalia, killing three AMISOM soldiers and injuring several others. AMISOM would return fire with heavy weapons without being able to observe the fall of shot and without being able to rapidly locate al-Shabaab's heavy weapons, which meant AMISOM's return of fire was likely automated at preset targets. The TFG's minister for defense reported to the AFP that he witnessed AMISOM forces fire 60 artillery shells, missiles, and mortars into Bakara Market in response to three mortars fired by al Shabaab.[154] This and other incidents eventually prompted AMISOM to create an indirect fire policy in 2011. Al-Shabaab would then claim AMISOM's fire had caused civilian casualties while AMISOM would deny this or claim al-Shabaab had forcibly kept civilians in Bakara Market for precisely this reason. Alternatively, much the same scenario unfolded after al-Shabaab used converted Toyota minibuses as mobile artillery launchers, which would fire at TFG/

AMISOM positions before departing the scene leaving the area exposed to likely retaliatory fire.[155] At times, AMISOM also fired on civilians who were mistaken for enemy fighters. In one such incident in 2009, a passenger bus was accidentally fired upon by AMISOM troops after they were ambushed by a combination of a roadside bomb and machine gun fire.[156]

Both AMISOM and the UNPOS were painfully slow to respond to allegations of civilian harm. In February 2009, when local newspapers reported AMISOM's fire on civilian passenger buses, the UN's Special Representative for Somalia accused the local reporters of being *genocidaires* and called for an international boycott of the Somali press.[157] AMISOM officials invariably denied reports of civilian casualties: as late as July 2010, AMISOM spokesman Gaffel Nkolokosa told *The Washington Post* that "AMISOM has never shelled indiscriminately at civilians … Peacekeepers have always avoided civilian shellings and observe international humanitarian laws."[158]

It was not until 2010 that public criticism of such episodes generated visible agreement throughout the AU, AMISOM and various international partners that something needed to be done to reduce levels of civilian harm in Mogadishu, especially that caused by AMISOM. This was seen as important for moral reasons and legal reasons but also because not protecting civilians was inefficient for AMISOM strategically and a barrier to operational success. The weight of evidence was clear that AMISOM's existing approach had neither defeated al-Shabaab nor destroyed its ability to launch mortar attacks. Among some local civilians this caused resentment, reduced cooperation, and probably pushed some of them to join al-Shabaab or at least become sympathetic to the insurgents. In sum, existing, inefficient approaches ultimately extended the conflict and would lead to more AMISOM and civilian casualties.[159] AMISOM also lacked the requisite capability and modern weaponry to deal with the growing insurgency within the city, including aerial surveillance, mortar locating capabilities (to guide its own counter mortar fires), and timely intelligence. The AU, however, was adamant that it could not fund intelligence operations as part of a peace support mission. Also, AMISOM did not arrive with a strategic communications strategy or infrastructure and was therefore left to undertake damage control in most instances. Therefore, in order to fundamentally change its image, AMISOM needed external assistance from contractors who helped design and implement new information and communication policies, and external advisers who helped design a new indirect fire policy for the mission.

This period also saw AMISOM occasionally forced to conduct vicious street-fighting with enemy forces sometimes less than 50 meters away from its positions. Al-Shabaab's fighters tended to traverse the city in small units of 10 or so fighters, but its network of underground tunnels also meant that it could mass a significant force—of up to 100 fighters—very quickly when peacekeeping patrols were spotted in the city. AMISOM's indirect fire weapons were thus often used danger close, i.e. within the minimum safety distances for AMISOM troops as well as any present civilians. Tunnels and pit traps were also used by al-Shabaab to snare AMISOM tanks and armored vehicles.[160]

Figure 6. AMISOM soldiers stand near a burnt out AMISOM tank in Mogadishu. Photo used by permission of Newscom.

A third characteristic of this fighting was the way in which AMISOM had to learn to effectively work with the TFG's security forces. This was not easy, in part because of the poor standard of training, equipment, and discipline among TFG (and some AMISOM) troops, but also because of the initial mistrust with which AMISOM viewed some of these fighters, being unsure where their real loyalties lay.[161] As a result, AMISOM strictly rationed supplies of ammunition to TFG soldiers to try to prevent them from selling it.[162]

A fourth problem was the poor state of the logistical support available to the AMISOM troops, almost all of which was coming from their own armed forces and bilateral donors, notably the U.S. and United Kingdom. This situation improved considerably when the UN Support Office for AMISOM (UNSOA) was authorized and set up its logistical support base in Mombasa in August 2009 (see below).[163]

By mid-2010, there was rising despair in Washington. Policymakers and analysts suspected that the stalemate had become lucrative for both sides of the conflict, and feared that a new war economy had developed in Somalia. The TFG, in particular, was suspected of having strong political and financial incentives to prolong the conflict with al-Shabaab. At a discussion held under Chatham House Rule, one prominent expert surmised that the bloody stalemate in Somalia could go on forever, since no actor in the conflict—neither the TFG, al-Shabaab nor AMISOM—was suffering losses that would cause them to withdraw.[164] All were in fact profiting financially from either Western or Arab support.[165] It was Somalia's silent civilians who appeared to be suffering the worst consequences of the battle between Somalia's transitional government and the terrorists.

The balance of the war was tilted distinctly in AMISOM's favor by two events during mid-2010: al-Shabaab's bomb attacks in Kampala and the failure of its Ramadan offensive. Probably in an attempt to weaken Uganda's resolve, al-Shabaab carried out two suicide bombings in Kampala in July 2010 during the football World Cup. Although these killed over 70 people, they did not have the desired effect; instead of pulling out, Uganda responded in line with an earlier IGAD declaration by deploying additional troops to Mogadishu and increasing its commitment to degrading al-Shabaab. So did Burundi.[166]

The Kampala bombings thus reinvigorated IGAD's earlier call for AMISOM's troop levels to be raised to 20,000.[167] As a result, the 15th AU Summit in Kampala (26-27 July 2010) authorized the increase of AMISOM troop strength from 8,000 to 20,000 and its police strength from 270

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to 1,680 (560 police officers plus eight Formed Police Units of 140 personnel each). This decision was subsequently endorsed by the AU Peace and Security Council on 15 October 2010, and the AU produced a revised Concept of Operations for AMISOM which provided an overview of the operational employment of the 20,000-strong force.

The U.S. State Department's Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program delivered a refined pre-deployment training package as an addition to the increase in AMISOM troop strength. This new package included more robust and better combat equipment, and focused on counterinsurgency tactics—including how to fight through buildings to tackle al-Shabaab sniper teams—and better force task organization (i.e. combat teams with armor and special forces). AMISOM forces also received more timely intelligence from their partners and developed a better close combat supply arrangement. All these things helped pave the way for the successful offensive operations which took place in 2011.

The second major turning point was the failure of al-Shabaab's major offensive against the TFG and AMISOM launched during Ramadan of 2010.[168] Known as *Nahayatu Muxtadiin* (the end of the apostates), the offensive apparently took place at the insistence of al-Shabaab's Amir, Ahmed Abdi Godane, despite considerable skepticism from other commanders. The plan was to isolate approximately 40 percent of AMISOM's forces which were deployed in the Villa Somalia area. On 23 August 2010, therefore, al-Shabaab's concentrated forces launched attacks across Hawalwadag, Hodan, Bondehere, and Whardigley districts of Mogadishu attacking AMISOM strongholds but failing to draw them out. After two weeks of intense fighting, however, al-Shabaab forces had suffered a series of significant losses, with AMISOM intelligence estimating between 500 to 700 fatalities with an additional 2,000 wounded. On 13 September, the humiliating defeat was announced when a gathering of Hawiye elders publicly declared al-Shabaab had lost the campaign.

Box 4: Financing AMISOM

AMISOM received funding from a variety of different sources. According to the *Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union* (2002), Member State troop-contributing countries bear the costs of any AU peace support operations during the first three months. The AU will then reimburse these countries within a maximum period of six months and then proceed to finance the operation. In practice, however, this system did not work, in large part because the AU Peace Fund has never functioned as planned. AMISOM's initial financial costs therefore fell directly on the troop-contributing countries (Uganda and Burundi), but they received support from bilateral donors, notably the U.S., the U.K., and France. A UN Trust Fund for AMISOM and a UN Trust Fund for Somali Security Forces were also established and received donations from a variety of partner states and international organizations, some with caveats. After the UNSOA was established in 2009, AMISOM also received financial support for its logistics package from the UN Assessed Peacekeeping Budget. Between mid-2009 and mid-2013, the UN allocated just over $1.1 billion to UNSOA's budget. This covered the delivery of rations, fuel, general stores and medical supplies; engineering and construction of important facilities; health and sanitation; medical evacuation and treatment services and medical equipment for AMISOM medical facilities; communications and information technology; information support services; aviation services for evacuations and troop rotations; vehicles and other equipment; and capacity-building. UN support did not extend to the provision of ammunition which remained a bilateral partner arrangement. In November 2013, UN Security Council Resolution 2124 expanded the UNSOA logistical support package for AMISOM to encompass the additional personnel and provide food and water, fuel, transport, tents and in-theater medical evacuation for Somali National Army troops engaged in joint operations with AMISOM. This support was funded by a UN trust fund rather than covered by the UN's assessed peacekeeping budget (like most of UNSOA's activities).

The allowances of AMISOM's uniformed personnel were also paid for by donors. During 2007 and 2008, the U.K. government picked up the bill for these at a rate of $575 per soldier per month. The EU then took over this role via its African Peace Facility, paying an initial rate of $750 per month but moving to the standard UN peacekeeping rate of approximately $1,028 per month in January 2011. In 2012 these allowances totaled approximately €163 million. The governments of AMISOM's troop-contributing countries taxed each member of personnel $200 from their monthly allowance.

In total, one estimate suggests that combined U.S., EU and UN funding of AMISOM from 2007 and through June 2012 totaled close to $1.5 billion dollars, which amounts to an average cost of approximately $800,000 per day. This figure includes the UN administrative costs, funding for U.S. contractors such as Bancroft Global Development, as well as the cost of operating the AMISOM headquarters in Nairobi.[169]

Stage 3: Offensive (September 2010-October 2011)

With an increase in its troop strength and on the back of repelling al-Shabaab's Ramadan offensive, AMISOM began to prepare for its own series of

offensive operations. Over the next 12 months, these operations would enable the AU force to gain control of Mogadishu.

African leaders were once again disappointed by the Western response to the Somali crisis. In the wake of the Kampala bombings, the African Union had demanded increases in troop levels, weaponry, and funding. But the response of the UN Security Council and the U.S. was muted and not accompanied by offers of increased funding for AMISOM, not least because the AU had not specified how and why it came to the number of 20,000 troops. In addition, one analyst astutely pegged the U.S. response when he observed that "For Washington, the Kampala bombings were an embarrassment, not the crisis and shock that they were in East Africa."[170]

In the face of UN and U.S. reticence, the IGAD and AU call for an expanded force of 20,000 was assessed by the UN's Military Staff Committee to be too high, and the UN Security Council instead endorsed a troop increase from 8,000 to 12,000 in resolution 1964 (22 December 2010). The difference, this time around, was that these debates spurred efforts to actually deploy the initial authorized force strength of 8,000 personnel. This gave AMISOM the forces it required to take the fight to al-Shabaab, in tandem with TFG security forces.

During mid-February and early March 2011, AMISOM and TFG forces launched Operation *Panua-Eneo* (Swahili for expand space) to extend their areas of influence across Mogadishu. This campaign was summarized by the UN Monitoring Group in the following manner:

> Although the offensive entailed high casualties on the part of AMISOM forces, Transitional Federal Government and affiliated militias, it succeeded in expanding the AMISOM area of control, from five districts of the capital to seven, shifted the front line further away from Villa Somalia and placed al-Shabaab forces in Bakaara market and Dayniile under pressure.[171]

On the negative side, however, the Monitoring Group also concluded that the offensive "was followed by an increase in physical threats by al-Shabaab against aid workers across southern Somalia."[172]

Once again, there were major difficulties involved in conducting such offensive operations. Arguably some of the most important strategic challenges related to working with the TFG's security forces, winning the hearts

and minds of Somalis, and the limitations of the AU's bureaucratic capacity to manage an operation of AMISOM's size and complexity.

With regard to the TFG security forces, in early 2011 these were estimated to be approximately 10,000 strong (this figure excludes friendly militias such as Ahlu Sunna Wal Jamaa).[173] Importantly, these forces were never integrated but consisted of an amalgamation of clan-based militias and lacked any centralized command and control structure. These various groups were organized into four brigades stationed side by side on the front line. The number of soldiers in each brigade, however, was unclear.[174] Their morale was low, in part because their stipends (paid at a rate of $100 per soldier per month, principally by the U.S. and Italian governments) were inconsistent and sporadic.[175] To circumvent this problem, some TFG soldiers acquired two or more identification cards which they used to draw salaries. In addition, because of concerns about corruption, AMISOM rationed the TFG's access to ammunition. As one assessment of the Somali security forces concluded:

> each soldier is given only ten bullets per day, some of who sell five of them to buy food and khat. When the remaining five bullets have been used, they stop fighting and desert the frontline. In addition, there is no proper coordination with the AMISOM forces. Meanwhile, should they get injured in the course of duty, they don't receive medical attention and have to rely on friends and relatives.[176]

The fact that major divisions remained within the TFG leadership also posed significant problems. Nevertheless, AMISOM and the TFG's forces managed to overcome these difficulties sufficiently to deal al-Shabaab a series of significant blows.

By late May, TFG and AMISOM forces had taken control of Wadnaha Road, including the symbolic Red Mosque, the former military camp, Bondhere district headquarters, the former Italian Embassy, the former Interior Ministry building, and Alimo Hotel.[177]

The AU's own management weaknesses also posed significant challenges. In March 2011, for instance, the Mission's self-assessment concluded that "Effective and efficient management of AMISOM performance, operations, administration and information systems was hampered by understaffing and lack of structures."[178] In the military sector it identified five challenges: there were no funds for reimbursement of contingent-owned equipment to the troop-contributing countries; there was inadequate provision of appropriate

operational equipment for AMISOM troops; there was a lack of facilities for repair and maintenance of the equipment in theatre; there were no VSAT [an Internet over satellite provider] connectivity between AMISOM's Nairobi headquarters, the mission's force headquarters in Mogadishu, and the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa; and there was inadequate coordination between AMISOM military and other forces.[179] The absence of strategic guidance from Addis Ababa led to the mission being run from Kampala.

Despite these problems, AMISOM made major gains over al-Shabaab. By early August, AMISOM and TFG forces succeeded in forcing al-Shabaab fighters to withdraw from their positions in central Mogadishu. Initially they retreated only as far as settlements just outside the city, such as Balaad, and Afgoye, from where they continued to launch various guerrilla-style attacks and assassinations as well as suicide bombings against targets in the city center.

Stage 4: Expansion (October 2011-September 2012)

The next major shift in the strategic terrain occurred on 16 October 2011 when Kenyan forces launched Operation *Linda Nchi* (Swahili for protect the nation). Although Kenya had long been a significant player in Somalia's politics and economy, this was the first time it openly deployed troops across the border.[180] Until then, Kenya's approach to stabilizing southern Somalia revolved around its Jubbaland Initiative, which attempted to dislodge al-Shabaab from the Juba and Gedo regions by supporting local clan militias with funding and weapons. This was also the first time the Kenyan Defence Forces (KDF) had engaged in an expeditionary warfare campaign. The UN Monitoring Group declared Kenyan operations between 16 October 2011 and 2 June 2012 to be a breach of the general arms embargo on Somalia because they were not part of AMISOM and only after 5 January 2012 did AMISOM's area of operations include Sector 2 where the Kenyan forces were operating.[181]

Following the famine-induced mass exodus of refugees streaming across the Somali-Kenya border during 2011 and the kidnapping of several foreign nationals along the same frontier, Kenyan authorities increased fortifications along the border and deployed troops into Somalia. One of Kenya's many stated aims was to prevent al-Shabaab operations in Kenya by creating a buffer zone up to the settlement of Afmadow, which was an al-Shabaab stronghold. The Kenyan operation unfolded along three primary

axes: toward Kismayo; from the border crossing at Liboi through the Somali border town of Dhobley, toward Afmadow; and from the northern Kenyan border town of Elwaq into Somalia's Gedo region. The advances were reportedly preceded by air strikes, and on 20 October Kenyan forces seized the town of Ras Kamboni. After that, Kenyan forces met somewhat stiffer local resistance, and for two entire months the troops became literally stuck in the mud produced by the region's seasonal *deyr* rains (which usually last from October-December). By February 2012, the deployment was estimated to have cost approximately $180 million and 50 deaths per month.[182] Because the Kenyan intervention supported the Ogadeni clan, this led to tensions with Ethiopia and with significant swathes of the Somali population, who viewed Kenya's intervention as an illicit effort to assist the Ogadeni clan to regain its hold on the lucrative port of Kismayo.[183]

While the precise timing of Kenya's operation took most states by surprise, the authorities in Nairobi claimed it took place with the concurrence of the TFG and had the support of the Kenyan parliament. (This claim was contradicted by the Somali president, Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, who complained to reporters that Kenya had not informed him of the invasion plans and that their transgression "would not be allowed."[184]) Operation *Linda Nchi* involved some 6,000 troops and may have been planned as early as June 2011.[185] While France said it provided some logistical support for the operation, the U.S. stated it was not involved but was continuing to help Kenya enhance its counterterrorism capabilities and was "in close contact with them as they go forward with this operation."[186] Nevertheless, the fact that U.S. drone attacks in Somalia increased at the same time as Kenya's operation led many locals to interpret Kenya's operation as a U.S. project.[187] The impression was confirmed when the U.S. later agreed to provide financial support for the Kenyan troops.

On 25 November 2011, the IGAD Heads of State summit in Addis Ababa supported the Kenyan operation, encouraged Ethiopia to support the KDF, and called upon Kenya to consider integrating its forces into AMISOM. The Government of Kenya accepted this invitation on 7 December 2011.[188] Ethiopian troops entered Somali territory once again in late November 2011 in the wake of Kenya's campaign. According to the UN Monitoring Group this was a violation of the general arms embargo.[189] Ethiopian General Samora Yunis was reported to have said that Operation *Linda Nchi* opened up a possibility of Ethiopia acting decisively against al-Shabaab in Somalia.[190] It appears

that most of the ENDF's operations went well, in part because al-Shabaab forces rarely chose to stand and fight but instead withdrew from towns before ENDF, TFG, and allied troops arrived. Al-Shabaab did, however, successfully conduct some significant ambushes on ENDF and TFG aligned forces.

In December 2011, Ethiopian forces captured the strategic town of Belet Weyne, followed by Baidoa in February 2012. By opening up another front against al-Shabaab, the ENDF operations helped create an environment in which AMISOM could expand beyond Mogadishu. Moreover, Ethiopia's announcement that it was going to take on al-Shabaab sent a helpful message for AMISOM. Ethiopia's strategic goal seems to have been the stabilization of the territory that would become AMISOM Sector 3 and Sector 4 (see box 5). It achieved this in tandem with AMISOM forces deployed in Baidoa and Belet Weyne and, from December 2012, as part of the IGAD Grand Stabilization Plan for South-Central Somalia.

These developments paved the way for a major revision to AMISOM's strategic and military concepts of operations. This took place in late 2011 and early 2012 and involved representatives from the AU, UN, IGAD, the TFG, Uganda, Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, the U.S., and the United Kingdom. The new strategic concept of operations adopted a new force posture based around four land sectors and involving nearly 18,000 troops (see box 5). Another significant development was the establishment of a new AMISOM force headquarters in Mogadishu which would be given 85 staff posts.

Box 5: AMISOM's Force Posture as set out in the January 2012 Concept of Operations

Sector 1, Mogadishu was covered by approximately 9,500 troops from Ugandan and Burundi.

Sector 2 in southwest Somalia involved some 4,200 troops from the re-hatted Kenyan force. It covered such key towns as Afmadow, Jilib, Bualle, and Kismayo. In April 2013 a battalion from Sierra Leone deployed replacing one of the Kenyan battalions.

Sector 3 centered on the town of Baidoa and comprised some 2,500 Ugandan and Burundian troops supported by Ethiopian forces.

Sector 4 focused on the town of Belet Weyne northeast of Mogadishu. This contained roughly 1,000 Djiboutian soldiers supported by Ethiopian forces.

AMISOM's maritime component was supposed to conduct limited maritime security operations and support land operations such as interdicting al-Shabaab logistic resupply into Kismayo, Haradhere, Marka, and Barawe, and protecting sea lines of communication.[191]

This new force posture, articulated in the AU-UN joint Strategic Concept for an expanded AMISOM, was endorsed by the AU's Peace and Security Council and the UN Security Council in January and February 2012 respectively.[192] This paved the way for the adoption of UN Security Council 2036 (22 February 2012), a landmark resolution that, among other things, authorized the reimbursement of Contingent-Owned Equipment from the UN assessed budget to AMISOM troop-contributing countries. A positive spin-off effect of this resolution was that it brought commitments from new contributing countries during 2012, namely, Djibouti and Sierra Leone, which each pledged a battalion of troops, and Nigeria, which deployed a formed police unit to Mogadishu. Despite agreeing to join AMISOM in December 2011, Kenya's authorities took until 2 June 2012 to sign the technical Memorandum of Understanding with the African Union. The delay was caused by arguments over several issues: the precise number of troops in the Kenyan contingent and operational details remained unclear; there were problems with integrating Kenyan air and maritime assets into AMISOM; there were ugly arguments about who should acquire key senior positions in the new force headquarters; and the issue of payment of troop allowances caused major arguments within the EU.[193] Djibouti's battalion did not complete its deployment to Sector 4 until December 2012, and Sierra Leone's battalion only started deploying to Sector 2 in April 2013 where it co-deployed with Kenyan forces.

Box 6: AMISOM's Mandate February 2012

Source: UN Security Council Resolution 2036, 22 February 2012

"in addition to the tasks set out in paragraph 9 of resolution 1772 (2007) AMISOM shall include establishing a presence in the four sectors set out in the AMISOM Strategic Concept of 5 January, and AMISOM shall be authorised to take all necessary measures as appropriate in those sectors in coordination with the Somali security forces to reduce the threat posed by Al Shabaab and other armed opposition groups in order to establish conditions for effective and legitimate governance across Somalia, *further decides* that AMISOM shall act in compliance with applicable international humanitarian and human rights law, in performance of this mandate and in full respect of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and unity of Somalia."

AMISOM's military strategic objectives were finalized the following month as: (a) deplete military capabilities of armed opposition groups; (b) provide security to the Transitional Federal Institutions; (c) secure and

protect AMISOM forces and other international actors; and (d) enhance the capacity and organization of Somali forces.[194] The desired end states were defined as follows:

> Strategic End State. The envisaged end state would be a significantly depleted military capacity of Al Shabaab and pirates and the threats they pose to Somalia and the sub-region, enhanced capacity and cohesion of the TFG military forces and police, expanded TFG authority, and a secure environment that allows the implementation of the End of Transition Roadmap as well as the gradual handover of responsibility to TFG Forces and take Somalia into the post-conflict peace building phase. Military End State. Somali National Forces take responsibility for security.[195]

During mid-2012, AMISOM also conducted operations to capture the remaining suburbs and outskirts of Mogadishu. Operation Free Shabelle, which ran from 22 to 28 May, succeeded in capturing the Afgooye corridor, a critical roadway linking the capital to the agricultural town of Afgooye on the Shabelle river. This was where hundreds of thousands of people displaced by fighting in Mogadishu since 2006 were located and where al-Shabaab was said to have considerable influence. In subsequent operations, AMISOM forces, with the help of Ethiopia, TFG, and friendly clan militias, gained considerable ground from al-Shabaab across Sectors 2, 3 and 4. Most international attention focused on the port city of Kismayo, which was thought to be al-Shabaab's new center of gravity. Kismayo was captured by AMISOM in a Kenyan-led assault in late September 2012.

AMISOM also successfully supported the conclusion, albeit somewhat behind the official schedule, of the so-called roadmap to end the transitional institutions of government, which had been agreed in September 2011. The "Somalia End of Transition Roadmap" was a detailed list of tasks aimed at directing Somalia toward the creation of permanent political institutions, as well as greater national security and stability. It was signed by the Somali prime minister, the UN envoy to Somalia, representatives of the Arab League, the AU, and the IGAD, as well as the leaders of regional entities (including Puntland) and pro-government militias (including Ahlu Sunna wa'al Jamaa).[196] It was the successful implementation of this roadmap which saw AMISOM embark on its fifth stage of operations in September 2012.

Stage 5: Post-Transition (September 2012-December 2013)

Somalia's political arena altered dramatically with the selection of the new Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) during August and September 2012. President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud quickly insisted that it was the new government's prerogative to determine the nature and timing of outside assistance. This reflected the new government's determination to assert its autonomy on the basis that it was no longer a transitional mechanism but a sovereign entity. Its initial six-pillar strategy—detailed in a formal policy document—was intended to make progress in the areas of stability, economic recovery, peace building, service delivery, international relations, and unity. This document laid the foundations of a new beginning for Somalia. In addition, President Hassan Sheikh subsequently emphasized that his government's top priorities lay in the areas of security, reform of the judicial system, and public finance management reform.[197] Soon after assuming office, President Hassan Sheikh removed the head of the Somalia Armed Forces, his deputy, and the head of the Navy and replaced them with commanders who had been in the diaspora, and who were reportedly out of touch with the recent events in Somalia. Recruitment of key officers from the diaspora was a signature of Abdullahi Yusuf's administration as well, and had been a consistent source of tension between the TFG and its "local" employees. For instance, the chief of the army, Mohamed Gelle Kahiye, had been a general in Siad Barre's army, but had been working at a McDonald's restaurant in Germany for years.

The selection of the new FGS prompted the African Union to engage in a further round of reflection on its engagement with Somalia and what role(s) AMISOM should play in it. To that end, in December 2012 it established a review team which was given two key tasks: to work out how best to engage with the new FGS and support its priorities, and to find a sustainable solution to AMISOM's chronic funding problems (see box 4). In mid-January 2013, the review team announced their conclusion: that AMISOM should make the transition to a new joint arrangement, whereby two parallel AU and UN missions would come together at the strategic level under a Joint Special Representative.

The review team analyzed three principal options for AMISOM: (1) handover AMISOM to a UN peacekeeping operation; (2) enhance AMISOM

to work alongside a UN peacebuilding mission; and (3) establish a new joint AU-UN mission. The review team concluded its report as follows:

> As the status quo is not an option, and option 1 (UN peacekeeping) is not feasible at this stage, the remaining options are option 2 (enhance AMISOM) and option 3 (a new joint AU-UN mission). As option 2 does not provide for sustainable and predictable funding for AMISOM, the Review Team therefore recommends option 3.[198]

However, because such a joint mechanism would take time to develop, the AU team recommended that an enhanced AMISOM should be developed as an interim prelude to its preferred joint UN-AU arrangement. The AU also wanted the UN to authorize a new peacebuilding office to focus on supporting the Federal Government's priorities, including the empowerment and restructuring of the Somali security sector. At the heart of this new joint arrangement would be a more predictable and long-term source of financial support for the AU mission, which would come via the UN's assessed contribution peacekeeping budget.

Although the initial plan was for the AU and UN to conduct a joint strategic assessment, this did not happen. Next, it was proposed that the AU and UN should conduct parallel assessments—perhaps facilitated by UNOAU—but that idea also failed to materialize. Instead, the UN conducted its review in late 2012 before the AU. Its team ruled out the deployment of a UN peacekeeping operation and instead deliberated between four forms of UN mission configurations, short of a Blue Helmet operation. These were: 1) a UN assistance mission parallel to AMISOM and a UN Country Team; 2) a UN peacebuilding mission parallel to AMISOM and UNSOA; 3) an integrated UN peacebuilding mission, encompassing UNSOA and UNPOS; and 4) a joint AU-UN mission along the lines of UNAMID (the UN/AU hybrid operation in Darfur), with a separate UN Country Team.

Only the fourth option—a joint AU-UN mission—would ensure AMISOM's funding through the UN's assessed peacekeeping budget. In late January 2013, however, the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon recommended that the UN Security Council create a new UN Assistance Mission, which would deliver political and peacebuilding support with a presence across Somalia alongside AMISOM, UNSOA, and a UN Country Team. Probably in light of this decision, the AU moved toward adopting one of its

other options, an enhanced AMISOM as an interim prelude to its preferred joint UN-AU arrangement.

On 27 February 2013, the AU Peace and Security Council issued a communique setting out a new mandate for AMISOM (see box 7) and calling for the UN to help enhance it in the areas of civilian capacity and training teams to work with the Somali security forces. Just over a week later, the UN Security Council extended AMISOM's operations for an additional year and set out a slightly different mandate than the one detailed by the AU Peace and Security Council (see box 8).

Box 7: AMISOM's African Union mandate (February 2013)
Source: AU document PSC/PR/COMM(CCCLVI), 27 February 2013

"(a) take all necessary measures, as appropriate, and in coordination with the Somalia National Defence and Public Safety Institutions, to reduce the threat posed by Al Shabaab and other armed opposition groups,

(b) assist in consolidating and expanding the control of the FGS over its national territory,

(c) assist the FGS in establishing conditions for effective and legitimate governance across Somalia, through support, as appropriate, in the areas of security, including the protection of Somali institutions and key infrastructure, governance, rule of law and delivery of basic services,

(d) provide, within its capabilities and as appropriate, technical and other support for the enhancement of the capacity of the Somalia State institutions, particularly the National Defence, Public Safety and Public Service Institutions,

(e) support the FGS in establishing the required institutions and conducive conditions for the conduct of free, fair and transparent elections by 2016, in accordance with the Provisional Constitution,

(f) liaise with humanitarian actors and facilitate, as may be required and within its capabilities, humanitarian assistance in Somalia, as well as the resettlement of internally displaced persons and the return of refugees,

(g) facilitate coordinated support by relevant AU institutions and structures toward the stabilization and reconstruction of Somalia, and

(h) provide protection to AU and UN personnel, installations and equipment, including the right of self-defence;"

Box 8: AMISOM's UN Security Council Mandate (March 2013)

Source: UN Security Council Resolution 2093, 6 March 2013

"to maintain the deployment of AMISOM until 28 February 2014, which shall be authorised to take all necessary measures, in full compliance with its obligations under international humanitarian law and human rights law, and in full respect of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and unity of Somalia, to carry out the following tasks:

(a) To maintain a presence in the four sectors set out in the AMISOM Strategic Concept of 5 January 2012, and in those sectors, in coordination with the Security Forces of the Federal Government of Somalia, reduce the threat posed by Al-Shabaab and other armed opposition groups, including receiving, on a transitory basis, defectors, as appropriate, and in coordination with the United Nations, in order to establish conditions for effective and legitimate governance across Somalia;

(b) To support dialogue and reconciliation in Somalia by assisting with the free movement, safe passage and protection of all those involved with the peace and reconciliation process in Somalia;

(c) To provide, as appropriate, protection to the Federal Government of Somalia to help them carry out their functions of government, and security for key infrastructure;

(d) To assist, within its capabilities, and in coordination with other parties, with implementation of the Somali national security plans, through training and mentoring of the Security Forces of the Federal Government of Somalia, including through joint operations;

(e) To contribute, as may be requested and within capabilities, to the creation of the necessary security conditions for the provision of humanitarian assistance;

(f) To assist, within its existing civilian capability, the Federal Government of Somalia, in collaboration with the United Nations, to extend state authority in areas recovered from Al-Shabaab;

(g) To protect its personnel, facilities, installations, equipment and mission, and to ensure the security and freedom of movement of its personnel, as well as of United Nations personnel carrying out functions mandated by the Security Council;"

In June 2013, major controversy arose when the FGS accused Kenyan forces in Kismayo of working directly against its personnel in a blatant violation of AMISOM's mandate.[199] Specifically, the FGS accused the Kenyans of supporting Ahmed Madobe, a former ally of al-Shabaab and leader of the Ras Kamboni militia, and to that end manipulating political processes in the controversial new Jubbaland State. Following these allegations, the Federal Government called for Kenyan soldiers in AMISOM's Sector 2 to be replaced with different forces which would uphold AMISOM's mandate.

The clash between Kenya's narrow national agenda and the new FGS is reflective of two much larger conflicts. The first conflict concerns federalism: Somalis remain intensely divided over how much authority the central government in Mogadishu should have over the political arrangements of

the clans, including the autonomous largely "ethno-states" of Somaliland and Puntland, which have existed for decades. When it assumed office, the Federal Government had no real capacity to enforce its decisions and extend its authority beyond Mogadishu, yet it felt compelled to respond to various de facto regional authorities across the country (such as those in Somaliland, Puntland, Jubbaland, Galmudug, and Hiraan among others). The Federal Government thus faced a choice: Should it focus on Mogadishu and its environs and leave the regions to their own devices, and thus look weak? Or, should it try to extend its authority forcefully and potentially lose to these regional entities, and look even weaker? President Mohamoud's administration chose the second option; first by initiating a process of dialogue, and then by becoming more forceful, especially in the south with the de facto authorities in Jubbaland.

The second contentious issue is regional interference; many Somalis believe that Kenya and Ethiopia prefer to keep Somalia weak and divided, and will for economic and national security reasons seek to undermine the creation of a strong central government in Mogadishu.

The latest dispute had been brewing for some time. In June 2012 a process to establish a Jubbaland state was started in Kenya under the IGAD Grand Stabilization Plan, which had been agreed in January 2012. The FGS's position was that any such process should be government-led. However, in February 2013, some 500 delegates gathered in Kismayo to discuss the status of Jubbaland. The Federal Government promptly declared this conference unconstitutional and called for it to be disbanded. The delegates refused, and in May 2013 they elected Ahmed Madobe as President of Jubbaland.[200] This prompted the elders from several other clans to declare their own presidents of Jubbaland, notably the Darod/Marehan clan's declaration that Colonel Barre Adan Hiiraale was now President. The activities of Kenyan forces in Kismayo also opened a major rift in the Somali parliament, where on 25 May members tabled a motion to censure the KDF. Yet Nairobi repeatedly refused calls by the Somali parliament and senior government officials to redeploy its troops to Mogadishu and surrender Kismayo to more clan-neutral Ugandan forces. Kenya's support of the creation of a Jubbaland state was seen by the authorities in Mogadishu as undermining their efforts to establish federal authority beyond the city. In an attempt to counter Kenya's military influence, the Somali president signed a military agreement with Turkey, which

threatened an oppositional realigning of Mogadishu's interests with Turkey as well as Egypt and Djibouti.[201]

In June 2013, the crisis intensified when fighting erupted in Kismayo between Ras Kamboni and Darod/Marehan militia who were allied with the FGS. Ras Kamboni forces prevailed but not before the Kenyan commander in Kismayo had arrested a colonel in the Somali Army, who had been sent to Kismayo to oversee the integration of the various militia into the national army. At the same time, Kenyan troops have been accused of breaking the UN ban on the sale of charcoal, and of confiscating 50 percent of revenues generated at the lucrative deep-water port. Moreover, in an effort to strengthen its position, the FGS also struck up an alliance with a local leader, Barre Hiiraale, who declared that his forces were colocated with al-Shabaab and planning joint military operations against Madobe's forces.[202] After considerable diplomatic wrangling, an agreement was signed on 27 August 2013 which solidified Madobe's position as leader of an Interim Jubba Administration—which consists of Gedo, Lower Jubba, and Middle Jubba regions—for up to two years.

For AMISOM, this episode raised big questions about the limits of its central command and control structures and its ability to function as a coherent force rather than several disconnected, national parts. This is crucial; if AMISOM is perceived by Somalis as a vehicle within which neighboring states can legitimize their narrow national agendas, it is likely to limit the mission's ability to achieve its objectives, hobble its attempts to wage an effective public diplomacy campaign, and send hugely unhelpful signals about the wider ability of the AU to effectively steer its peace operations. It also remains unclear how far this episode poisoned relations between the FGS and Kenya, and how closely the FGS was willing to work with al-Shabaab forces to defeat a mutual enemy. Finally, the events in Jubbaland illustrate how the distinction between threats posed by al-Shabaab and those which stem from more deeply rooted clan and subclan rivalries might become increasingly difficult to separate.

The last major development discussed here is the process of developing a new Concept of Operations for AMISOM, which was completed in January 2014.[203] This was required because AMISOM's January 2012 Concept of Operations had become outdated. The process officially began after 4 August 2013 when the Heads of State and Government of the troop-contributing countries (TCCs) to AMISOM, Ethiopia and Somalia, issued a communique

arguing that a new Strategic Concept for future AMISOM operations was required that was more in line with the prevailing circumstances in the mission theatre.[204] Among other things, AMISOM's revised Concept of Operations had to reconfigure its forces into a posture more capable of conducting sustained offensive operations, strengthen the multidimensional nature of the mission, and bolster the SNSF as a necessary part of the mission's exit strategy.

A major step along the way came on 12 November 2013 when the UN Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 2124. Among other things, this extended AMISOM's mandate until 31 October 2014 and increased the force strength from 17,731 to 22,126 uniformed personnel, including a surge capacity of three infantry battalions for a period of 18-24 months and a range of support units.[205] The Council also reiterated its call for various force enablers and multipliers, especially AMISOM's aviation component of up to 12 military helicopters.[206] This was particularly important because as the UN Secretary-General had made clear, "it is not realistic for AMISOM to achieve the desired effect of resuming the military campaign [against al-Shabaab] without air assets."[207]

This came 15 months after AMISOM lost the scheduled provision of six Ugandan military helicopters when in August 2012 three of them crashed on the slopes of Mount Kenya while en route to Somalia.[208] Resolution 2124 also expanded the UNSOA logistical support package for AMISOM to encompass the additional personnel and provide food and water, fuel, transport, tents, and in-theatre medical evacuation for Somali National Army troops engaged in joint operations with AMISOM. It was at this point that Ethiopia began to signal its desire to join AMISOM. By late November, Ethiopia began negotiations over the terms of integration into AMISOM. Over 4,000 of its soldiers were duly integrated into the mission in January 2014.

5. The Role of the United States

The notorious Black Hawk Down incident (Operation Gothic Serpent) of October 1993 led to the end of international military engagement in the Somali civil war. Shortly after the battle, President Bill Clinton ordered the withdrawal of all U.S. forces from Somalia within six months, and by early March 1995 all UN peacekeeping troops had also been withdrawn. What these international military operations left behind was a Somalia characterized by a patchwork of clan fiefdoms. Though some al-Qaeda activity was evident in Somalia from the UNOSOM II engagement onward, from 1994 until the terrorist assaults of 11 September 2001, the U.S. adopted a containment policy toward Somalia and had few dealings with the country apart from the provision of humanitarian relief. During this period, regional actors organized a large number of peace and reconciliation conferences (14 in total, including those in the early 1990s) intended to create a new government for Somalia. Washington observed, supported, and occasionally funded these conferences, but remained largely on the periphery of efforts to reconstruct the Somali state—even as, during the 1990s, the Horn of Africa became a focal point for U.S. counterterrorism efforts due to the increased amount and heightened scale of terrorist activity in the region.

In 1998, al-Qaeda successfully conducted its first attack against U.S. interests, bombing two American embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, that killed 224 people and injured more than 4,000—most of them Africans. The strikes revealed evidence of a larger terrorist network and the development of a local al-Qaeda cell in Kenya whose core leadership had originated from Somalia, Pakistan, and the Comoros. Transnational terrorism in the Horn of Africa continued throughout the next decade. In October 2000, Yemeni fighters attacked the USS Cole while in Aden harbor, killing 17 American sailors. In 2002, a double attack was conducted in Mombasa, Kenya by al-Qaeda, targeting an Israeli-owned hotel and an Israeli airliner. Thirteen people were killed in the hotel bombing, but the strike against the plane was unsuccessful after the two surface-to-air missiles failed to hit their target.

Following the 9/11 terror attacks against the World Trade Center and Pentagon, the Bush administration created the Combined Joint Task Force–Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) to protect U.S. interests in the Horn.[209] Initially,

CJTF-HOA's approximately 1,800 personnel focused on "capture-kill" operations but by 2007 became focused on the more benign goals of promoting regional stability through military-to-military engagements and civil-military operations, as well as providing short-term humanitarian and development assistance. CJTF-HOA is also reported to have had, at least in the early 2000s, a 350-400 person special operations task force that included a Special Forces commander's *in-extremis* company, a Navy SEAL platoon, a Naval Special Warfare rigid-hull inflatable boat detachment, and an Air Force special operations package of aircraft designed to conduct clandestine infiltration missions. This team was reportedly deployed for special reconnaissance missions in the period before the SCIC came to power.[210] However, they appear to have been scaled down as the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan drew American military resources to the Middle East.

U.S. Policy Objectives in Somalia

The U.S. has several long-standing national interests in Somalia. First, Washington has a political interest in stabilizing one of the world's most conflict-prone regions, and especially in containing the spread of insecurity across Somalia's borders. Second, particularly since the famine of 1991, Washington has sought to address humanitarian concerns stemming from drought and cyclical food insecurity. Third, as the world's primary guarantor of maritime security, the U.S. has pursued a strategic interest in protecting the major international shipping routes that lay off Somalia's coast and through the Gulf of Aden. Most recently, the U.S. has defended a national security interest against the rise of indigenous jihadist groups within Somalia's territory.

Despite this range of significant interests, there has been no American embassy on Somali soil since 1991; all American affairs relating to Somalia have been handled out of the U.S. embassy in Nairobi. The absence of any American diplomatic personnel in Somalia severely diminished both human intelligence capabilities and diplomatic capacity to engage with Somali clan, civil society, and religious leaders. From the withdrawal of U.S. troops in 1994 until today, the lack of a U.S. embassy and subsequent lack of direct engagement with Somalia caused Washington's formal policy toward the country to be largely reactive and unsighted. Since 9/11, the U.S. had a set of loose interests—U.S. officials typically cite counterterror, state-building, regional stability, and humanitarian imperatives[211]—but very few dollars were

invested in pursuing those interests, particularly relative to the U.S. treasure that was invested in Afghanistan and Iraq. These policy interests remained consistent through both former President George W. Bush's administration and President Barack Obama's first term in office.

Within both administrations and among Somali experts, however, there was a persistent division of opinion about the nature of the threat to U.S. national security interests that was posed by Somalia and other so-called failed states. On the one hand, President Bush's 2002 National Security Strategy had singled out the grave threat posed by failed and failing states, and their attendant security vacuums.[212] On the other hand, West Point analysts and other experts were making a strong case that Somalia's xenophobic culture had virtually inoculated the country against the effective functioning of groups like al-Qaeda.[213] Regardless of whether Somalia posed a nascent threat to U.S. national security interests, officials were faced with the distinct possibility that direct engagement in the country would expose the U.S. to a quagmire.

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U.S. Policymaking on Somalia

Another set of challenges stemmed from a widespread perception among bureaucrats in the U.S. Government that the Somalia portfolio was an unwanted or even punishing assignment. Since 1993, U.S. engagement in Somalia had produced a series of high-profile errors that jeopardized and even ended careers—beginning with the resignation of then-Defense Secretary Les Aspin immediately following the Black Hawk Down episode. As a result, from late 1993 until late 2011, no agency or official demonstrated a desire to own the U.S. Government's response to the Somali conflict. Instead, the responsibility for Somalia policy planning and program implementation was diffused across a broad spectrum of government agencies.

While the Department of State's Bureau of African Affairs ostensibly had the lead on setting policy, implementation was heavily stove-piped across the Bureau of Political Military Affairs; the Bureau of Populations, Refugees and Migration; the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor; and the

Policy Planning section of the Office of the Secretary of State.[214] The National Security Council (NSC) also occasionally exerted a strong directive pull on Somalia policy, occasionally resulting in significant tensions between the NSC and the Department of Defense.

Surprisingly, the Department of Defense was singularly absent with regard to the formation of a coherent U.S. policy on Somalia. Partially the result of President Obama's firm prohibition on boots on the ground in Somalia, the Pentagon's reluctance to lead on Somalia was also related to the controversial launch of the U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM), which beginning in 2006 set off storms of protest within many African states over the militarization of U.S. policy toward the continent.[215] Since its creation, USAFRICOM sought to disprove those accusations by scrupulously avoiding any appearance that it was leading policy, rather than following the Department of State's lead. Even CJTF-HOA is reluctant to engage in military-to-military training or even civic engagement programs in Somalia or Somaliland without an unambiguous invitation from the Assistant Secretary of State for Africa. One Pentagon appointee bluntly summarized the Somalia portfolio with the phrase: "The Defense Department is just not in Somalia."[216]

This lack of leadership had three adverse effects on U.S. policy outcomes. First, different actors within the U.S. Government often acted at cross-purposes or were unaware of important decisions taking place in other agencies. For example, one senior official within the Bush administration's Department of State claims to have been uninformed of the decision to launch airstrikes on Somalia in January 2007 until the attacks were in progress.[217] Second, it created a policy vacuum that allowed intelligence actors to effectively—and often disastrously—set U.S. policy toward Somalia. Third, it crippled the U.S. response to significant crises, most notably during the Somali famine of 2011, which is reported to have killed 260,000 people, including 17 percent of children in Mogadishu and 18 percent of children in certain al-Shabaab territories.[218] Officials within the Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) delayed funding to humanitarian groups for months while they haggled with the Department of the Treasury—whose Office of Foreign Asset Control (OFAC) had the authority to restrict the flow of funds into and out of Somalia—over the legality of providing relief to territories held by a U.S.-designated terrorist group.

U.S. Support to AMISOM

U.S. ambivalence about the threat posed by Somalia and the reluctance to put boots on the ground led Washington to outsource many of its counterterror efforts. Chief among Washington's strategies for managing the Somali terror threat was support for regional actors as intelligence gatherers and as political/military proxies. In particular, as noted previously, the U.S. regularly deferred to Ethiopia as a source of intelligence and analysis on the Union of Islamic Courts and on al-Shabaab. This adherence to Ethiopian interests and intelligence, for example, appears to have led the Department of State to its premature and inaccurate conclusion that SCIC was under the leadership of al-Qaeda in late 2006.

Although Washington attempted to downplay the extent of its collaboration with Addis Ababa, the U.S. provided political, logistic, intelligence, and financial support to the Ethiopian intervention in late 2006. The U.S. ultimately provided similar support to Kenya's 2011 invasion of Somalia.[219] While Washington appears to have had misgivings about the wisdom of both interventions, its subsequent support of both Ethiopia and Kenya led significant segments of the Somali public to assume that the U.S. instigated both military campaigns.

The repercussions proved costly to U.S. interests. In particular, beginning in early 2007, the presence of Ethiopian troops in Somalia prompted some 40 U.S.-passport holding Somali diaspora from Minnesota and other states to return to Mogadishu to fight with al-Shabaab, significantly raising the threat of homegrown acts of terror on American soil and sparking widespread alarm across the U.S. national security apparatus. As noted earlier, the Ethiopian intervention also resuscitated the al-Shabaab movement, allowing the militia to overcome public outrage over the deaths of hundreds of youth at the battle of Baidoa, refashion itself as an insurgent guerrilla movement, and position the Somali conflict as a new front in the global jihad. The repercussions of the 2011 Kenyan invasion, which was widely perceived in Somalia as a foreign campaign on behalf the Darod/Ogadeni clan, became apparent in Jubbaland, where a new administration asserted its autonomy from the Federal Government in Mogadishu. Jubbaland's demand for autonomy could potentially pose a major threat to Washington's efforts to legitimize and empower the FGS in Mogadishu.

Aware that local perceptions of American engagement in the Somali conflict would empower the Somali jihadi factions, Washington attempted to avoid direct military engagement in the country. Since 2007, therefore, the U.S. provided vital logistic, political, and financial support to AMISOM via bilateral aid to its troop-contributing countries: initially Uganda, followed by Burundi, Kenya, Djibouti, Sierra Leone, and Ethiopia. It has also provided a variety of assistance packages to the Somali security sector.

> *With regard to AMISOM, the U.S. has been the mission's largest bilateral financial contributor.*

With regard to the Somali security sector, U.S. assistance assumed several forms related to mentoring, training, equipping, and providing logistical support. The U.S. also contributed to the drafting of Somalia's National Security and Stabilization Plan (2011-14) and paid monthly stipends to some members of the Somali National Army.

With regard to AMISOM, the U.S. has been the mission's largest bilateral financial contributor.[220] From 2007 to May 2013, the U.S. Government obligated more than $341 million to AMISOM in addition to its financial contributions to the UN-assessed peacekeeping budget which funded the UNSOA from 2009 onward (the U.S. Government is obliged to pay approximately 27 percent of the annual UN assessed peacekeeping budget). The U.S. Government provided all of its support to AMISOM "in-kind," i.e. through the provision of equipment, training, advice, and logistical support to the AMISOM TCCs. From 2010, Washington also embarked on a five-year long project to install a new command, control, and communication information system for the AU, totaling some $1.7 million. The strategic rationale for this support was to help AMISOM overcome the threat of al-Shabaab and to "safeguard the Somali political process."[221]

The Department of State's ACOTA program was the primary vehicle for this assistance. ACOTA is a Department of State initiative to train African peacekeepers. Since 2005, ACOTA trained more than 229,000 peacekeepers including many from the core AMISOM TCCs: Uganda and Burundi. The ACOTA operation for Somalia covers topics such as protection of civilians, human rights, countering improvised explosive devices, maritime security, and mechanized infantry operations. The U.S. Department of Defense contributed to ACOTA under its Section 1206 authority by providing specialized counterterrorism training and equipment, including combat engineering,

unmanned aerial vehicles, and secure communications. USAFRICOM also provided military mentors and trainers for ACOTA events and conducted specialized logistics training activities through programs such as the Africa Deployment Assistance Partnership Team. CJTF-HOA personnel also conducted USAFRICOM-supported education programs and training for AMISOM TCCs.

Total U.S. assistance to Burundi and particularly to Uganda soared in the wake of the AMISOM operation. Total bilateral assistance to Uganda (the vast majority of which is non-security assistance) increased from $390 million in fiscal year 2007 to $528 million in fiscal year 2012.[222] Uganda is now one of the top recipients of U.S. foreign aid in Africa. In addition, punitive restrictions on military aid to Uganda that were established after Uganda's military interventions during the war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo were gradually lifted. In 2012, the U.S. Government also provided small Raven drones to some AMISOM TCCs to help combat al-Shabaab.

U.S. Support to Private Contractors

As noted in section 4, in addition to its direct support to AMISOM's TCCs, the U.S. funded support packages for AMISOM carried out by DynCorp International (in early 2007) and Bancroft Global Development (from early 2010). While DynCorp provided logistical support, it was Bancroft which played a more active role in developing AMISOM's urban warfare tactics, and hence generated most controversy in the international media.

Originally founded as a demining firm by Virginia native, Michael Stock, in 2007, Bancroft Global Development began providing foreign *experts on mission*—called mentors by Bancroft—to the AMISOM troops deployed in Somalia. This was initially at the request of the Ugandan, and then Burundian, contingents. Early efforts revolved around counter-irregular warfare tactics to stem AMISOM's early heavy losses and then indirect fire protocols to minimize civilian casualties. In 2009, the U.S. Department of State identified Bancroft's mentoring activities as a potential success factor and began providing its own funding support in order to ramp up the scale of this training. The firm was awarded a U.S. Government contract to continue providing such services to AMISOM in early 2010. With this and other funding, Bancroft then expanded its range of mentorship to AMISOM to include additional areas such as civilian-military cooperation, combat engineering

operations, counter-IED operations, explosive ordnance disposal, information analysis, logistics, and medical training and casualty evacuations. Some of this advice was given on the frontlines of AMISOM's operations. Bancroft is distinguished by its careful conformity with the conditions of the arms embargo on Somalia established by UN Security Resolution 1772 (2007).[223] For the most part, it has also managed to avoid the controversy that surrounded other private security firms in Somalia including Sterling Corporate Services/Saracen International and Pathfinder.

As previously noted, Bancroft's initial team of four advisors operating out of its compound in Mogadishu expanded to its current cohort of approximately 90 mentors spread throughout AMISOM Sectors 1, 2, and 3. They included personnel from more than a dozen countries, including some Americans, with larger contingents from South Africa, France, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. Mentors were tasked to support AMISOM units as advisors, at times embedded alongside them, and were primarily contracted by Uganda and Burundi. These mentors coached AMISOM forces on how to predict and defeat the tactics that foreign fighters brought from outside East Africa and taught to al-Shabaab.[224] Their operations have been credited with enhancing AMISOM fighting skills and for imparting tactics aimed at bolstering public support for AMISOM and government forces by reducing civilian casualties.[225] Bancroft also provided extensive anti-mine and IED training, advanced marksmanship training, and other basic technical skills training.[226] Bancroft CEO Michael Stock has confirmed that Bancroft also shared bomb materials and DNA evidence with the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation, which led to the identification of Somali-Americans who became al-Shabaab recruits.[227]

Finally, although it did not impact AMISOM's operations directly, in June 2012, the Puntland government requested that AMISOM help incorporate the Puntland Maritime Police Force into Somalia's overall security framework, specifically suggesting that experts from Bancroft could help with the task. Bancroft was tasked by AMISOM to conduct an assessment of the Puntland force in late 2012 and also facilitated discussions with the Puntland government. However, as AMISOM and the Puntland government did not reach a final agreement regarding the maritime police force, no concrete action was subsequently taken by either AMISOM or Bancroft.

Though the U.S. Government supports a portion of Bancroft's activities, Bancroft is contracted to AMISOM, not to the U.S., with the U.S. making

reimbursements for the specific purposes of Bancroft mentoring. The Associated Press reported $12.5 million in compensation for payments to Bancroft between 2008 and 2011.[228] Some members of the U.S. Congress have criticized funding mechanisms like the one used for Bancroft, as lacking transparency.[229]

Direct U.S. Military and Intelligence Action in Somalia

Since the rise of the Islamic Courts Union in Somalia in 2006, U.S. military forces in limited cases took direct action against members of al-Qaeda and members of al-Shabaab in efforts to counter terror.[230]

In 2007, these strikes were largely counterproductive; they often failed to hit their targets and caused multiple civilian casualties, which helped to turn public opinion against the United States. Beginning in 2008, however, our assessment is that U.S. direct action proved far more effective: Civilian casualties were minimized and important high-value targets (HVTs), including Aden Hashi Ayro, were killed. These actions helped to undermine the development of al-Shabaab's relations with al-Qaeda—there are rumors that Ahmed Godane was viewed by some in al-Qaeda's core as an unacceptable substitute for Ayro—and diminished Somalia's attractiveness as a destination for jihadi "tourists."

Significantly, not only did these strikes take place with the consent of the Somali TFG, they have also resulted in very little public backlash, since the U.S. smartly avoided striking militants in the nationalist wing of al-Shabaab, whose deaths might have sparked outrage from their respective clan constituencies. The recent arrest of the Habir Gedir religious leader Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys by Somali Alpha Group troops, which have reportedly received assistance from the U.S. Government, clearly represents a different approach.[231] In October 2013, the U.S. established a military coordination cell in Somalia to provide planning and advisory support to AMISOM and Somali security forces.[232]

U.S. engagement in Somalia has been problematic for AMISOM in two key respects. First, AMISOM has borne the brunt of public anger over Washington's use of surveillance drones and direct action. For example, al-Shabaab retaliation for the killing of Aden Hashi Ayro was especially severe, causing an immediate surge of violence in Mogadishu and culminating in two large-scale attacks on AMISOM headquarters in February and

September 2009, which killed a total of 28 peacekeepers including the Burundian deputy force commander.[233] Local perceptions that the U.S. Government was involved in the forcible detention of Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys, the senior religious leader of Somalia's largest clan, in July 2013 could produce a similar backlash and further catalyze public impatience with the presence of foreign troops on Somali soil.

Second, the U.S. designation of al-Shabaab as a terrorist organization reduced AMISOM's capacity to conduct a dialogue with potential al-Shabaab defectors. In theory, peace negotiations with al-Shabaab were the responsibility of the Somali central authorities, but each iteration of the government, including the current Federal Government, failed to promote peace negotiations with the opposition. By late 2011, AMISOM's inability to promote defections from al-Shabaab through direct deal-making was considered so detrimental that an unofficial AU lobbying group was dispatched to Washington.[234] They argued that AMISOM not only possessed the intelligence to strategically target al-Shabaab operatives whose defection would promote peace, but that the ongoing sacrifices of AMISOM troops should entitle the mission to use any means necessary to achieve peace. Those requests fell on deaf ears.[235] In this instance, the prioritization of U.S. counterterror objectives undermined broader efforts to promote peace and bring to an end AMISOM's mission in Somalia.

6. Conclusion: Key Lessons Learned

This concluding section provides a concise summary of some of the key strategic and operational lessons that emerge from our analysis of AMISOM's experiences in Somalia. Overall, we submit that insofar as AMISOM became a successful mission, it succeeded despite a series of strategic challenges that stemmed from a lack of decisive political leadership within a range of international organizations, especially the African Union. The fact that AMISOM has been widely hailed as a successful mission since 2012 owes far more to the perseverance and commitment of its core troop-contributing countries—Uganda and Burundi—and their tactical successes on the ground in Mogadishu than any grand strategic plans devised in Addis Ababa or New York.

Strategic Lessons

International indifference to Somalia had costs. The absence of a clear international strategy for constructive engagement with Somalia after the Black Hawk Down episode and the withdrawal of the UNOSOM peacekeeping force in 1995 produced an intelligence vacuum about Somalia. This lack of interest and lack of knowledge combined to produce a series of international policies that oscillated between benign neglect (from 1995 to 2003) and malign interventionism. This is when IGAD states attempted to use military force to entrench an unelected government in Somalia, creating a political backlash that predictably took the form of an Islamist insurgency. The inability of international actors to engage constructively with Somalia in the 21st century results in large part from the abandonment of Somalia during the late 1990s.

 Lack of support undermined AMISOM. Particularly in the early years, AMISOM labored under a cloud of international pessimism which resulted in a visible lack of champions for the mission. Most African states spoke with their feet, and AMISOM attracted only two troop-contributing countries until 2012. There was also consistent failure to deploy the authorized numbers of troops (see figure 1 and box 3). This situation produced a lack of political support on the continent, a lack of resources, and a focus on just one city. The failure to provide AMISOM soldiers with even the basic resources required for mission success was morally indefensible and militarily disastrous. It

also deeply undermined morale; recall that at one point, over 30 AMISOM personnel were hospitalized and four died from a disease—wet beriberi—connected to a lack of proper diet and hygiene.[236] The mission's personnel were left to carry out a hugely dangerous set of tasks without key enablers including planning resources; mission analysis capabilities; air assets (such as helicopters, fixed-wing aircraft, and drones); and maritime assets. More concerted international support for AMISOM did not significantly increase until 2011, particularly after al-Shabaab's tactical withdrawal from Mogadishu in August, and after al-Shabaab's mishandling of the Somali famine caused public support for the insurgency to plummet. It is plausible that without such blunders by al-Shabaab, AMISOM would likely have remained badly underfunded and under-equipped.

Weak AU political leadership undermined AMISOM. In addition to lacking major champions, AMISOM's external supporters often had different agendas and priorities. There were conflicts of interest initially between the ENDF and AMISOM (from early 2007 to early 2009), and later between Kenya, Ethiopia, and AMISOM (from October 2011 to the present). The latter were particularly intense in AMISOM Sector 2 despite Kenya's official integration into AMISOM in 2012. These factors exacerbated another central problem faced by the mission: the lack of strong political leadership from the AU—by the Chairperson, the Chairperson of the AU Commission, and the Peace and Security Council. Because AMISOM's Head of Mission was based in Nairobi and not on the ground in Mogadishu, successive force commanders were left struggling as the principal political interlocutor between the AU and the TFG. This also meant that the mission's TCCs were able to operate with a major degree of autonomy, which sometimes led to counterproductive results. The role of the UN Political Office was also problematic in this regard; spurred on by the absence of a strong political lead from the AU, the UN's Special Representative for Somalia at times monopolized the international dialogue with the TFG, making controversial policy decisions that politicized the role of UN in the conflict—even the role of its humanitarian agencies.

AMISOM's effectiveness was undermined by a lack of political neutrality. Although AMISOM was primarily a military operation, it was deployed into Somalia as part of an international effort to resolve two fundamental political questions that lie at the root of Somalia's conflicts since the collapse of the central government in 1991: what is Somalia, and how should it

be governed? The problem for AMISOM was that Somalis, their neighbors, and a variety of interested external actors have continually disagreed about the answers to those basic questions. Since 9/11, external actors—Somalia's key neighbors, Ethiopia and Kenya, and key external powers, the U.S., the UN, EU, IGAD, AU, etc., were unhappy with the prevailing (Somali) answers to those questions and tried to implement their own policies to change the facts on the ground. AMISOM was always part of that process, initially as a prerequisite for Ethiopia's exit strategy, and later, especially in AMISOM Sectors 2 and 3, it found itself caught in the middle of Somali debates about the often tense relationship between the central government in Mogadishu and the different regions.

AMISOM deployed into Mogadishu to defend a transitional government which was recognized internationally but deeply unpopular with large segments of the local population and propped up by the Ethiopian army. This led some locals to view AMISOM as a partisan force that was pursuing foreign objectives at their expense. Others initially welcomed AMISOM, but the lack of a significant shift in the balance of power on the ground vis-à-vis al-Shabaab left local residents fearful of reprisals if they were seen to be supporting the AU troops. The first major problem this caused was to breathe life back into al-Shabaab. By January 2007, al-Shabaab was defeated militarily and discredited. But the perceived illegitimacy and violence of the TFG and ENDF forces allowed al-Shabaab to reorganize. Despite being splintered along ideological, strategic, and clan lines, the presence of a foreign enemy on Somali soil allowed al-Shabaab's radical leaders to defer these issues and make common cause with otherwise disparate elements of the movement. There is plenty of evidence that al-Shabaab was not popular among Somalis, but it was still often held in higher regard than the foreign-backed TFG. It was this dynamic which led tens of thousands of armed clan militia in southern Somalia not to mobilize against al-Shabaab for so many years.[237]

Public tolerance of al-Shabaab—coupled with the movement's access to significant economic resources and technical training from abroad—gave it many advantages which made AMISOM's tasks more difficult. First, it was often unclear who was a member of al-Shabaab; as a result, al-Shabaab supporters easily infiltrated the TFG. Second, al-Shabaab had access to significant economic resources from its control of territory, ports, roadblocks, commercial routes, etc. Third, al-Shabaab managed to use asymmetric tactics to good effect (IEDs, suicide bombs, snipers, human shields, tank traps,

ambush, tunnels, etc.) even if it proved unable to win major conventional battles or take ground in offensives.

Operational Lessons

The "AMISOM model" departed from accepted counterinsurgency tactics. Successful counterinsurgency (COIN) campaigns are extremely difficult for external actors to conduct without an effective and legitimate local partner. One of AMISOM's major challenges was that the TFG was neither. This raised all sorts of legitimacy issues for AMISOM, locally and internationally. In addition, the effectiveness of a potential COIN strategy in Somalia was undermined not only by the lack of popular support for the TFG, but also by a series of departures from accepted COIN tactics.

First, the campaign was conducted by an African force which initially operated without an explicit mandate to conduct counterterror operations or to protect civilians. Though AMISOM did have a mandate to protect the TFG and proactively use force to that end, the mission was not given the means to go on the offensive until early 2011.

Second, human security concerns and stabilization policies were not priorities for the AU's political leadership, but AMISOM did engage in various forms of civil-military initiatives such as providing water and medical facilities to locals. The utility of these efforts from a public relations standpoint may have been exaggerated; Somalia is a deeply aid-dependent country, and Somalis are individually accustomed to high levels of humanitarian assistance, which accounts for more than 50 percent of food imports into the country. Many Somalis have thus come to regard foreign aid as an entitlement. AMISOM's humanitarian efforts were also undermined by its partisan defense of the TFG and instances of indiscriminate fire. Partly as a result, AMISOM gained a toxic reputation among some of the humanitarian agencies working in Somalia who felt such activities jeopardized the neutrality of their operations. High levels of civilian casualties were seen as acceptable for much of the mission for far too long. The situation was not helped by the decision of one of AMISOM's strongest supporters, the U.S., to cut humanitarian relief by almost 90 percent (despite warnings of an imminent famine).[238]

Third, successful COIN requires effective targeting of the enemy's center of gravity. But too often, al-Shabaab was misunderstood. Specifically,

al-Shabaab was not an insurgency; it held sway over more than 90 percent of southern Somalia's territory, delivered some important human services, provided security, collected taxes, and was tolerated by the public, albeit often because collaboration was perceived as being the least worst option. From 2007 to 2012, AMISOM's de facto mission was to install an unelected government that controlled no territory, delivered no services, provided no security to the public, and was broadly perceived by its own citizens as illegitimate. It was therefore difficult for AMISOM to engage in COIN. Indeed, it was instructive that AMISOM force commanders described their mission as warfighting, and senior Ugandan officers admitted that they saw themselves as the insurgents, especially in the mission's early years when they struggled to maintain their footholds within Mogadishu.

It was also a major international failure not to devote more serious levels of resources to degrading al-Shabaab's sources of support and supply through targeted embargoes and sanctions to cut its supply lines, close down money transfers, and break its monopoly control over large stretches of the Somali coastline. This was all the more troubling given the large maritime task force which was assembled after late 2008 off the coast of Somalia.

Fourth, AMISOM was not accompanied by an effective state- or nation-building effort in part because the U.S. and UN provided mainly rhetorical support for the TFG. There was very little direct funding (due to the rampant corruption of government officials), no institution-building (since many government employees resided in Nairobi), no infrastructure-building, and no emphasis on developing an effective civil service—the crucial pillar of any functioning state.

Fifth, AMISOM was conducted on the cheap. During 2007 and 2008, the United Kingdom paid the allowances for AMISOM troops at a rate of $575 per soldier per month. After this, the EU took over this role via its African Peace Facility, paying an initial rate of $750 per month but moving to the standard UN peacekeeping rate of approximately $1,028 per month in January 2011.[239] This set a poor precedent by suggesting that some peacekeepers are more valuable than others.

Civilian harm attributed to the ENDF and AMISOM strengthened al-Shabaab. Minimizing civilian casualties is a crucial part of any peace operation. But the risks of causing civilian harm were significantly amplified by the fact that AMISOM forces were deployed in far too few numbers and into a theater where there was no peace to keep. This put AMISOM's

personnel directly in harm's way and quickly produced numerous incidents of indiscriminate fire, the burden of which fell upon the civilian population. The urban environment of Mogadishu also posed particular challenges to AMISOM in this regard; its population density added complexity and difficulty and increased civilian casualties from indiscriminate fire. Given current trends in African demography and urbanization, future peace operations on the continent are likely to confront this complexity on a more regular basis. In this context, Bancroft Global Development's urban warfare training proved key, as well as on-the-job learning by the troop-contributing countries themselves.

Al-Shabaab lost the war as much as AMISOM won it. Three factors proved decisive in the major military gains made against al-Shabaab, but two were not precipitated by AMISOM.

First, the death of hundreds of Rahanweyn fighters in al-Shabaab's Ramadan Offensive of October 2010 reminded Somalis of the SCIC military defeat in December 2006, which killed hundreds of men, and triggered a backlash within the Rahanweyn clan. Since the Rahanweyn supplied the bulk of al-Shabaab's foot soldiers, this reduced the movement's offensive capacity and its ability to hold territory.

Second, the Somali public blamed al-Shabaab for the 2011 famine, which reportedly killed some 260,000 people. U.S. policy did not help this situation; despite advance warning of the crisis, Department of State officials reduced humanitarian relief to those regions by 90 percent in the year before the famine hit and failed to pre-position food relief.[240] The result was months of delay which exacerbated a terrible humanitarian crisis. However, one of the repercussions of the famine was that Somalis regarded al-Shabaab as a worse alternative than the TFG.

The third key factor was AMISOM's own evolution. In particular its efforts to reduce the number of civilian casualties caused by its indiscriminate fire helped to mitigate public anger toward the mission. Moreover, the increase in AMISOM troop levels from late 2010 enabled it to take and retain control of several districts of Mogadishu and ultimately conduct a series of sustained offensive operations against al-Shabaab throughout the first half of 2011.

Lack of effective command and control mechanisms caused problems. AMISOM operations were negatively impacted by a lack of effective command and control over all the assigned forces and assets. This problem was

exacerbated after the integration of neighboring countries into the AMISOM structure; these contingents sometimes pursued national interests that did not always align with AMISOM objectives, thereby undermining the mission's control of some aspects of the operations. The most critical instances came when some TCCs placed caveats on certain assets such as helicopters and logistics specialist units which were supposed to be under the command of AMISOM Force Headquarters. It was specifically to address these challenges that AMISOM's new Strategic Concept called for the establishment of a Joint Coordination Mechanism and a Military Operations Coordination Committee within AMISOM's command and control architecture.[241] The formation of these mechanisms mitigated the command and control challenges, but intermittent issues arose particularly in Sector 2, where Kenyan forces continued to conduct unilateral operations, and Sector 3, where coordination with ENDF forces often proved difficult.

Adequate logistical support is crucial to operational effectiveness. As noted above, effective command and control is vital to the success of any military operation. Yet AMISOM's Force Commanders were placed in the unenviable position of not being in control of the logistics for their own operations as well as being physically divorced from the Head of Mission who was based in Nairobi. In its first two years, AMISOM's two troop-contributing countries struggled with logistics, especially Burundi. Stated bluntly, the situation was dire before the UNSOA was established and became operational in late 2009. After that, the mission experienced a major improvement in logistical support. However, UNSOA was not a perfect match for AMISOM's needs. Although UNSOA was an unprecedented UN mechanism designed to support the AU forces, it operated within a set of UN frameworks and procedures which were geared to supporting the equivalent of a UN Blue Helmet peacekeeping operation, not a warfighting mission like AMISOM.

As a result, UNSOA struggled to keep up with the pace and tempo of operations conducted by AMISOM. This in turn generated tensions between the AU and the UN. While it was possible to stretch some of UNSOA's resources while AMISOM operated in the small geographic theater of Mogadishu, it was simply impossible for UNSOA to cope with the logistical challenges presented by AMISOM's new mandate and force posture from early 2012 when its theater of operations expanded across south and central Somalia. In addition, the UNSOA logistics package was what one AMISOM official described as a suboptimal push, not a pull system, i.e. UN officials

determined what to give AMISOM commanders and when (push) rather than the AMISOM commanders being given the freedom to determine what they needed and when (pull).[242]

U.S. direct action on non-Somali HVTs helped to put pressure on al-Shabaab. Some U.S. direct action on HVTs under the Obama administration did weaken al-Shabaab. These strikes were effectively targeted at non-Somali radicals who were widely resented or disliked by the local population and avoided more reputable or clan-affiliated Somali leaders—such as Hassan Turki, Muktar Robow, and Hassan Dahir Aweys. These figures may have had some contact with al-Qaeda but their death would probably have sparked a strong public backlash. The threat of direct action, and the fear al-Shabaab operatives had of being tracked through their use of satellite phones and through their contacts with Middle Eastern radical groups, appears to have reduced the freedom of movement of al-Shabaab leaders and dampened Somalia's attractiveness as a jihadi tourist destination.

Looking Forward

As AMISOM expanded beyond Mogadishu and faced an al-Shabaab force more intent on harassment of its supply lines and terrorist attacks than open confrontation, it entered a new environment where building cooperative political relationships between Somalia's de facto governing authorities became more significant than projecting military power. How AMISOM should best support the new Somali government as it attempts to extend its authority beyond Mogadishu thus remains the key political issue moving forward. In April 2013, Jane's Intelligence concluded that: "Mogadishu's relationships with neighboring states could again threaten the stability of the Horn in the longer-term while at the short-term imperiling the state-building project in Somalia."[243] With the integration of Ethiopian forces into AMISOM in January 2014, it would be sadly ironic if, once again, competing national political agendas placed AU troops in the middle of a set of armed conflicts they were unable to control. ⬆

Acronym List

ACOTA	African Contingency Operations Training Assistance
AIAI	al-Ittihad al-Islamiya
AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
ARPCT	Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counterterrorism
ARS	Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia
ASWJ	Ahlu Sunna wa'al Jama
AU	African Union
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CJTF-HOA	Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa
COIN	Counterinsurgency
DFS	United Nations Department of Field Support
DPA	United Nations Department of Political Affairs
DPKO	United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ENDF	Ethiopian National Defense Force
EU	European Union
HVTs	High-Value Targets
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IGAD	Inter-governmental Authority on Development
IGASOM	IGAD Peace Support Mission to Somalia
ISF	International Stabilization Force
KDF	Kenyan Defense Force
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
SCIC	Supreme Council of Islamic Courts
TCC	Troop-Contributing Country
TFG	Transitional Federal Government
TFP	Transitional Federal Parliament
TNG	Transitional National Government
UN	United Nations
UNAMID	African Union- United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur
UNMEE	United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea
UNOSOM	United Nations Operation in Somalia
UNPOS	United Nations Political Office for Somalia
UNSOA	United Nations Support Office for AMISOM

USAFRICOM	United States Africa Command
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USC	United Somali Congress

Endnotes

1. The official was Kenya's deputy minister of foreign affairs. "Kenyan official: 2,700 Ugandans dead in Somalia," *Associated Press,* 31 October 2012.

2. See, for example, Louis Charbonneau, "Up to 3,000 African peacekeepers killed in Somalia since 2007," *Reuters*, 9 May 2013. Available at: http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/05/09/us-somalia-peacekeepers-deaths-idUSBRE94812020130509.

3. See, for example, Abdi Moalim, "AMISOM spokesperson refutes casualty numbers," *Sabahi*, 22 May 2013. Available at: http://sabahionline.com/en_GB/articles/hoa/articles/features/2013/05/22/feature-01.

4. As called for by Linda Robinson in *The Future of U.S. Special Operations Forces* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Special Report No.66, April 2013).

5. For an overview see I.M. Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somali* (Oxford: James Currey, 4th edition, 2002).

6. Frequently called the "Eldoret conference" or the "Mbgathi Peace Process."

7. The Transitional Federal Charter of the Somali Republic (February 2004), Article 29. Available at: http://www.so.undp.org/docs/Transitional%20Federal%20charter-feb%202004-English.pdf. This quota has never been met, and is one reflection of the charter's awkward blend of Western and Islamist objectives.

8. Ken Menkhaus, *Somalia: A National and Regional Disaster?* (UNHCR, April 2009), pp. 1-2, Available at http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/49f180d82.pdf.

9. Sally Healy, *Lost Opportunities in the Horn of Africa* (London: Chatham House, Horn of Africa Group Report, 2008), p. 22.

10. Mark Mazzetti, "Efforts by CIA Fail in Somalia, Officials Charge," *New York Times*, 8 June 2006. Available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2006/06/08/world/africa/08intel.html?_r=0.

11. Bronwyn E. Bruton, *Somalia: A New Approach* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, Special Report No.52, March 2010), p. 7.

12. Soufan Group, *TSG Intel Brief: Conflict Zone Series- Somalia: The Next Chapter in an Endless War* (20 April 2012). Available at: http://soufangroup.com/news/details/?Article_Id=268.

13. "US Says Al Qaeda Behind Somali Islamists," *Reuters*, 14 December 2006. Available at: http://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2006/dec/677/u_s__says_al_qaeda_behind_somali_islamists.aspx.

14. Mary Harper, *Getting Somalia Wrong?* (London: Zed, 2012), p. 177.

15. See Human Rights Watch, *Shell-Shocked: Civilians Under Siege in Mogadishu* (Human Rights Watch: Vol.19, No.12, August 2007).

16. Author's interviews, Somali NGOs and Somali government officials, March 2009.

17. "Rebels Drag Soldiers' Bodies Through Mogadishu Streets," *Guardian*, 21 March 2007. Available at: http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2007/mar/21/1.

18. Laura McCallum, "Officials: Terror worries tied to Midwest Somalis," *MPR News*, 11 March 2009. Available at: http://www.mprnews.org/story/2009/03/11/somali_hearing.

19. Author interviews with confidential sources in Mogadishu during 2009 and 2010. Ethiopian officials hotly dispute the accuracy of this estimate. Broadly speaking, estimates of the numbers of Ethiopian troops deployed in Somalia since 2007 and up to the present day have been a constant point of contention between Ethiopian and Somali sources. Ethiopia has, for example, claimed that it withdrew all of its forces from Somalia in early 2008 and has denied subsequent frequent sightings of its troops in Central Somalia. U.S. officials have chosen to tacitly accept the accuracy of Ethiopian reporting of its military presence in Somalia.

20. Ethiopia claims to have been relying on Ethiopian-trained TFG troops to provide security. However, Somali civil society and government sources have emphasized in author interviews that, from 2006 onward, Ethiopia has habitually used "clones"—Ethiopian soldiers dressed in Somali outfits—to disguise the level of its troop presence in Somalia. It is plausible and likely that some of the "Ethiopian-trained TFG troops" were actually Ethiopian soldiers.

21. Author's interview, U.S. official, Nairobi, July 2012.

22. See Apuuli Phillip Kasaija, "The UN-led Djibouti peace process for Somalia, 2008-2009," *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 28:3 (2010), pp. 269-74.

23. Menkhaus, *Somalia: A National and Regional Disaster?*

24. Although the Agreement is dated 9 June 2008 it was not actually signed until 19 August 2008.

25. See Modalities for the Implementation of the Cessation of Armed Confrontation, 26 October 2008, at: www.hdcentre.org/files/Ceasefire%20Agreement%20 26%20OCT.pdf.

26. Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, Chairman ARS, "AMISOM Brutality in Somalia," unpublished letter addressed to the UN Secretary-General, the presidents of the AU, Uganda and Burundi, officials from the League of Arab States, the Organization of Islamic Conference and various human rights organizations, September 29, 2008, copy in authors' possession.

27. Author's confidential interviews.

28. Matthew Russell Lee, "Somali Continental Shelf Filing Rejected by Parliament Has Norway 'Embarrassed,' UN Admits," UNDP WATCH, 31 August 2009. Available at: http://undpwatch.blogspot.com/2009/08/somali-continental-shelf-filing.html.

29. "Ould Abdullah— A formidable obstacle to Somali crisis resolution," *Biyokulule Online*, 20 July 2009. Available at: http://www.biyokulule.com/view_content.php?articleid=.

30. Hizbul Islam was a coalition of the ARS-Asamara, Jabhatul Islamiya, Mu'askar Ras Kamboni and Muaskar Anole.

31. "Somalia," United States Central Intelligence Agency, 7 May 2013. Available at: https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/countrytemplate_so.html.

32. Author's interviews with UN officials, February 2009. UN officials expressed frustration that obtaining a quorum in the Somali parliament required "Herculean" persuasive efforts from UN staff, who were routinely obliged to organize transporation for parlimentarians from Nairobi to Mogadishu in order to ensure attendance at partliamentary sessions.

33. Jay Bahadur, "TFG Corruption: An Exclusive Report—Part II: Of Budgets and Briefcase Ministries," *Somalia Report*, 27 February 2012. Available at: http://www.somaliareport.com/index.php/post/2938/TFG_Corruption_An_Exclusive_Report.

34. Jeffrey Gettleman, "Guards for Somali leader join Islamists," *New York Times*, 22 July 2010. Available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/23/world/africa/23somalia.html.

35. Sheikh Sharif's bodyguard provided security for one of the author's during a visit to Mogadishu in March 2010.

36. Jason Straziuso, "UN report cites massive corruption in Somali gov't," *Bloomberg Business Week*, 16 July 2012. Available at: http://www.businessweek.com/ap/2012-07-16/un-report-cites-massive-corruption-in-somali-govt.

37. Author's confidential interviews with ASWJ leaders, December 2011.

38. International Crisis Group, *Somalia: The Transitional Government on Life Support* (Africa Report No.170, 21 February 2011), p. 1.

39. Author's interview with Abdullahi Jama, Mogadishu, March 2010.

40. The author understood this to mean that the TFG was handing the soldier's stipends to militia leaders.

41. In Somalia, "technical" refers to a truck or other vehicle with a machine gun jerry-rigged onto it. The term came to prominence in the early 1990s when international NGOs hired local fighters to protect their personnel and assets. The NGO accountants logged the protection monies under "technical expenses"— hence "technicals." John Drysdale, *Whatever Happened to Somalia?* (London: Haan, 1994), pp. 46-47.

42. *Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1853 (2008)* (Annex to UN S/2010/91, 10 March 2010), p. 7.

43. *Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1916 (2010)* (UN S/2010/433, 18 July 2011), pp. 231-234.

44. Author's interview with AMISOM official, Mogadishu, January 2013.

45. *Report of a Security Sector Assessment Scoping Mission in Somalia* (Prepared by former Somalia Senior Security and Military Officials, Mogadishu, June 2011), p. 26.

46. Author's interview with AMISOM official, May 2013.

47. Author's interviews in Mogadishu, March 2010.

48. *Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia pursuant to Security Council resolution 1853 (2008)* (UN S/2010/91, 10 March 2010), para. 17.

49. *Somalia Security Sector Assessment* (AU, US, EU, TFG, World Bank and UN: 1 January 2010), para. 16a9a.

50. *Report of a Security Sector Assessment Scoping Mission in Somalia* (June 2011), p. 5. In April 2010 the European Union established in Uganda a Training Mission (EUTM) for TFG security forces. By the end of April 2013 the EUTM had trained approximately 3,000 soldiers, focusing on junior officers, NCOs, specialists and trainers. In February 2013 its mandate was revised and extended to focus on training commanders up to battalion and company level, and specialists in the areas of military police, civil military cooperation, intelligence and combat engineering.

51. Author's interviews with TFG officials, Mogadishu, March 2010.

52. Authors' interviews with U.S. officials, Washington DC, July 2010, and EU official, Addis Ababa, May 2012.

53. Somali "warlordism" is highly distinct from the warlord politics that occurs in other parts of Africa. For an excellent discussion, see Roland Marchal, "Warlordism and Terrorism: how to obscure an already confusing crisis? The case of Somalia," *International Affairs*, 83:6 (2007), pp. 1091-1106.

54. David Shinn, "Al Shabaab's Foreign Threat to Somalia," *Orbis*, 55:2 (2011), p. 2.

55. U.S. Military Academy, Combating Terrorism Center, *Al-Qaida's (mis)Adventures in the Horn of Africa* (West Point, New York, 2007). Available at: http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS91834.

56. Adirahman "Aynte" Ali, "The Anatomy of al-Shabaab," undated and unpublished research paper. Available at: http://www.scribd.com/doc/34053611/The-Anatomy-of-Al-Shabaab-by-Abdi-Aynte.

57. See Bjorn Moller, *The Horn of Africa and the U.S. "War on Terror" with a Special Focus on Somalia* (Denmark: DIIPER Research Series Working Paper No.16, 2009), pp. 28-29. Available at: http://vbn.aau.dk/files/17203657/DIIPER_wp_16.pdf.

58. The relationship between al-Shabaab and the SCIC is the subject of debate. Stig Jarl Hansen, for example, saw the relationship as parasitic rather than symbiotic,

describing al-Shabaab as "a parasite on the Sharia Courts' back, thriving from their growth." Stig Jarle Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), p. 36. Whatever the truth, al-Shabaab broke decisively with the Courts after the creation of the Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia-Djibouti faction in September 2007.

59. Bruton, *Somalia: A New Approach*, p. 8.

60. Links to various TFG and press reports detailing the number of SCIC casualties are available at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Baidoa.

61. Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia*, pp. 44-45.Between 2007 and 2011, al-Shabaab are estimated to have carried out 48 suicide attacks which reportedly killed 424 people, with a major increase in fatalities occurring 2009-2011. 65 percent of these attacks were delivered by vehicles other than motorcycles and trucks, while 28 percent were carried out on foot. 65 percent were focused on the security forces, 20 percent on diplomatic targets, 7 percent on government targets, and 8 percent on civilian targets. Anneli Botha, *Practical Guide to understanding and preventing suicide operations in Africa* (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies Guide, 2013), pp. 76-86.

62. Roland Marchal, "The Rise of a Jihadi Movement in a Country at War: Harakat Al-Shabaab Al Mujaheddin in Somalia," March 2011, pp. 4-5. Available at: http://www.ceri-sciencespo.com.

63. See Human Rights Watch, *Shell-Shocked* and Xan Rice, "EU given war crime warning over Somalia aid," *Guardian*, 6 April 2007. Available at: http://www.theguardian.com/world/2007/apr/07/eu.warcrimes. This YouTube video offers one example of the outraged response to alleged Ethiopian atorcities from the Somali Diaspora: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3aCngddDoZg.

64. Human Rights Watch, *Shell-Shocked*, p. 25 and Mark Bradbury and Sally Healy, "Endless War" in Accord, *Whose peace is it anyway?* (Conciliation Resources, Accord Issue 21, 2010), p. 14.

65. *Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia pursuant to Security Council resolution 1724 (2006)* (UN doc. S/2007/436, 18 July 2007), para. 37.

66. Ibid, para. 37.

67. Ibid, para. 30. See also paras. 33-34.

68. The figure of 150,000 for the strength of the Ethiopian army is taken from *The Military Balance 2007* (London: Routledge for the IISS, 2007), p. 274.

69. Other sources put the figure much higher: The Swiss Peace Foundation, for instance, reported that Ethiopia maintained an estimated 40,000 troops in Somalia. SwissPeace, *Somalia: Trends in Conflict and Cooperation* (FAST Update, Somalia, No.1, February-March 2007), p. 2.

70. As noted above, these numbers contradict troop numbers claimed by Ethiopia and reiterated by the U.S., European, and UN officials. They are provided by civil

society actors who collectively employed workers in every district of Mogadishu during this period, and had contacts with employee families and clan elders across southern Somalia. These figures include the use of "clones" (Ethiopian soldiers outfitted in Somali clan militia gear) and other Ethiopian tactics intended to disguise the deployment of troops.

71. The U.S. Government would not confirm Ayro's death, however. Jim Garamone, "U.S. strikes known al-Qaida target in Somalia," 1 May 2008 at http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=49742. These strikes were apparently ordered by the U.S. Department of Defense without input from the State Department regarding the likely diplomatic repercussions, and without assessing the consequences for humanitarian activities. Refugees International, *Somalia: Policy Overhaul Required* (Washington DC: Refugees International Field Bulletin, 19 November 2008), p. 2.

72. And from neighboring Eritrea, which also harbored historic resentments against Ethiopia.

73. These beliefs are a radical offshoot of the Hanbali school of Sunni Islamic law and its ideological off-shoots, found primarily in the teachings of Ahmad ibn Taymiyya and Muhammad ibn Abd-al-Wahhab.

74. Author's interviews with TFG officials, Mogadishu, March 2010.

75. UN Security Council press release, SC/9904, April 12, 2010. Available at http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2010/sc9904.doc.htm.

76. During one of the author's travel in Mogadishu in March 2010, senior TFG officials reported that small groups of al-Shabaab fighters regularly transited the districts that were reportedly secured by AMISOM or the TFG.

77. Marchal, "The Rise of a Jihadi Movement," p. 9.

78. Eqbal Ahmed cited in Zachariah Mampilly, *Rebel Rulers: Insurgent Governance and Civilian Life During War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011), p. 13.

79. Mampilly defined "effective governance" as involving a degree of stability ensured by policing; establishment of some form of dispute resolution mechanisms; and some capacity to provide public goods beyond physical security. Mampilly, *Rebel Rulers*, p. 17.

80. Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia*, p. 72.

81. For a good discussion of governance trends in Somalia see Ken Menkhaus, "Governance without Government in Somalia: Spoilers, State Building, and the Politics of Coping," *International Security*, 31:3 (2006-07), pp. 74-106.

82. Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia*, p. 83.

83. Ibid., pp. 85-89.

84. Ibid., p. 91.

85. Ibid., p. 104.

86. In 2011 the UN Monitoring Group estimated that there were anywhere between 200 and 500 ethnic Somali, and between 500 to 1,500 non-Somali foreigner fighters. *Report of the 2nd AMISOM-TFG Information Sharing Meeting, 22nd to 24th November 2011, Bujumbura Burundi* (AU internal document, no date), p. 10.

87. Their numbers overlap with the indoctrinated core.

88. Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia*, pp. 100-102.

89. *Al-Shabaab* reportedly offered TFG troops $50 a month to defect at a time when many troops lacked regular salaries or food. Author's interviews with TFG officials and civil society associations, Mogadishu, March 2010.

90. Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia*, p. 58.

91. It was at best a notional alliance at the insistence of Ethiopia, which provided ASWJ with arms and funds. The alliance posed little risk to ASWJ, since the TFG was isolated in distant Mogadishu, and ASWJ was determinedly opposed to al-Shabaab. When a splinter movement of ASWJ went to Mogadishu at Ethiopia's behest to join the TFG, ASWJ became heavily fractured and essentially broke in two.

92. Marchal, "The Rise of a Jihadi Movement," p. 57.

93. Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia*, p. 102.

94. Author interviews with Somali and U.S. government officials.

95. During one of the authors' interviews in Mogadishu in March 2010, TFG officials could not quote the price of fuel or basic food staples in the Mogadishu market.

96. *Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2002 (2011)* (UN doc. S/2012/544, 13 July 2012), p. 228.

97. IRIN, "Attack on graduation ceremony the 'last straw'," 10 December 2009. Available at: http://www.irinnews.org/report/87387/somalia-attack-on-graduation-ceremony-the-last-straw.

98. Ibid.

99. See *Report of the Joint Committee on Administration and National Security; and Defence and Foreign Relations on the Inquiry into the Westgate Terrorist Attack, and other Terror Attacks in Mandera in North-Eastern and Kilifi in the Coastal Region* (Kenya National Assembly, Eleventh Parliament-First Session, December 2013).

100. For good summaries of these debates see Ken Menkhaus, "Al-Shabab's Capabilities Post-Westgate," and Stig Jarle Hansen, "An In-Depth Look at Al-Shabab's Internal Divisions," *CTC Sentinel*, 7:2 (2014), pp. 4-12. Available at: http://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/africa-special-issue.

101. Report of the Atlantic Council Counter-Piracy Task Force, *Managing the Global Response to Maritime Piracy* (Washington DC: Atlantic Council, October 2012). Available at: http://www.acus.org/publication/managing-global-response-maritime-piracy.

102. *Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia pursuant to Security Council Resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009)* (UN doc. S/2012/410, 8 June 2012), p. 200.

103. For a discussion of IGAD's weaknesses in the field of conflict management see Sally Healy, *Peacemaking in the Midst of War: An Assessment of IGAD's Contribution to Regional Security in the Horn of Africa* (London: LSE Crisis States Working Paper No. 59, April 2009).

104. Healy, *Lost Opportunities in the Horn*, p. 22.

105. IGAD, "Communique on Somalia," issued in Abuja, Nigeria, 31 January 2005. Interestingly, IGAD's charter did not explicitly include a provision for deploying such a peace operation, although advocates suggested that Article 7(g) could perhaps be used as the legal basis. Article 7 on IGAD's Aims and Objectives states that the institution will: 7(g) Promote peace and stability in the sub-region and create mechanisms within the sub-region for the prevention, management and resolution of inter and intra-State conflicts through dialogue. Signed March 1996. Available at http://www.igad.int/etc/agreement_establishing_igad.pdf.

106. AU doc. PSC/PR/Comm.(XXIX), 12 May 2005.

107. AU doc. PSC/Min/Comm.(XXXIV)–(i), 3 July 2005.

108. For details see, Roland Marchal, "Islamic Political Dynamics in the Somali Civil War" in Alex de Waal (ed.), *Islamism and Its Enemies in the Horn of Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), pp. 132–9; Cedric Barnes and Harun Hassan, "The Rise and Fall of Mogadishu's Islamic Courts," *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 1:2 (2007), pp. 151-60; Healy, *Lost Opportunities in the Horn of Africa*, pp. 23–24.

109. Menkhaus, "Governance without Government in Somalia," p. 76. The ARPCT was formed in February 2006, apparently with considerable assistance (of some $2 million) from the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency in return for help tracking down those individuals responsible for the U.S. embassy bombings in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam in 1998. See, for example, Bruton, *Somalia: A New Approach*, p. 7; Shaul Shay, *Somalia: Between Jihad and Restoration* (New York: Transaction Publishers, 2011), p. 189; and Ted Dagne, Congressional Research Service, testimony before U.S. Congress, House International Relations Committee Joint Hearing, 29 June 2006: available at http://allafrica.com/download/resource/main/main/idatcs/00010916:4b224706565c9efbf7340cb32c3c7b66.pdf.

110. "Sharif Sheikh Ahmed Biography," no date, *Ceelcad Media Network*. Available at: http://ceelcad.com/?p=4411.

111. Its participants included Austria, Belgium, Canada, China, Denmark, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Netherlands, Norway, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, African Development Bank, African Union,

European Union, Islamic Development Bank, IGAD, League of Arab States, Organization of Islamic Cooperation, NATO, United Nations, World Bank.

112. Ayro was killed in a U.S. air strike in Somalia on 1 May 2008.

113. See, for example, Abdi Ismail Samatar, "Ethiopian Invasion of Somalia, U.S. Warlordism and AU Shame," *Review of African Political Economy*, 34, No.111 (2007), p. 158, Healy, *Lost Opportunities in the Horn of Africa*, p. 25.

114. *Ethiopian Herald*, 30 June 2006 cited in Haggai Erlich, *Islam and Christianity in the Horn of Africa* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2010), p. 168.

115. Ibid., p. 166.

116. Barnes and Hassan, "The Rise and Fall of Mogadishu's Islamic Courts," p. 156.

117. Jim Garamone, "Aircraft attack Al Qaeda Haven, Ike Moves off Somalia," 9 January 2007, at http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=2625 and Bradbury and Healy, "Endless War," p. 14.

118. SwissPeace, *Somalia: Trends in Conflict and Cooperation* (FAST Update, Somalia, No.1, February-March 2007), p. 2.

119. For a discussion of the legal dimensions, see Zeray W. Yihdego, "Ethiopia's military action against the Union of Islamic Courts and others in Somalia," *International and Comparative Law Quarterly*, 56:3 (2007), pp. 666–76. On the politics of the process of international recognition see Anonymous, "Government recognition in Somalia and regional political stability in the Horn of Africa," *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 40:2 (2002), pp. 247–72.

120. Abdi Ismail Samatar, "The production of Somali conflict and the role of internal and external actors" in Redie Bereketeab (ed.), *The Horn of Africa* (London: Pluto, 2013), pp. 171-3.

121. Erlich, *Islam and Christianity in the Horn of Africa*, p. 176.

122. Ibid., p. 7.

123. The subsequent number of foreign Jihadist fighters who came to Somalia was the subject of much debate. Estimates of several hundred seem to be the most reliable.

124. Human Rights Watch, *Shell-Shocked*.

125. See, for example, Sabiiti Mutengensa and Dylan Hendrickson, *State Responsiveness to Public Security Needs: The Politics of Security Decision-Making: Uganda Country Study* (University of London, CSDG Paper No.16, June 2008).

126. See, for example, *Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of Congo* (UN doc. S/2002/1146, 16 October 2002), esp. paras. 97-131.

127. Jonathan Fisher, "Managing Donor Perceptions: Contextualizing Uganda's 2007 Intervention in Somalia," *African Affairs*, Vol.111, Issue 444 (2012), pp. 404-423.

128. Otto Bakano, "Peacekeeping cushioning African states from scrutiny: Analysts," *AFP*, 6 September 2010. Available at: http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gGvXvDJA71h52xiRgeLhUQdKp8Rw.

129. This paragraph draws on the author's interviews with Burundian AMISOM official, Nairobi, August 2012 and U.S. official, Washington DC, June 2009.

130. For a discussion see Elizabeth Dickinson, "For tiny Burundi, big returns in sending peacekeepers to Somalia," *Christian Science Monitor*, December 22, 2011. Available at: http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Africa/2011/1222/For-tiny-Burundi-big-returns-in-sending-peacekeepers-to-Somalia.

131. Author's communication with Western human rights NGO official, July 2012. *Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the Situation in Somalia* (AU doc. PSC/PR/2(LXIX), 19 January 2007, paras. 36-37.

132. AU doc. PSC/PR/Comm(LXIX), 19 January 2007. *Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the Situation in Somalia* (AU doc. PSC/PR/2(LXIX), 19 January 2007, paras. 36-37.

133. AU doc. PSC/PR/Comm(LXIX), 19 January 2007.

134. Compiled by the authors from official AU and UN sources since AMISOM has not provided a public monthly tally of its personnel. This figure therefore depicts multiple snapshots of the mission strength.

135. Kathryn Sturman and Aissatou Hayatou, "The Peace and Security Council of the African Union: From Design to Reality" in Ulf Engel and Joao Gomes Porto (eds.), *Africa's New Peace and Security Architecture* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2010), p. 71.

136. See http://www.dyn-intl.com/what-we-do/contingency-operations/somalia-case-study.aspx [accessed January 2013].

137. This testimonial quote was posted on ibid [accessed January 2013]. This webpage has subsequently been removed from DynCorp's website.

138. Author's interviews with Bancroft officials, June 2013.

139. Meles Zenawi's interview with James McLure: "Stuck in Somalia," *Newsweek*, April 9, 2008. Available at: http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2008/04/10/stuck-in-somalia.html.

140. Meles claimed in the *Newsweek* interview that Ethiopia retained "Two, three thousand." Cited in "Stuck in Somalia."

141. For an overview see Kasaija, "The UN-led Djibouti peace process for Somalia, 2008-2009," pp. 269-74.

142. Menkhaus, *Somalia: A National and Regional Disaster?*, p. 7.

143. Although the Agreement is dated the 9 June 2008 it was not actually signed until 19 August 2008.

144. "Somalia peacekeepers 'not viable'," *BBC News*, 9 November 2007. Available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/africa/7086367.stm.

145. "Kenya demands UN engagement in Somalia," *Afrol News*, 23 September 2008. Available at: http://www.afrol.com/articles/36631.

146. *Strategic Directive for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)* (AU internal document, 20 May 2008), para. 22.

147. Subsequent UN–AU planning cohered around an ISF of approximately 6,000 troops.

148. *Report of the Secretary-General on the Situation in Somalia* (UN doc. S/2008/709, 17 November 2008), paras. 31–43. Phase 1 would involve deployment to Mogadishu while in Phase 2 the ISF would monitor and verify the withdrawal of Ethiopian forces from the city. These two phases were scheduled to take place "within six months" (para. 44). In Phase 3, the force would conduct stabilization operations in Mogadishu in order to facilitate the consolidation of the TFG's authority. Phase 4 involved the transition to a UN multidimensional peacekeeping operation of "22,500 troops operating in five brigade-sized sectors throughout southern and central Somalia" (para. 47).

149. "Letter from the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council" (UN doc. S/2008/804, 19 December 2008).

150. Ibid., Annex.

151. Unfortunately, most of these assets were worn out, unserviced, missing parts and some were obsolete. Only some 10% of the vehicles could be driven from the Mogadishu sea-port to the airport. Author's interview with AMISOM official, June 2013.

152. Somali sources—and some Western press reports—contend that Ethiopia did not fully withdraw its troops from Somalia.

153. In frustration with President Yusuf, in November and December 2008 IGAD and the AU endorsed sanctions against Yusuf and his associates. Given Yusuf's ill health a travel ban preventing his medical care visits to Nairobi was probably instrumental in his decision to resign. Kasaija, "The UN-led Djibouti peace process," p. 273.

154. Malkhadir M. Muhumed, "African peacekeepers blamed for Somali civilian deaths," *Associated Press*, 21 July 2010. Available at: http://www.nbcnews.com/id/38349076/ns/world_news-africa/t/african-peacekeepers-blamed-somali-civilian-deaths/.

155. *Civilian Harm in Somalia: Creating an Appropriate Response* (Washington DC: CIVIC, December 2011), p. 19.

156. Author's interview, AMISOM officer, May 2013. See also CIVIC, *Civilian Harm in Somalia*, p. 20.

157. Ould-Abdallah's comments originally appeared in a *Voice of America* interview. Voice of America subsequently removed the interview from its site, but Ould-Abdallah's comments were extensively condemned in reports by, among

others, Human Rights Watch, CNN. See, for example, Anna Husarska, "They kill journalists, don't they? Why is a U.N. diplomat comparing Somali journalists to Rwandan war criminals?" *Slate*, 17 February 2009. Available at: http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/foreigners/2009/02/they_kill_journalists_dont_they.html.

158. Sudarsan Raghavan, "Rising Civilian Toll Ignites Anger at African Force," *Washington Post*, 18 July 2010.

159. For a more detailed discussion see Paul D. Williams, "The African Union Mission in Somalia and Civilian Protection Challenges," *Stability: International Journal of Security & Development*, Vol.2, No.3 (2013), at http://www.stabilityjournal.org/.

160. Author's interview with AMISOM official, Mogadishu, January 2013.

161. See, "AU peacekeepers push back al Shabaab," *The New Vision*, 22 September 2010. Available at: http://allafrica.com/stories/201009230019.html.

162. *Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 1916 (2010)* UN doc. S/2011/433, 18 July 2011, paras. 133, 135.

163. In resolution 1863 (16 January 2009), the UN Security Council had authorized its Department of Field Support to establish UNSOA in order to deliver a logistics capacity support package to keep AMISOM afloat. For details, see Report of the UN Secretary-General, *Support to African Union peacekeeping operations authorized by the United Nations* (A/65/510-S/2010/514, 14 October 2010), para. 30.

164. AMISOM suffered occasionally devastating suicide attacks from al-Shabaab, but did not actively patrol the entire city and was largely secure behind its lines. The TFG, though it repeatedly promised to launch a major "offensive" against al-Shabaab, remained utterly disorganized. According to Senior Somali government officials, though AMISOM's armed personnel carriers and tanks allowed the peacekeepers to easily gain new ground from al-Shabaab, the lack of any forward supply lines and—more than anything else—the failure to carry *khat* to the front, ensured that the TFG forces deserted their new positions by 1,100 hours. AMISOM's troops often deserted the new positions by 1,500 hours to ensure that they were not caught out after dark. TFG officials privately expressed intense frustration over AMISOM's unwillingness to expand the government's territory during this period.

165. In addition to training and financial support from *al-Qaeda*, al-Shabaab benefitted greatly from the diversion of Muslim charitable gifts (known as *zakat*). During author interviews, TFG officials acknowledged receiving regular cash gifts from sources as diverse as Qatar and Iran.

166. Fifteenth Extra-Ordinary Session of the IGAD Assembly of Heads of State and Government, Addis Ababa, 5 July 2010. Available at: http://igad.int/attachments/222_Final_Communique_of_15th_IGAD.pdf.

167. Ibid.

168.   This paragraph draws from Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia*, pp. 100-102.

169.   John Norris and Bronwyn Bruton, *Twenty Years of Collapse and Counting: The Cost of Failure in Somalia* (Washington DC: Center for American Progress, September 2011), p. 23. Available at: http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/security/report/2011/09/14/10286/twenty-years-of-collapse-and-counting/.

170.   Michael Weinstein, "Somalia: Washington's Response to the Kampala Bombings —Continued Procrastination," *Garowe Online*, 21 July 2010. Available at: http://www.garoweonline.com/artman2/publish/Somalia_27/Somalia_Washington_s_Response_to_the_Kampala_Bombings_-_Continued_Procrastination.shtml.

171.   *Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea* (18 July 2011), para. 24.

172.   Ibid., para. 199.

173.   *Report of a Security Sector Assessment Scoping Mission in Somalia* (June 2011), p. 5.

174.   One senior Somali government official admitted that TFG soldiers were rarely paid their salaries, but did receive $1 per day for food, which encouraged most of the soldiers "to stick around in hopes of getting paid." Other Somali sources, however, indicate that there were rarely more than 3,000 TFG soldiers in the ranks at any given time.

175.   Author's interviews, Somalia National Army personnel, Mogadishu, January 2013.

176.   *Report of a Security Sector Assessment Scoping Mission in Somalia* (June 2011), p. 26. Where possible, AMISOM did try to bring TFG wounded to its medical facilities.

177.   *Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the Situation in Somalia* (AU doc. PSC/PR/2(CCXCIII), 13 September 2011), para. 17.

178.   *Mission Implementation Plan (MIP) March-December 2011* (AU internal document, no date), p. 9.

179.   Ibid., p. 10.

180.   In early 2010, Kenyan forces conducted a secret military operation, Operation *Linda Mpaka* to prevent "Al-Shabaab, pirates and contraband from entering the country [Kenya]." Kenyan military intelligence document cited in *Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2002 (2011)* (UN doc. S/2012/544, 13 July 2012), p. 225. Kenyan forces also made cross-border incursions into southern Somalia in early 2007 in search of SCIC forces which had fled into the swampy, forested territory of the Juba regions. More controversial was Kenya's recruitment of some 2,000 Somali Ogadenis in 2009, many of whom were registered refugees and whose illegal recruitment directly out of the Kenyan refugee camps sparked widespread criticism from human rights groups.

181.   Ibid., p. 229.

182. See David W. Throup, "Kenya's Intervention in Somalia," CSIS, 16 February 2012. Available at: http://csis.org/publication/kenyas-intervention-somalia.

183. Since the mid-1990s, the Ethiopian government has been engaged in a low-intensity armed conflict against the Ogaden National Liberation Front. In October 2012, attempts to initiate a formal peace process and talks between the two parties broke down.

184. Mike Pflanz, "Somalia's president questions Kenya's al-Shabaab mission," *The Telegraph,* 25 October 2011. Available at: http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/kenya/8848537/Somalias-president-questions-Kenyas-al-Shabaab-mission.html.

185. Kenyan military intelligence document cited in *Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea* (13 July 2012), p. 226.

186. Comments by State Department Spokesperson Victoria Nuland at daily news briefing, Washington DC, 1 November 2011.

187. Harper, *Getting Somalia Wrong?*, p. 179.

188. The full communiqué is available at: http://igad.int/attachments/422_communique%20from%20IGAD.pdf.

189. *Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea* (13 July 2012), p. 229 and p. 231.

190. Paragraph based on author's interviews with UN official, Addis Ababa, 3 August 2012, and Ethiopian official, Addis Ababa, 31 July 2012.

191. See AU doc. PSC/PR/COMM.(CCCII), 2 December 2011. This communique also called for an air-exclusion zone to help cut off arms supplies to al-Shabaab.

192. AU doc. PSC/PR/COMM.(CCCVI), 5 January 2012 and UN Security Council resolution 2036, 22 February 2012.

193. The Kenyan MoU states that for the purposes of reimbursement for personnel and Contingent-Owned Equipment the MoU shall be deemed to have entered into force on 22 February 2012 (the date of UN Security Council Resolution 2036). The EU position, however, was that its payments of allowances for Kenyan troops should begin on the date that the MoU was signed (2 June 2012), prompting a dispute over the provision of payment for the intervening months.

194. *Military Strategic Concept of Operations for AMISOM* (AU internal doc. 14 February 2012), para. 8.

195. Ibid., para. 10.

196. It is available at: http://bit.ly/WIk074.

197. President Hassan Sheikh Mohamoud, "The Future of Governance in Somalia," speech to Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Washington DC, 17 January 2013. Available at: http://bit.ly/Yz2ffi.

198. See UN doc. S/2013/134, 5 March 2013, para. 50.

199. See "Extremely Urgent: Kismayo Conflict," letter sent by Somalia's Deputy Prime Minister to the African Union, 30 June 2013. Copy in author's possession.

200. Ahmed Madobe is the leader of the Ras Kamboni militia and was among the most radical members of al-Shabaab's "nationalist" faction. Madobe helped to organize an *al-Qaeda* training camp in Ras Kamboni during the 1990s, and publicly boasted of sheltering the fleeing perpetrators of the 1998 bombing of the U.S. embassy in Nairobi. His militia was among al-Shabaab's strongest military allies until a dispute over the distribution of the revenues from the port of Kismayo. When al-Shabaab refused to share those revenues, Madobe abandoned his allegiance to *al-Qaeda* and became Kenya's preferred local ally in Jubbaland; a prime example of the way in which clan and economic interests work within *Shabaab's* "nationalist" faction.

201. "Somalia's Jubbaland conundrum,"*Jane's Islamic Affairs Analyst*, May 2013.

202. Matt Bryden, *Somalia Redux? Assessing the New Somali Federal Government* (Washington DC: CSIS, August 2013), p. 22.

203. For details on this process see Paul D. Williams, "Stabilising Somalia: The African Union Mission and the next stage in the war against al-Shabaab," *RUSI Journal*, 159:2 (April/May 2014), pp. 52-61.

204. The communique is available at http://www.hiiraan.com/Pdf_Files/2013/FINAL_COMMUNIQUE_OF_THE_SUMMIT_OF_HEADS_OF_STATES.pdf.

205. Resolution 2124 also proposed enhancements to AMISOM's management structures, specifically planning and strategic management capabilities and new systems to address allegations of misconduct and ensure that any AMISOM detainees are treated in strict compliance with applicable obligations under international humanitarian law and human rights law.

206. As provided for in UN Security Council Resolution 2036 (22 February 2012), para. 6.

207. Letter dated 14 October 2013 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (UN doc. S/2013/606, 14 October 2013), p. 6.

208. Uganda had signed a letter of assist with the AU and UNSOA to deploy three attack/tactical; two utility, and one medevac helicopters to AMISOM. They would provide air cover for troops, escort convoys, fly rescue/evacuation missions, and airdrop forces.

209. Initially defining "the Horn" as Sudan, Somalia, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, the Seychelles and Kenya, CJTF-HOA subsequently deployed for operations in Mauritius, Comoros, Liberia, Rwanda, Uganda and Tanzania.

210. Sean D. Naylor, "The Secret War: How the U.S. Hunted AQ in Africa," *Army Times*, 30 October 2011. Available at: http://www.armytimes.com/article/20111030/NEWS/110300316/The-Secret-War-How-U-S-hunted-AQ-Africa.

211. Comments by Senator Russ Feingold at the Center for Strategic Studies, Washington DC, 10 March 2009.

212. National Security Council, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, September 2002. Available at: http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/nsc/nss/2002/nss1.html.

213. U.S. Military Academy, *Al-Qaida's (mis)Adventures in the Horn of Africa*. See also Ken Menkhaus, *Somalia: State Collapse and the Threat of Terrorism* (London: Routledge, Adelphi Paper No. 364, 2004) and "Somalia and Somaliland" in Robert Rotberg (ed.), *Battling Terrorism in the Horn of Africa* (Washington, DC, Brookings Institution Press, 2005).

214. The Bureau of Political Military Affairs is tasked with managing the U.S. counter-piracy response, and assumed the lead role in convening the *Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia*, a collaboration between the United States, 44 other states and seven international organizations (including the International Maritime Organization and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime). The Bureau of Populations, Refugees and Migration focused on humanitarian and displacement issues; while the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor focused on human rights and, to a lesser extent, oversight of democratization efforts; and Policy Planning prepared memos, remarks and other guidance on behalf of the Secretary of State.

215. For overviews of the various critical perspectives on AFRICOM see, for example, the special section of *Contemporary Security Policy*, 30:1 (2009), pp. 1-99.

216. Author's confidential interview.

217. Author's interview with senior official from U.S. Department of State, Bureau of African Affairs, November 2008.

218. "Somali famine 'killed 260,000 people'," *BBC News*, 2 May 2013. Available at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-22380352.

219. Confidential Kenyan and U.S. government sources assert that the then-US Ambassador Scott Gration privately encouraged Nairobi to undertake the invasion. An Inspector General's investigation subsequently raised many criticisms of Gration's leadership, leading to his removal from post. Available at: http://oig.state.gov/documents/organization/196460.pdf.

220. United States Government Assistance to the African Union, Fact Sheet, May 2013.

221. Assistant Secretary of State for Africa Johnnie Carson, "Assessing U.S. Policy on Peacekeeping Operations in Africa," testimony before House Foreign Affairs Committee, Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, and Human Rights. Washington, DC: 13 September 2012. Available at: http://www.state.gov/p/af/rls/rm/2012/197773.htm.

222. *Congressional Budget Justification Foreign Operations Annex: Regional Perspectives, Fiscal Year 2012* (US Department of State, 2012), pp. 218-219. Available at: http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/158268.pdf.

223. *Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea* (13 July 2012), para. 67.

224. Kevin Kelley, "How 'Quiet Americans' Helped Defeat al Shabaab," *East African,* 20 August 2011. Available at: http://allafrica.com/stories/201108210024.html.

225. See, for example, Jeffrey Gettleman, Mark Mazzetti and Eric Schmitt, "US Relies on Contractors in Somali Conflict," *New York Times,* 10 August 2011. Available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/11/world/africa/11somalia.html?pagewanted=all&_r=2&. This point has been confirmed by the authors' interviews with senior officials within AMISOM.

226. *Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea* (13 July 2012), paras. 23 and 45.

227. Katherine Houreld, "Bancroft Global Development, U.S. Group Advises African Troops in Somalia," *The Huffington Post*, 10 August 2011. Available at: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/08/10/bancroft-global-development-somalia_n_923531.html.

228. Kelley, "How 'Quiet Americans' Helped Defeat al Shabaab."

229. Gettleman et al, "US Relies on Contractors in Somali Conflict."

230. For acknowledgement of direct U.S. military engagement in Somalia by President Obama see, "Presidential Letter— 2012 War Powers Resolution 6-Month Report," 15 June 2012. Available at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/06/15/presidential-letter-2012-war-powers-resolution-6-month-report.

231. Although the TFG claimed a U.S. Government intelligence agency had provided assistance to the Somali National Security Agency, which reportedly runs the Alpha Group, the U.S. Government would not acknowledge this publicly. See *Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2002 (2011)* (UN doc. S/2012/544, 13 July 2012), Annex 5.5 paras. 49-51.

232. Eric Scmitt, "U.S. Advisers Sent to Help Somalia Fight the Shabab," *New York Times*, 10 January 2014. Available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/11/world/africa/us-advisers-sent-to-help-somalia-fight-the-shabab.html?_r=0. Confirmed by AFRICOM Public Affairs office to authors, 21 April 2014.

233. David Montero, "Somalia violence flares in the wake of U.S. airstrike," *Christian Science Monitor,* 21 May 2008. Available at: http://www.csmonitor.com/World/terrorism-security/2008/0521/p99s01-duts.html.

234. Author interviews with AMISOM and U.S. officials, October and November 2011.

235. Ibid.

236. John T. Watson et al, "Outbreak of Beriberi among African Union Troops in Mogadishu, Somalia," *PLoS ONE*, 6:12 (2011), e28345.

237.   See Bruton, *Somalia: A New Approach*, pp. 6-14.

238.   Mike Pflanz, "Antiterror laws could impede U.S. aid for Somali famine victims," *Christen Science Monitor*, July 22, 2011. Available at: http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Africa/2011/0722/Antiterror-laws-could-impede-US-aid-for-Somalia-famine-victims.

239.   Author's communication with EU official, February 2014.

240.   Food aid volumes had been depleted to abnormally low levels by the sharp reduction in Western aid to Somalia throughout 2010. See Hugo Slim, *IASC Real-Time Evaluation of the Humanitarian Response to the Horn of Africa Drought Crisis in Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya: Synthesis Report* (Interagency Standing Committee, June 2012), p. 5.

241.   Since April 2012, the Joint Coordination Mechanism has convened twice (April 2012 and January 2013) and the Military Operations Coordination Committee nine times.

242.   Author's interview with AMISOM official, June 2013.

243.   "Somalia's Jubbaland conundrum," *Jane's Islamic Affairs Analyst*, May 2013.