Full Length Research

CONFLICT RESOLUTION RESPONSES OF IGAD AND AU TO THE SOMALIA CRISES

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Somalia has been in a state of political and socio-economic crises since the demise of the central government in 1991. What followed after the collapse of the state was intensification of violent civil war among various political players supported by external powers. The civil war has invited the intervention of regional and international actors seeking to restore peace and order in the country. In this regard, IGAD and AU have played an important role in maintaining peace and security in the Horn of Africa in general and in Somalia in particular. By and large, it can be argued that they have been successful in mediating various competing political groups operating in Somalia to end the crises. In fact, their conflict resolution efforts failed at the implementation and consolidation stages of conflict resolution. This paper, therefore, attempts to describe and analyze the conflict resolution responses of IGAD and AU in their effort to mitigate the Somalia crises. It concludes that IGAD and AU have played a key role to maintain peace and security in the Horn region generally and in Somalia particularly. Therefore, their conflict resolution response should be taken as a commendable achievement in building peace in Africa.

Key Words: Conflict, Conflict resolution, Negotiation, Mediation, Peace Agreement.

Abbreviations:

AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
AU	African Union
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
IGASOM	IGAD Peacekeeping Mission in Somalia
TFG	Transitional Federal Government
UNOSOM	United Nations Operation for Somalia

INTRODUCTION

The Horn of Africa is one of the most volatile and conflict-ridden parts of the world. Many political commentators describe the region as "the hot-bet of the world". The region continues to be the venue of most of intense inter-state and intra-states conflicts in the post-colonial Africa (Medhane, 2002; Kinfe, 2006). Hence, it is a tragic scene of endemic conflicts and political fragmentation.[1] Lack of democratic political institutions which allow people to participate in making decision has been triggering civil war and political turmoil in the region (Markakis, 2003).

The region, however, is also one the penetrated parts of the globe by external forces (Chaliand, 1978). Due to its geographical proximity to the Middle East and strategic significance; the region has gained the attention of external powers since antiquity. For instance, the involvement of the Super powers and the Middle East countries in the post-Cold War era had redefined the patterns of conflict in the region by in the heavily arming and extending their support to one state against the other (Lefebvre, 1996). Therefore, the region has become a place where political chaos and civil war is instigated and backed up by external powers. Generally, political upheavals, economic stagnation and environmental degradation became the defining feature of almost every countries of the region since independence. In this regard, the political crises and economic stagnation in Somalia following the collapse of the central government in 1991, has witnessed evidences of violent conflict and its consequent economic decay in the region.

Somalia achieved its independence on July 1st, 1960, comprising the former Italian Trust Territory and the former British Protectorate of Somaliland. It has been described as the only homogenous society in Africa who speaks a single language and adheres to one religion, Islam. But this homogeneity has never saved them from suffering from two decades of civil war and humanitarian crisis[2] Besides, the country has experienced authoritarian and dictatorial regimes.

For instance, in 1969 Said Barre staged a coup, ending attempts of post-colonial democracy and started experimenting 'Scientific Socialism' which lead to the state to authoritarianism and finally to state collapse in 1991 (Memar, 2012). Following the collapse of the state, Somalia has been divided in to three parts, namely the Somali Republic and the Puntland State of Somalia (former Italian Somaliland) and the Republic of Somaliland (former British Somaliland). South-Central Somalia has been in a state of civil war governed by weak Transitional Federal Government which was based in the capital, Moqadishu.

Immediately after the demise of the Barre regime, Somalia has been in political and humanitarian crises. This has been attracting the intervention of both regional and international organizations. More importantly, IGAD and AU have been actively involving in the various phases of the conflict and conflict resolution processes which aim at establishing a representative central government and restoring sustainable peace in Somalia.

APPROACHES IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Approaches in peace building have gained prominence since the end of the Cold War era. The withdrawal of Super powers from regional and internal conflict resolution activities in Africa particularly necessitated the development of new approaches and theoretical assumptions in peace and conflict studies (Murthi, 2009). Since then, theories and approaches in conflict resolution play an important part in underpinning and guiding practical intervention in peace building efforts.

CONCEPTUALIZING CONFLICT RESOLUTION

According to Wallesteen (2007) conflict resolution approach is "a situation where the conflicting parties enter into an agreement that solves their central incompatibilities, accept each other's continued existence as parties and cease all violent action against each other". In this definition he identified major components that are essential to effective conflict resolution. He considered incompatibilities as a basic issue dividing the conflicting parties.

Conflict Resolution involves a contention that an acceptable solution to a particular conflict has been discovered or mutually created by conflicting parties, possibly with some assistance from third parties (Mitychell, 2002). The aim is to solve the central incompatibility of conflicting parties by facilitating new ground for peace negotiation and agreement. Conflict resolution usually ends with an agreement negotiated by

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[1] Conflict in the Horn of Africa is highly complicated and the sources of the conflicts are a combination of multifaceted factors. In fact, behind the scene of every conflict economic factors such as access to scare resources and competition for political power play an important role in intensifying intra-state and inter-state conflicts. The interlocking nature of the region's conflict has also deepened civil war and economic decay as well. Thus, the region has seen very little of democratic governance, economic growth, peace and stability.

[2] The horn region is an area where serious humanitarian crisis is common due to large flow of refugees. Especially, the catastrophes in Somalia and Darfur have been characterized by massive abuse and violation of human rights.

the representatives of conflicting parties. The agreement will outline the details of settlement and allow negotiators to view their respective goal. In this regard, Tarekegn (2005) noted in case of armed conflict that conflict resolution approach concentrates on the termination of war by analyzing and understanding the nature of the conflict.

Boulding (1976) and Burton (1990) propagate the need for "conflict resolution through changed perception" to conflict transformation and peace reconstruction. They maintained the idea that in conflict situation the prime task is to bring about changes in the perceptions, attitudes and contradictions of the antagonists as outlined in Galtung's[3] conflict triangle model. They also suggested that long-lasting settlement and resolution of violent conflict can be achieved through "controlled communication".[4] Generally, since 1990s the conflict resolution approach utilizes skill and knowledge of psychological process to maximize the positive potential inherent in a conflict and finds itself at a bridge between a very narrow concept of peace (negative peace) and a very broad one (positive peace).

PHASES IN SUCCESSFUL CONFLICT RESOLUTION APPROACH

PHASE ONE: PEACE AGREEMENT

The signing of peace agreement is the beginning of conflict resolution approach. According to Wallesteen (2007) peace agreement is "a situation in which the fighting parties accepts each other also as parties in the future dealing with one another". It means that achieving cessation of hostilities between the conflicting parties is

an important aspect of peace agreement. This stage is more attractive to the parties in a conflict when the conflict seems unwinnable and popular support evaporates (Zartman, 1991). From the perspective of conflicting parties, negotiation and peace agreement become more desirable option when the chance of winning the war on the battlefield fades. It is, however, a necessary but not sufficient step to a lasting conflict resolution process.

Peace agreement which is an integral part of conflict resolution can be achieved at the end of negotiation. Third party mediator plays an important role in facilitating conditions for conflicting parties to explore durable peace. It incorporates, as Tarekegn (2005) noted military provisions and security guarantees including Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) and political stipulation. In the peace agreement phase of conflict resolution, what is equally important as the participation of primary actors of conflict is the representation of secondary parties in the conclusion of any peace accord. This is because secondary parties may be involved in the conflict by providing either material or psychological support to the parties in the course of the conflict.

PHASE TWO: IMPLEMENTATION

A growing body of scholars in conflict resolution suggested that it is not sufficient for the parties to hammer out an achievable peace agreement but the negotiated terms of an agreement must be carefully implemented with the participation of all concerned parties. Väyrynen (1991) underlines that, the discovery of an acceptable solution which was not recognized as achievable before and its effective implementation is the most obvious way of shortening a conflict.

It is worthwhile to mention here that the peace agreement and the implementation phases of conflict resolution contain mechanisms that include demilitarized zone, demobilization of troops, dispute resolution commission, peace keeping as well as political provisions for effective power sharing among the previously warring parties (Boutros-Boutros Ghali, 1992). It is necessary to take into consideration that conflict may reverse itself, doubling back into violence even in the implementation stage if it failed to incorporate all parties that overly or covertly participated in the conflict (Hampson, 2007).

PHASE THREE: CONSOLIDATION /INTEGRATION

Integration is the final and the most vital phase in the process of conflict resolution in that it creates change of mind among the actors if conflict and resolves central incompatibilities. As Tarekegn (2005) stated

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[3] Galtung has proposed a conflict triangle model with corner A, B and C representing attitudes, behavior and contradiction. According to him, a fully articulated conflict emerges as outcome of the attitudes, A, of actors' behavior, B, and the contradictions, C, which is the root causes of disputes. Conflict is thus a combination of assumptions, behaviors and contradictions which can be mathematically expressed as Attitudes (A) + Behavior (B) + Contradiction (C). It generates from the existence of attitudes, contradictions and behaviors and the interaction between the basic elements of the conflict cycle. This forms a 'Conflict Triangle' which represents cycle of conflict.

[4] It is a procedure in which messages are checked for their accuracy and seriousness in order to bring about termination of conflicts.

consolidation is the "acceptance of the agreement by all parties and the people of the provision of the accord and implementing them" to generate long-lasting advantages to the warring parties that enhance cooperation and harmony. In this phase major parties that played a role in defining the nature of the conflict must have gained access to economic and political resources. Through consolidation, it is possible to change or amend damaged relations between antagonists and restore amicable interactions (Ibid).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE SOMALIA CRISES

The colonial division of Africa left the Somali people divided into different territories: French Somaliland, British Somaliland, The Northern Front District (NFD) in Kenya and the Ogaden in eastern Ethiopia (Woodward, 1996). The development of anti-colonial movements in Africa, the changes in the global political power configuration in the aftermath of the WWII and the beginning of the Cold War contributed to the independence of many African countries. As a result of liberation struggle in Africa, Somalia gained its independence in July 1960 with the merger of the former Italian colony in the South and the British protectorate it the North (Makinda, 1982). Somali inhabited territories which were not included in the newly independent state of Somalia were the NFD and those people in Ethiopia and Djibouti as well.

Somalia established a liberal parliamentary democracy and approved its first national constitution in a countrywide referendum following independence (Ibid). In fact, consolidating democratic state and well-established governmental machineries were the pre-occupations of the Somali leaders in the aftermath of independence. However, during the early post-independence period, party based political competition had been fundamentally replaced by clan based politics and it brought a basic split between the regional interest of the former British controlled north and Italian occupied south. Lack of clear political leadership and the subsequent policy drift finally led to that assassination of President Shermarke in 1969 and destroyed the hope for democratic system of government (Woodward, 1996).

In 1969, the military dictator, Siad Barre, seized power through bloodless coup. The first measure that prioritized was granting total supremacy to the state and in effect, the state had owned the land, not the clans (Ibid). Hence, Somalia underwent through a process of extreme political, social and economic fragmentation. Although he attempted to solve political and economic crises, the dictatorial nature of his regime, centralization of power and clannism led to the downfall of his regime in 1991. Consequence by the late 1990s, Somaliland and

Puntland in the northwest and north east of the country established their own administration that could fulfill most of the function of government, but south-central Somalia remained deeply divided.

SOMALIA AFTER THE COLLAPSE OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

What followed after the demise of Barre's regime was ineffective and counter-productive international intervention. Although the United Nations Operation for Somalia (UNOSOM) I and UNOSOM II mission was primary conducted to deliver humanitarian assistance to the people of Somalia, its intervention was ended up with full of tragedy (Thakur, 1997). It has been argued that the intervention of the UN has intensified the civil war by recognizing warlords as liable political force. Among other things, the warlords were treated as legitimate interlocutors by granting them the status they would not deserve (Medhane, 2002). This by far contributed for the consolidation of clan politics.

In the early stages of the civil war, various types of Islamic fundamentalists had emerged in the political map of Somalia using religion as an instrument of obtaining political power. Al-Ittihad al- Islamiya and Al-Islah were dominant political forces (Ibid). These groups changed the conflict equation of Somalia when they formed the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) in 2006 to fight against the warlords that controlled pocket of territory in South-Central part of Somalia. Needless to say, the UIC drove the warlords out of Mogadishu and consolidated its control of the capital. In fact, the warlords were fighting under the organizing umbrella of Alliance Against Terrorism and Restoration of Peace (AATRP) with the fundamentalist groups (Møller, 2009).

The Intervention of Ethiopia on the behalf of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in 2006 was another event that changed the balance of power in the Somali conflict. Its intervention had led to the overthrow of the legitimacy of the UIC and checked its influential position. However, according to some scholars, its intervention had inflamed Somali nationalism and intensified religious extremism and radicalism (ICG, 2005). This political outcome had offered opportunities for regional and extra-regional actor's intervention in the civil war. It enables them to facilitate the situation for peacemaking efforts. The role played by IGAD and AU was decisive in this regarded.

In June 2008, the TFG and the Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia (ARS), a group dominated by members of UIC, signed an agreement in Djibouti. This agreement led to the transformation of the old TFG and the creation of TFG II (Medhane, 2009). The parties agreed to a cease-fire, the withdrawal of Ethiopian forces, and the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping

force. Nevertheless, the new TFG which was given a mandate of 6 years to prepare the ground work for the formation all inclusive and representative government by 2012 moved to Mogadishu with the support of African Union Peace Keeping force (Ibid).

Since 2011, the TFGII and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) have intensified their attacks against Al-Shabaab forces in Mogadishu and Southern Somalia. Al-Shabaab forces pulled out of Mogadishu and its strongholds as a result of immense military attacks by the TFGII troops and AMISOM peace keeping forces. But now, Somalia has established a democratically elected national government which gained the consent of its people and the recognition of the international community as a legitimate representative of the Somali people. The burden of building sustainable peace and maintaining economic development was primarily the responsibility of the government although regional and international organizations play a significant role.

ROOT CAUSES OF THE SOMALIA CRISES

Over decades, the conflict in Somalia has been taking many different shapes and forms. Some conflicts were primarily over natural resources while others were caused in greater extent by the extremist and warlords' militia factions fighting for political power and control. Most scholars, however, mentioned three major reasons as the root causes of the Somali crises. These are:

THE LEGACY OF COLONIALISM

The legacy of colonialism has been mentioned as one of the root causes of the Somali conflict. The colonial powers (Britain, Italy, and France) partitioned Somalia into five parts. Britain took two parts (British Somaliland and the northern territory of Kenya); Italy one part known as Italian Somaliland, France the northern coast, and the rest was occupied by Ethiopia (the Ogaden) (Woodward, 1996). The subsequent attempt to reintegrate these different Somali-inhabited parts led the state, which emerged in 1960, to enter into conflicts with neighboring states and eventually to disintegration. Colonialism also posed a serious challenge to national integration in the post independence period because of the distinct colonial experiences of the British Somaliland and Italian Somaliland which formed the independent Republic of Somalia (Mesfin, 1999).

CLANNISM

Somalia is a lineage-based society, in which virtually all members of society enjoy membership in a patrimonial clan-family. Although the Somali people speak the same language, adhere to the same religion, and are from the same ethnic group, which is rare in the case of Africa, clannism [5] has long hindered internal cohesion in the country (Kidist, 2009).

Clans and sub-clans system play a very important role in defining the political, economic and social landscape of Somalia. Over 80 percent of the Somali people are pastoralists, lacking the culture of a centralized administrative system and promoting loyalty to their kin and clans (Ibid). The division between clans has also widened over the years due to competition over resources, elite manipulation, and political patronage. The most notable one in this regard is Hawiye-Darood mistrust and rivalry for political supremacy. It is stated that the political elite in Somalia utilized clan organization to gain political support (Muse, 2009) and this is responsible for clan competition and conflict. Besides, Barre's policy of divide and rule instigated suspicion and hatred among the clans and finally led the country into deep statelessness. In a nutshell, it has also left a legacy of fear and distrust towards efforts to revive a central government.

COMPETITION FOR ECONOMIC RESOURCES

Competition for economic resources is also a major cause for the Somali conflict. Clashes over resources such as water, livestock, and grazing land have always been a source of contention in Somalia, both before and after independence. In the post-independence period, competition over state power involved securing the major economic resources (Kidist, 2009). This coupled with economic mismanagement, corruption, and failure to meet the people's expectations and provide them basic services by successive regimes led to increasing poverty and further discontent.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION RESPONSES OF IGAD AND AU

THE EFFORTS OF IGAD

The Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Desertification (IGADD) was established in 1986 to coordinate the efforts of the Horn countries to eliminate the occurrence of chronic drought and famine from the region because one state cannot face the problem alone

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[5] Clan has been the most important factor in the political life of the Somali society. Although Somalia has been described as the only homogenous society in Africa; clan has been a determinant factor in shaping and redefining the politics of Somalia.

(Ahmed, 1992). In 1996, member states agreed to modify the mandate of the organization to make it more active in conflict prevention, management and resolution activities.[6] Since then it has played an important role to maintain peace and stability in the region. In fact, the dynamic nature of the region's conflict and the involvement of external powers have challenged its peace building efforts.

Before IGAD had taken the leading role in the Somali peace processes, the UN and the U.S.A were the major actors that attempted to establish central government by facilitating negotiations (Medhane, 2002). Following the departure of the United Nations Operation to Somalia (UNOSOM) and the United States troops from Somalia in 1995, IGAD became active in initiating and sponsoring the Somali peace process in order to fill the gap. Since then it considers the issue of Somalia as its top priority agenda and mediated a number of peace processes that aimed to establish central government in Somalia (Faraha, 2007).

In 2002, IGAD Heads of State and Government who met in Khartoum took a progressive decision to bring about sustainable peace and stability in Somalia. They

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[6] Before its revitalization IGADD's peace building and mediation role, among other things, was enhanced when it attempted to mediate between the government of Ethiopia and Somalia after the end of the 1977/78 border conflict. At its first meeting in January 1986 in Djibouti, IGADD initiated a peace dialogue between Mengistu and Siad Barre which led to peace negotiation and agreement. Therefore, they signed an agreement that allowed the two countries to exchange war prisoners, to reopen of embassy and to restoration of amicable relations. After the change of government in Ethiopia in 1991, the political dynamics of the Horn of Africa drastically changed. Concomitantly, IGADD took progressive measures to improve the security situation of the region. Due to of new regional political developments, IGADD countries overwhelmingly agreed to expand the mandate of the organization to deal with peace and security matters in the region. They also agreed to design a common security strategy to influence the government of the Sudan and to establish a legitimate central government for Somalia. The role of IGAD in conflict prevention, management and resolution had shown significant progress when it carried out conflict resolution and mediation attempts in the Sudan and Somalia. It facilitated meeting between the government of the Sudan and the SPLM/A by issuing negotiation principles in 1994 and assigned Kenya as a mediator. Eventually both parties managed to sign the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005. IGAD also attempted to mediate Ethiopia and Eritrea during the 1998-2000 war although they remained to date in a state of no-war no-peace situation.

agreed to sponsor the Eldoret peace and reconciliation conference in which the representatives of the Somali people would participate to establish their own national government. The Eldoret peace agreement resulted in the signing of the "Declaration on Cessation of Hostilities and the Structure and Principle of the Somalia National Reconciliation Process" on 27 October 2002 (Eldoret Declaration, 2002). It stipulates that all parties should be abstaining from using violence as a means of resolving conflict.

After two years of negotiations, at Mbagathi peace process, extension of the Eldoret reconciliation conference, established the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) as a legitimate government of the Somali people. IGAD-led Eldoret and Mbagathi reconciliation conferences are unique as compared to the past peace agreements that had been initiated either jointly or unilaterally by IGAD countries because of the following major reasons.

First, they are the latest manifestations of IGAD's commitment to establish legitimate central government in Somalia. Moreover, they are the first peace processes in the history of Somalia which reveal cooperation and relative convergence of interest among IGAD member countries in particular and international community in general. Second, they are unique in that IGAD countries had increased their engagement in terms of financing the peace processes than ever before. Although there had been clash of interests and persistent division among member states, IGAD countries showed their unified positions. Third, the peace agreements resulted in the establishment of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), the Transitional Federal Charter (TFC) and the Transitional Federal Institutions (IFI) (Menkhaus, 2009). These achievements became functional since the Djibouti peace agreement in the late 2008.

The TFG is the first legitimate government of Somalia that obtained recognition from all IGAD member states and international community unlike the TNG. In fact, the TFG was unable to project authority and control in Mogadishu and Islamist controlled regions. In addition, it faced severe resistance from the Djibouti backed Mogadishu groups and Eritrean backed Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) because they perceived the TFG as appendages of the Ethiopian government in Somalia (Ibid).

Finally, the Eldoret and Mbagathi peace processes were unique because IGAD had pushed the issue of Somalia in the meetings of the African Union (AU), the United Nations (UN), and the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) than ever before. It also gained their support to establish IGAD Peace keeping Mission to Somalia (IGASOM). IGAD played an important role in securing financial assistance from donor countries. Had it not been for the commitment of IGAD member states and the international community to grant financial assistance

to the peace process, the TFG would not have been created and it would not have been possible for Somalia to get respite from the protracted civil war.

The major challenge for IGAD after the establishment of the TFG was installing it in Mogadishu where the security situation had deteriorated seriously. Lack of comprehensive strategy for the implementation of the peace agreement coupled with disagreement within the parliament further complicated the situation. Moreover, IGAD countries were not willing to support the TFG both financially and militarily except the unilateral intervention of Ethiopia in 2006. In addition to this, lack of sufficient support from the international community hinders the hope for the installation of the TFG.

In order to overcome these challenges and to nurture the TFG in Mogadishu, IGAD had taken several measures. At the beginning of 2005 IGAD countries discovered their weaknesses and in January 2005 in Abuja, the Heads of State and Government agreed to present a draft proposal to the AU summit. The proposal provided the creation of a peace support mission called IGASOM to relocate the TFG in Somalia. The Foreign Ministry of IGAD who met in Nairobi in 2005 approved the deployment plan for IGASOM (Healy, 2005). The UNSC Resolution 1725 of December 2006 also authorized the deployment of an Africa Union Peace keeping Mission to Somalia (AMISOM).[7]

Despite these IGAD's efforts, the TFG like its predecessor, TNG, suffered from chronic problem of legitimacy (ICG, 2008). Clan competition, disagreement between the President and Prime Minister as well as division among members of the parliament rendered TFG to fragile. Most importantly, President Abdullhi Yusuf had been entrusted a serious burden to implement IGAD's decisions. But he resigned from his presidency in 2008 due to international pressure. Generally, disagreement within the government and deterioration of security in the country resulted in the transformation of the TFG in 2008 at the Djibouti peace agreement (Medhane, 2009). The United Nations mediated and IGAD facilitated Djibouti Peace Agreement that had been signed between the old TFG and the Alliance for Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS)-a group dominated by members of the UIC, on 19 August 2008 (Keck, 2009). It was a peace conference that primarily intended to revitalize the old TFG.

The TFG and the ARS demanded the immediate departure of the Ethiopian troops from Somalia and the deployment of AMISOM. IGAD Heads of State and Government agreed to establish a mechanism headed by a Facilitator to monitor and supervise the implementation of the decision of the assembly. Many observers argued that the formation of IGAD Facilitator for the Somali Peace and Reconciliation witnessed the extent of IGAD's commitment to maintain durable peace in Somalia.

It was after all these developments that the parliament elected a moderate Islamic leader, Sheik Sherif Ahmed, as President of the new TFG on 30 January 2009. He appointed Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke as Prime Minister from the Darood clan family on 13 February 2009 to win the support of Puntland (Medhane, 2009). The Transitional Federal Parliament (TFP) also extended its mandate for additional two years to 2011 and expanded to include 200 Members of Parliament from the opposition ARS and 75 members from civil society and other groups, doubling its size to 550.They also agreed to form a new cabinet on the basis of 4.5 power sharing formula provided for the TFG. Of all these times, IGAD had been closely working with the new TFG to strengthen its security capacity and to avert military attacks of its opponents.

With the support of international community and IGAD member countries, however, Somalia has established representative and legitimate government which is elected with the participation of the Somali people. Thus, it can be argued that IGAD saved Somalia from prolonged crises. In fact, it has been suffering from financial constraints and lack of unity among its members'.

THE EFFORTS OF AFRICAN UNION (AU)[8]

The African Union has been actively involved in the Somali peace processes to play its peace building role since the signing of the Djibouti peace accord between the old TFG and the ARS (Alliance for the Re- Liberation of Somalia) in 2008 (Memar, 2012). The signatories of the peace accord demanded the immediate withdrawal of the Ethiopian troops and the deployment of African Union peace keeping force.

When the Ethiopian troops evacuated from Somalia following the Djibouti peace agreement, there was a huge security gap which would help Al- Shabab to revive and to control its lost territories in the South Central Somalia including Mogadishu. With Ethiopia evacuation, African Union decided to send a peace keeping force called AMISOM in order to give security protection to TFGII and to overthrow the legitimacy of Al-Shabab. The African Union Peace and Security Council, in its 69th meeting of January 19, 2007, mandated AMISOM to support dialogue and reconciliation in Somalia, to provide protection to the Transitional Federal Institutions (TFIs) and their key infrastructure, to enable them carry out their

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[7] UNSC Resolution 1725 of December 2006.

[8] African Union (AU), replaced OAU at the Durban submit in 2002 with an expanded mandate especially with the right to intervene in the domestic affairs of member states in cases of grave circumstances such as war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity. For further clarification see Article 4 of the Constitutive Act of the African Union.

functions, and provide technical and other support to the disarmament and stabilization efforts.

The UNSC Resolution 1725 of December 2006 also authorized the deployment of an Africa Union Peace keeping Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) (UNSC, 2006). Moreover, IGAD countries agreed to modify the mandate of the organization to allow the establishment of the East Africa Standby Brigade (EASBRIG). It is mandated to intervene in the internal affairs of member states in events of serious and massive human rights violations, genocide and unconstitutional change of government (Alemayehu, 2010). These were steps forward in the construction of peace in Somalia.

Following the relocation of the TFGII to Mogadishu, AU has provided technical support in preparing the National Security Stabilization Plan and has been instrumental in securing the lifting of the UN arms embargo to allow the TFGII to maintain peace and stability (Healy, 2009). In addition, African Union through IGAD took actions to apply sanctions against all warlords in Somalia including travel ban and freezing of accounts (IGAD, 2006). It also demanded the UNSC to lift arms embargo for TFGII to establish law enforcement institutions which were expected to reduce the escalation of the civil war.

Up on the request of AU and IGAD countries, the UNSC adopted resolution 1907 on 23 December 2009 which imposed an arms embargo on Eritrea- has been giving Al-Shababa with logistic and moral support- and travel restrictions and freezing of assets on its political and military officials as a punishment for aiding anti-government rebels in Somalia (UNSC, 2009). This has been recognized as one of the remarkable achievements of AU in weakening the political and diplomatic muscle of Al-Shabab.

The intervention of AU peacekeeping force (AMISOM) in Somalia resulted in the fracturing of ARS into three factions (Ted, 2009). These are: Djibouti based ARS headed by Sheik Sherif, Al-Shabaab which controlled territories in southern Somalia, and Eritrean backed Hizb-Al-Islam which was created in February 2009 immediately after the election of Sheik Sherif as president of the new TFG. The division of ARS provides TFGII with winds of security opportunities to operate as a government beyond the capital, Mogadishu.

In collaboration with the international community, AMISOM has been training and mentoring the core of a revitalized Somali National Army. However, the Somali forces face significant hurdles in terms of equipment, weaponry, communications infrastructure and resources. Above all, AMISOM has also prioritized the training and mentoring of the Somalia Police Force (SPF) via the AMISOM Police Component to boost the security capacity of the government. As some observes in the region argued, had it not been the support of AMISOM, the TFGII would not have survived as a government in Mogadishu (Kidist, 2009).

Although the African Union Mission in Somalia has been playing a constructive role since its intervention in the Somalia peace processes in 2008 to help the TFGII and to install it in Mogadishu, it has been suffering from major challenges which obstructed its mission. To mention some, lack of staff and resources, financial and logistical constraints and lack of commitment and practical engagement among states pledging troops are the major ones. The cumulative effects of all these challenges evidently hinder the effectiveness of the mission.

CONCLUSION

The conflict resolution responses of IGAD and AU to the Somalia crises have been greatly affected by the complex nature of the Somalia politics. Many scholars who studied the politics of the country came to a conclusion that the Somali politics is complex and hinders conflict resolution responses due to several factors. First, it is complex in that the Somali politics is fragmented across clan lines and competition among major clan groups for political supremacy and control of economic resources have complicated the hope for achieving sustainable peace and economic development as well as the establishment of central government. In the political landscape of Somalia, clan plays an important role being a factor of political organization and has been an instrument for getting the monopoly of legitimate use of violence.

The perception and hatred of the Somali people towards a centralized authority is also the other factor that complicated the political dynamics of Somalia. Hence, it hinders the conflict resolution efforts of regional and international organizations. It has been argued that the Somali people are more loyal to their clan leaders than the central government even for claiming physical security. As a result, they usually do not trust on political force assuming state power. This makes the process of peace building activities of IGAD and AU trivial.

Third, the intervention of external powers in the Somali politics with different motivations and contradictory strategies in handling the crises has also been the challenging IGAD and AU in their conflict resolution efforts in Somalia. It limits its capacities to implement the terms of the agreement in consultation with the Somali people. In addition, uncoordinated and badly managed intervention of regional and international actors made the situation worse. They also supported one group against the other in order to sustain their interests rather than the interest. Fourth, there have been clash of interests and persistent division among IGAD and AU member states in dealing with the kind of support that the Somali people to be provided with. Their supports to the Somali people various depending on their national interests.

But it can be argued that the conflict resolution responses of IGAD and AU were effective in the first stage conflict resolution approaches, mediating for negotiations to sign peace agreements. In this regard, IGAD in collaboration with AU was able to bring representatives of various clan leaders into a forum of negotiation and to sign binding peace agreements. It has been more effective in bringing the conflicting parties into negotiations to sign more than fifteen peace agreements.

However, their responses were significantly failed in the implementation and consolidation stages of conflict resolution approaches due to several factors. For instance, one of the potential problems to the implementation of the peace agreements was absence of government institutions that enforce law and order and handle complex security situation in Somalia. IGAD, rather than implementing the terms of the peace agreements, was striving to establish governmental institutions which could maintain peaceful political situation for the implementation of the terms of the agreements. Secondly, multiplication of political factions, absence of commitment and consensus among the major political players in the country also obstructed IGAD'S and AU's efforts in implementing the agreements. Thirdly, absence of commitment and sustainable support from the international community has also been a great hindrance for the implementation of the peace processes. Fourthly, persistent divisions and disagreements among IGAD member states and also the intervention of regional and extra-regional actors before and during the agreement were the other setbacks of the implementation of the peace processes. These problems coupled with the intense financial constraints made the implementations and consolidation of the peace processes difficult.

Generally, the conflict resolution responses of IGAD and AU have brought tremendous political, socio-economic and security improvements in Somalia especially after the establishment of the central government through democratic process. They also achieved relative peace in Somalia despite all the aforementioned challenges in implementation and consolidation the peace agreements. By and large, IGAD and AU played a great role to maintain peace and security in the Horn region generally and in Somalia particularly. Their conflict resolution response of should be taken as a commendable achievement in building peace in Africa.

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