

## Contention 1 is Stability

### **Non-intervention is eroding AU authority and prevents effective conflict prevention**

Félicité **Djilo and Paul-Simon Handy**, 3-17-2022, Paul-Simon Handy, ISS Regional Director for the Horn of Africa and Representative to the AU and Félicité Djilo, Independent Analyst "Redefining the African Union's utility", ISS Africa, <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/redefining-the-african-unions-utility>

Redefining the African Union's utility **As it turns 20, hard questions are being asked about the AU's authority to resolve security challenges in Africa.** February's African Union (AU) summit was symbolic in several ways. It was held in person in Addis Ababa after nearly two years of online meetings due to COVID-19, signalling a growing confidence in the management of the pandemic. For Ethiopian authorities, the summit was an **opportunity to show the government's control over the fragile security situation in the country.** **AU Commission** Chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat's opening speech was another positive surprise of the summit. He was uncharacteristically confrontational with heads of state, **using lucid and courageous words** to describe what he called the 'immensity of African paralysis with regard to neighbouring homes that are going up in flames.' Faki was referring to the **AU's uneven peace and security record in 2021**, one year after its Commission was reformed and restructured. But he was **also raising fundamental questions around the continental body's authority to weigh in on challenges to state stability.** What does the AU need to exert more profound impacts on conflict situations? The time is right to ask this question. **As the body turns 20, protracted and emerging conflicts are testing the coherence of the AU's African Peace and Security Architecture and its goal of silencing the guns by 2030.** When facing crises, **African governments use various strategies to limit the AU's involvement** Based on philosopher Hannah Arendt's definition, authority is generally understood as the **ability to obtain consent without coercion.** As a continental organisation, **the AU draws its influence from the voluntary adherence of member states to the pan-African project.** But **governments often don't back the AU when it tries to enforce its authority, especially on early action and conflict prevention.** When facing crises, African governments often resort to various strategies to limit the AU's role. **They politely reject its involvement in their internal affairs** (Cameroon), **contest its action when it's already deployed** (Somalia), **sideline it in favour of regional bodies** (Central African Republic and Mozambique), or just **prefer working with better-resourced international actors** (Libya and Sudan). **In inter-state disputes, such as those between Morocco-Algeria, Egypt-Ethiopia, Kenya-Somalia and Rwanda-Uganda, for example, the AU struggles to mediate due to the uneven interest from the states involved.** **If we add the AU Peace and Security Council's inconsistent handling of unconstitutional changes of government in Mali and Chad, it could be argued that the AU faces a decline of authority.** However **the trend could be reversed if several structural and cyclical fragilities were addressed.** One systemic fragility is that most African states oppose any interference in their internal affairs. While the AU has normatively shifted from the non-interference position of its predecessor (the Organisation of African Unity) to non-indifference, **the gap between a pro-active AU Commission and reluctant member states is huge.** This causes inconsistencies in how the AU applies its rules and frameworks, which weakens the body. Unlike the EU, joining the AU is not subject to anything other than geography Another serious fragility is the relationship between member states and the AU. Unlike the European Union (EU), whose members must qualify to be included, **joining the AU is subject only to geography.** Despite strong rhetoric about how integrated the body is, **the AU comprises highly heterogeneous types of governments with varied commitments to human rights.** Most member states favour a traditional view of sovereignty that prevents any<sup>11</sup> interference to boost governance and human rights. The AU's role as an entrepreneur of shared values is complicated because it doesn't encourage the democratic convergence it needs from members, even though it has the power to issue sanctions in situations of unconstitutional government changes. As the AU doesn't provide subsidies or

significant funds for economic modernisation, its value-add in the daily functioning of member states is limited. **This means that African governments' dependency on the AU is relatively minimal.** The exception has been its significant role in fighting pandemics and epidemics, although this is more reactive than proactive. The AU is an international organisation with as much authority and influence as its member states want to give it. Beyond fierce rhetoric, **it remains unclear how much appetite African leaders have for effective continental integration that goes beyond pan-Africanist slogans.** It's unclear how much appetite African leaders have for real continental integration. It could be argued that the African Continental Free Trade Area agreement (AfCFTA) illustrates a commitment to regional integration. **But would the AU be able to settle, for example, trade disputes between Kenya and Somalia if it isn't trusted as an impartial broker for political and security matters?** The success of any trade agreement depends on the independence and impartiality of dispute settlement mechanisms and the upholding of their decisions by signatory states. Over the years, African states have been uncomfortable with the decisions of regional legal bodies. Tanzania for example recently denied its people direct access to the African Court of Human and Peoples' Rights, which is ironically headquartered in Arusha. It remains to be seen how AU member states respond to the AfCFTA dispute mechanism's decisions. As the AU marks its 20th anniversary, it is coming to the end of a cycle where member states intuitively respected its authority without needing to call on its binding instruments. **To remain relevant, key AU member states must find a way to bridge the expectations-capabilities gap.** Should African states see integration and a limited degree of supranationalism as going against their interests, **the focus will need to shift to greater regional cooperation that provides better added value. This would already be an impressive step on Africa's road to integration.**

**And foreign actors cant fill the AU's shoes.**

**Velasco 13**, Juliana Velasco. "Regional Organizations And The Durability Of Peace." University of Central Florida. 2013//DY <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3701&context=etd>

The most significant outcome is that when accounting for all other variables, **regional organizations are 6.728 times more likely to craft** an agreement that is not broken for at least 5 years.<sup>95</sup> The return of

significance on regional organizations with the addition of the other variables not only reinforces hypothesis 2. It also reinforces the theory in general. Eight separate regressions were run in order to combine 3rd party type and each of the remaining variables. Of those, significant results for a third party were present when controlling for region and outstanding issues. When controlling for region, regional organizations are almost three times more likely to produce a peace agreement that last five years<sup>96</sup> and when controlling for outstanding issues, almost 3.5 times more likely.<sup>9</sup> Of the twenty two regressions which combined two non-repeatable variables with 3rd party type, seven returned significant results for regional organizations, ranging from peace agreements 2.998 times to 4.799 times more likely to last five years. Overall, the results show that regional organizations do make a substantial difference in the success of peace agreements in keeping the peace. Ranging from two to five times more likely to achieve the desired measure (peace for five years), regional organizations outperform the United Nations, individual states, and non-regional ad-hoc groups. From the results, it is also clear that incompatibility is important and territorial disputes are generally the most difficult to resolve. The reasons for this result are several. First, mandated in several regional organizations, as well as the UN, is the respect for sovereignty of member states. When faced with a territorial dispute, organizations are by default required to seek out an outcome that keeps the initial borders of the state. As will be presented in Moldova's case, the OSCE was primarily concerned with keeping the Soviet Era borders despite Transnistria's desire to become an autonomous state. This is not always the primary reason for involvement, however, it adds an aspect to a regional organizations involvement that can be more difficult to solve. Alternatively, the territorial dispute could also be imbued with intractable characteristics. A common example is the Arab-Israeli conflict. Although it is a territorial conflict, the land is imbued with religious and ethnic values that only add to the already 98 Appendix A: Table 7. 99 Appendix A: Table 8. 35 immense complexity of the conflict. In terms of the fourth hypothesis, the null cannot be rejected, as none of the third parties yielded statistically significant results. Table 4: Full Model Logistic Regression Model Summary Step -2 Log likelihood Cox & Snell R Square Nagelkerke R Square 1 189.722a .302 .405 a. Estimation terminated at iteration number 20 because maximum iterations has been reached. Final solution cannot be found. Hosmer and Lemeshow Test Step Chisquare df Sig. 1 14.902 8 .061 Variables in the Equation N=189 B S.E. Wald df Sig. Exp(B) 95% C.I. for EXP(B) Lower Upper Step 1a party3\_type 10.292 4.036 State -.093 .549 .029 1 .866 .911 .311 2.674 Regional Org 1.906 .746 6.530 1 .011 6.728 1.559 29.028 United Nations -.623 .611 1.041 1 .308 .536 .162 1.775 Other .626 .597 1.099 1 .295 1.870 .580 6.025 Out\_iss 19.649 5.001 Process to finalize 2.396 .617 15.103 1 .000 10.983 3.280 36.778 Spelled out .425 .771 .304 1 .582 1.529 338 6.929 Delegated to commission .471 .790 .355 1 .551 1.601 .341 7.527 New negotiations 1.231 .716 2.956 1 .086 3.426 .842 13.943 Agenda for future 2.824 .898 9.879 1 .002 16.840 2.895 97.963 Inc 3.418 2 .181 Territory -.732 .716 1.046 1 .307 .481 .118 1.956 Government -.924 .502 3.381 1 .066 .397 .148 1.063 Provisions for cultural freedom -1.559 .986 2.500 1 .114 .210 .030 1.453 Ceasefire provision .234 .495 .224 1 .636 1.264 .479 3.337 Outline to address Inc .357 .484 .543 1 .461 1.429 .553 3.693 Peacekeeping Operation .697 .566 1.517 1 .218 2.008 .662 6.088 Region 4.082 4 .395 Europe - 20.784 11757.037 .000 1 .999 .000 .000 . Middle East 1.638 1.005 2.657 1 .103 5.147 718 36.918 Asia .227 .794 .082 1 .775 1.255 .265 5.944 Africa -.095 .698 .018 1 .892 .909 .232 3.570 >1000 deaths -.002 .452 .000 1 .996 .998 .412 2.418 Constant -1.422 .852 2.786 1 .095 .241 a. Variable(s) entered on step 1:

party3\_type, Out\_iss, Inc, Cul, cease, Outlin, PKO, Region, batdeathdum. b. p = \* ≤.05; \*\* ≤.01; \*\*\* ≤.000 36 Implications These results suggest several policy prescriptions. First, regional organizations and regional ad-hoc groups, in general, should be involved in solving conflicts within their region, as they are shown to be significant actors in creating **a durable peace agreement.** However, not all regional organizations are currently equipped to properly handle conflict, due to lack of finances or military capability, which will be illustrated in the case studies. These organizations should be assisted in order to have the means to respond to such conflicts when and if they arrive.

**Specifically, in Somaliland:**

**Kahin 12-12** Nassir Hussein Kahin: a Somali scholar specializing in international politics, 12-12-2024, "The African Union's Contradictions: Why Its Charter Fails Somaliland's Unique Case", SomalilandCurrent,

<https://www.somalilandcurrent.com/the-african-unions-contradictions-why-its-charter-fails-somalilands-unique-case/> //do: 12/12/24 sr

**The African Union (AU) Charter is often cited as a barrier to recognizing Somaliland's independence**, with its emphasis on territorial integrity as a guiding principle. **Yet, Somaliland's historical, political, and legal realities expose contradictions within this principle when applied to its unique case.** Compounding this inconsistency is the **AU's failure to act on its own fact-finding mission's 2005 recommendations, which concluded that Somaliland meets the criteria for recognition. Somaliland's situation cannot be classified as secession because it was a sovereign entity before its voluntary union with Somalia in 1960.** Gaining independence from Britain on June 26, 1960, Somaliland was internationally recognized as a separate state with defined borders. **Its decision to merge with Somalia on July 1, 1960, was a political arrangement, not the result of colonial boundary adjustments.** This union was never formalized through a binding treaty and dissolved in 1991 after decades of marginalization and oppression. **By reclaiming its sovereignty, Somaliland reverted to its original borders, adhering to the very principle of territorial integrity the AU claims to uphold.** The AU's stance becomes even more contradictory when considering its own fact-finding mission to Somaliland in 2005. **The mission concluded that Somaliland satisfied the legal and political requirements for statehood, recommending recognition. However, nearly two decades later, the AU has taken no steps to act on these findings, undermining its credibility as a proponent of African self-determination and stability.** Somalia's claims over Somaliland's Red Sea coastline further distort the historical reality. These claims rest on a narrative that Somaliland is a secessionist region of Somalia, an assertion that disregards Somaliland's separate colonial history and its recognized independence prior to the union. Somalia's insistence on this point is part of a broader effort to create a false narrative of Somali unity and sovereignty—concepts rendered obsolete by decades of fragmentation and conflict. Since the collapse of its central government in 1991, **Somalia has been under United Nations trusteeship, surviving on international aid and the support of African Union forces.** Confined largely to Mogadishu and its immediate vicinity, Somalia's sovereignty is, at best, symbolic. Its accusations of foreign interference, particularly against Ethiopia, contrast sharply with its reliance on Ethiopian troops and other African forces to maintain order. At the same time, **Somalia has entered into defense agreements with nations like Egypt, Eritrea, and Turkiya, which are more interested in curbing Ethiopia's regional influence than promoting stability. These actions have destabilized the region, creating tensions that threaten to engulf the Horn of Africa in further conflict.** In stark contrast, **Somaliland has built a functioning state with all the hallmarks of sovereignty:** its own flag, police, army, currency, and passport. It engages diplomatically, hosting offices from countries like Ethiopia and signing international commercial and military agreements, including partnerships with the UAE and a recent Memorandum of Understanding with Ethiopia. Unlike Somalia, Somaliland has demonstrated its ability to govern, maintain peace, and foster democratic principles. **Somaliland's political maturity is evident in its democratic elections, which have been lauded by international observers for their fairness and transparency.** Opposition victories in both presidential and parliamentary elections have led to peaceful transfers of power, a rarity in a region where despots often cling to power. These achievements align Somaliland more closely with established democracies than many recognized states in Africa. The African Union's contradictions in handling Somaliland's case go beyond ignoring its fact-finding mission. **Precedents such as Eritrea's independence from Ethiopia in 1993 and South Sudan's secession from Sudan in 2011 show that the AU has supported the redefinition of borders when justified by historical and political realities. Somaliland's case, grounded in legal precedent, historical legitimacy, and its proven capacity for governance, is equally compelling.** As in the case of Senegambia, officially the Senegambia Confederation or Confederation of Senegambia, was a loose confederation in the late 20th century between the West African countries of Senegal and its neighbour The Gambia, which is almost completely surrounded by Senegal. The confederation was founded on 1 February 1982 following an agreement between the two countries signed on 12 December 1981. It was intended to promote cooperation between the two countries, but was dissolved by Senegal on 30 September 1989 after The Gambia refused to move closer toward union. Somaliland's achievements, from maintaining peace and stability to contributing to regional security efforts, make it a model for governance in the Horn of Africa. **Its recognition would align with the AU's principles of promoting peace, human rights, and self-determination. Conversely, Somalia's fixation on a false narrative of Somali unity serves only to distract from its inability to govern or address its internal challenges. The time has come for the AU and the international community to rectify these contradictions, honor**

**Somaliland's accomplishments, and grant it the recognition it rightfully deserves. Doing so would not only reinforce the principles of justice and self-determination but also promote stability and progress in a volatile region.**

**Affirming would align AU words and actions, adhering to established precedents.**

**Kahin 12-12** Nassir Hussein Kahin: a Somali scholar specializing in international politics, 12-12-2024, "The African Union's Contradictions: Why Its Charter Fails Somaliland's Unique Case", SomalilandCurrent, <https://www.somalilandcurrent.com/the-african-unions-contradictions-why-its-charter-fails-somalilands-unique-case/> //doa: 12/12/24 sr

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#### **AU mediation works – empirics prove.**

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Much of **mediation efforts' success** depends on the **relationship** between the **third party** and the **conflict parties**. The social structure in which the third party and the conflict parties operate, in turn, greatly determines the nature of this relationship. Within the African society of states, **African leaders generally perceive that they are bound by norms related to sovereignty, respect for the colonial borders, anti-neocolonialism, nonalignment, and peaceful conflict resolution.** The collective commitment to this cluster of norms **provides African third parties with a social status that**, in turn, **provides** them with a high degree of **legitimacy when mediating armed conflict in Africa**. I have argued that this **high degree of legitimacy** makes African third parties **more effective than non-African ones**. My statistical analyses support the argument that African mediation outperforms non-African mediation. **Despite a higher degree of economic and military resources, non-African third parties are less effective in mediating civil wars in Africa than African ones. Indeed, something other than third-party capacity must explain the effectiveness of African third parties.** The statistical analyses thus draw on what Hurd describes as the logical necessity of legitimacy to show that African mediation efforts are likely to be regarded as more legitimate than non-African mediation efforts.<sup>116</sup> African third parties' effectiveness is conditional on the government side's commitment to **the** African solutions norm. This suggests that rather than just a low degree of third-party capacity, **African third parties are effective because African governments perceive them as legitimate**. Hence, I go beyond considering the effectiveness of mediators that are considered weak mediators or lacking "muscle."<sup>117</sup> The effectiveness of African third parties is not a result of either the presence or the absence of third-party capacity, it is about the presence of legitimacy. In this article I thus explain why third parties from Africa that have comparable resources to "weak" non-African third parties like Norway or less resources than a non-African third party like **the** US are still more effective. For example, Beardsley notes about Kofi Annan's **mediation effort in Kenya's post-2007 electoral crisis that** "Annan **possessed no authority to promise aid or threaten sanctions** against the intransigent parties, nor **did he have better access to information about the capabilities and resolve of the respective parties than they had themselves.**"<sup>118</sup> For this reason, Beardsley identifies **Kofi Annan's mediation effort as a good example of a third-party effort by a weak mediator.** This is a valid observation, but what Kofi Annan did have was a



degree of **third-party legitimacy**. **When the AU mediation team led by Anan arrived in Nairobi to mediate**, they told the conflict parties that they had discussed the conflict with Nelson Mandela and that he sent his best wishes and sought to remind them that all of Africa was watching the process.<sup>119</sup> **Almost one month later the conflict parties signed an agreement. This agreement would lay the basis for a grand coalition government that successfully mitigated the conflict.** One major question for future research is whether regional mediators in other regions can also draw on their third-party legitimacy. This question requires further research, but a preliminary analysis included in the appendix suggests that mediation efforts by regional third parties in the Middle East and Latin America— which are both regions where regional third parties with a high degree of thirdparty capacity are largely absent—are significantly less effective than nonregional mediation efforts. This could mean that the African solution norm bestows legitimacy onto African third parties that neither non-African third parties nor regional mediators in other regions benefit from. The level of compliance with the African solutions norm in Africa contradicts the prevailing view in the literature that only third parties with a high degree of economic and military resources are effective in mediating civil wars. Clearly, security dynamics in Africa can be partly explained in realist terms, but international norms affect the 116. See Hurd 1999, 391. 117. Beardsley 2009; Svensson 2007b. 118. Beardsley 2009, 273. 119. Roger Cohen, “How Kofi Annan Rescued Kenya,” New York Review of Books, August 2008, 5. 32 International Organization Downloaded from <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818320000041> <https://www.cambridge.org/core>. IP address: 193.203.10.81, on 25 Apr 2020 at 13:02:19, subject to the Cambridge Core terms of use, available at <https://www.cambridge.org/core/terms>. behavior of African actors to a great extent. African conflict parties’ understandings of the international environment in Africa constitute an international structure that is highly influential in shaping the outcomes of mediation processes. From this perspective, it is striking that the role of third-party legitimacy has largely been ignored in the literature on international mediation. In essence, solely focusing on third-party capacity entails missing a relevant alternative source of mediation success, namely third-party legitimacy.

### **Overall, instability causes a great power draw-in.**

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**A Red Sea Geopolitics** Primer by Nathan Heath ’20, Fares Center Senior Research Associate and Political Risk Analyst\* One of the world’s oldest waterways is becoming increasingly relevant in geopolitics. **The Red Sea is positioned between two continents, bordering six countries in Africa and four in the Middle East, and approximately 10% of all global trade passes through its waters. It also serves as a strategic zone for both regional and Great Powers projecting their military might or openly engaging in conflict.** There is the potential for either reward or disaster in the Red Sea, as increasing economic and military competition in its waters raises the possibility of intense economic growth while simultaneously foreshadowing potential conflicts between rival powers. **High levels of trade, energy production, and innovation forecast significant economic opportunity in the Red Sea**, but this prosperity is threatened by regional rivalries and the ongoing Great Power **competition between the U.S. and China.** The Red Sea’s global importance is rooted largely in its role as a key waterway for trade. **By 2050, Red Sea GDP is projected to more than triple, increasing from \$1.8 trillion to \$6.1 trillion**, and trade is expected to grow more than five times, from \$881 billion to \$4.7 trillion. **This enormous wealth will be driven by trade agreements encouraging countries with substantial Red Sea interests to increase exports**, particularly in key sectors such as energy, infrastructure, and technology. **Moreover, the construction of new ports and military bases to protect trade and investment interests will lead to even higher levels of trade throughout the Red Sea.** The geographical positioning of the Red Sea, proximate to numerous top energy producers, both explains the area’s current wealth and forecasts continuing economic growth. On the African side, Egypt and Sudan alone produce a combined 500,000+ barrels per day (bpd) of oil. On the Middle East side, Saudi Arabia and Oman produce more than 12 million bpd of oil. **In total, more than 50 million bpd of oil from producers as diverse as the U.S., Russia, China, Libya, and Iran pass through the Red Sea on a daily basis**, along with approximately 3.5 billion cubic feet per day in liquid natural gas. In the future, renewable energy will add even more value to this waterway, given the current interest in hydro, wind, and solar initiatives in numerous bordering states. **In addition to serving as a leading trade route and home to multiple leading energy producers, the Red Sea is also becoming relevant as a hub of innovation.** Saudi Arabia’s megacity projects such as Neom, **The Red Sea Project, and the Amalaa Project present an opportunity for the region to participate in sustainable urbanization through massive**, renewables-focused initiatives integrating robotics and smart services into new economies designed to thrive on innovation and tourism alike. Saudi Arabia’s megacities are projected to

bring in hundreds of billions of dollars by 2050, but more importantly, Neom and its sister cities highlight the tremendous opportunity for innovation and economic diversification in a region where many countries have historically been dependent on homogenous or semi-homogenous revenue streams such as fossil fuels. The UAE, Bahrain, and Qatar, all of which heavily traffic their goods in the Red Sea, have unveiled similar visions for sustainable innovation to be completed in the next decade. In short, this crucial waterway may soon be home to innovation driving regional prosperity forward even faster. These terrific opportunities for prosperity rooted in trade, energy, and innovation face risks posed by complex economic and military competition among both regional and global owners. For one, African rivalries stretching from Egypt to Djibouti are adding to the Red Sea region's volatility. Egyptian and Ethiopian relations, although somewhat improved since the transitions to the al-Sisi and Abiy regimes, respectively, remain tense over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). Ethiopia views the dam as a strategic necessity, while Egypt fears the dam will deplete its water resources. Although Ethiopia's relations with Somalia and Eritrea have improved from Addis's historically hostile positions towards Asmara and Mogadishu, Ethiopia's access to the Red Sea ports remains a point of negotiation between the three countries. Sudan has also become increasingly problematic for its neighbors, as its resources, access to the sea, and ongoing political violence have attracted the attention of Turkey and the Gulf Nations, frustrating Egypt given Cairo and Khartoum's historically close relationship. And Djibouti remains caught in a tug of war between an ever-growing number of regional and global powers. The Middle East is home to its own set of conflicts fueling military and economic competition in the Red Sea. The primary regional rivalry continues to be between Iran and Saudi Arabia, who are each vying for regional supremacy via either direct or proxy engagement in conflicts. Iran's allies are Syria, Lebanon, and the Houthi rebels in Yemen (and also Qatar to a limited extent). Saudi Arabia is allied with the UAE, Bahrain, and Egypt, and the Qataris have historically been Saudi allies but have in recent years struck a more independent foreign policy that resulted in their blockade by Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Bahrain, and the UAE. The conflict between Riyadh and Tehran presents the most probable risk of a regional conflagration that could threaten the political and economic stability of the Red Sea region. At the moment, the risk of a tanker war or all-out military conflict between the U.S. and Iran is quite high, and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz or even the disruption of trade through the Gulf of Oman is a troubling and possible outcome of such an event. The formation of Middle East-African alliances has added a further risk of conflict to the region. In addition to its relationship with Sudan (where Saudi Arabia and Iran have competed with Eritrea), Turkey has poured significant aid and investment into Somalia, and Istanbul now owns all of the country's major ports. Saudi Arabia and the UAE have sparred with Ethiopia over influence in Eritrea. Additionally, Qatar's alignment with the Turks, Saudis, and Emiratis at different times has increased Doha's influence in nations along the Horn of Africa. It is in Djibouti, however, that the greatest risk to the Red Sea itself lies, as the city-state has drawn the attention of the great powers. In addition to a slew of Middle Eastern and African powers including Qatar, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Ethiopia, Somalia, Eritrea, and Egypt, a number of global powers have set their sights on Djibouti as a strategic asset. The U.S., China, Russia, Japan, France, and Italy have all secured or pursued military bases in Djibouti, which is situated close to the critical Strait of Bab-el-Mandeb. China's first overseas military base, positioned in Djibouti, is situated just miles from Camp Lemonnier, the only significant U.S. military base in Africa. Russia failed to secure a base in Djibouti and has looked further inland for African military partnerships; France, Italy, and Japan maintain smaller operations. The U.S.-China base rivalry in Djibouti (if it could be thought of as such), is symptomatic of the larger continental rivalry between two Great Powers, as both Washington and Beijing continue to vie for influence in Africa with rival political ideologies and systems of economic development. Djibouti is thus a true powder keg, not merely for regional rivalries but also for the larger Great Power game between the U.S. and China. An economic and military conflict between Washington and Beijing would impact Djibouti, threatening to disrupt trade routes passing through the Red Sea. In the near future we can expect to see increasing economic competition in the Red Sea as both traditional fossil fuels and renewable energy sources bolster already-significant levels of trade and innovative projects such as Neom and the GERD. The struggle for economic power will fuel increased investment by developed or middle-income regional powers such as Egypt, Turkey, or Saudi Arabia, Qatar, or the UAE into developing countries such as Sudan, Somalia, and Eritrea. Furthermore, global powers such as the U.S., China, EU, and Japan will be increasingly drawn to key Djibouti and other key ports to protect access to key trade routes. With shifting alliances and economic

**competition**, however, comes **increased risk of conflict in a region** already **home to numerous zones of instability**. To minimize risk to the global supply chain, powers with military, economic, or political interests in the Red Sea region will have to work together to **ensure that conflicts are contained or prevented altogether in the interest of stabilizing both regional and global markets.**

Clare 23 (Stephen Clare, "Great power war", 80,000 Hours, 10-27-1962, <https://80000hours.org/problem-profiles/great-power-conflict/> // DOA 11-9-2024 // [SN])

Few wars cause more than a million casualties and the next great power war would probably be smaller than that. However, there's some chance it could escalate massively. Today **the great powers have much larger economies, more powerful weapons, and bigger military budgets than they did in the past. An all-out war could kill far more people than even World War II, the worst war we've yet experienced.**

## **Contention 2 is Russia**

### **Russia looking to set up bases in Somaliland**

**Knox 24** [Patrick Knox, "Russia 'To Set Up Naval Base For Warships And Hunter-Killer Submarines In Somaliland' As Putin Looks To Expand Military Reach", 12/24/2024, <https://www.facebook.com/saxafimedia.com/russia-to-set-up-naval-base-for-warships-and-hunter-killer-submarines-in-somaliland-as-putin-looks-to-expand-military-reach/>] //S.S.

**RUSSIA is plotting a game-changing naval base** in a breakaway east African state in bid **to dramatically expand his military might in the Middle East,** according to reports. Talks are reportedly underway between Moscow and leaders **in Somaliland** for a 1,500 man base to support its warships and hunter-killer submarines to operate in the volatile region and busy shipping lanes carrying most of Europe's goods. **If realized, this would be Russia's first base in Africa since the Cold War and be a major step forward for Vladimir Putin's ambitious modernization programme to revive his country's once proud navy.** The rumored location of the base is outside of Zeila city, in the self-declared republic of Somaliland. It is also on the border with Djibouti – nearby the location of China's first overseas base in modern times which opened last year. The United Arab Emirates is also building a military base in Berbera in what is – and always has been – a key position to project power in the unstable region.

### **incentive to engage soon**

**News 24** [Qaran News, "Russia Should Seek A Naval Base In Somaliland Since Sudan Continues Giving It The Runaround", 03/08/2024, No Publication, <https://qarannews.com/russia-should-seek-a-naval-base-in-somaliland-since-sudan-continues-giving-it-the-runaround/>]//S.S.

**It was suggested as far back as summer 2021 that “Somaliland Can Be An Alternative For Russia's Troubled Sudanese Naval Base Plans”, the insight of which is more relevant than ever after the US ominously threatened Sudan** with vague “consequences” in 2022 should it go through with this. Shortly afterwards, its “deep state” war broke out in early 2023 and evolved into a full-blown civil war that continues to this day, further impeding the chances of implementing their 2020 deal. Although Chief General Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan refused to bite the American media's bait that Russia allegedly arms his “Rapid Support Forces” rivals via now-defunct Wagner, his Foreign Minister's roundabout response about the future of this base suggests that he remains reluctant to defy the US. This state of affairs isn't expected to change considering that he wants to remain on that Western leader's good side so it's about time that Russia begins looking elsewhere to meet this military need. **The Memorandum of Understanding that Ethiopia and Somaliland signed on the first of the year, whereby Addis will recognize Hargeisa's**



**1991 redeclaration of independence and give it stakes in national companies in exchange for commercial-military port rights, could form the basis of such talks. Something similar could be discussed between Russia and Somaliland,**

which would meet the first's military needs while also pioneering a new connectivity corridor with fellow BRICS member Ethiopia. **Russia** had hitherto **not wanted to upset Somalia**, which continues to claim Somaliland despite not exerting any writ over it for the past one-third of a century, **but recent developments** in their ties **might cause Moscow to reconsider its calculations**. President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud slammed Russia twice while speaking at a think tank event in Italy in late January, after which a member of Somalia's Defense Committee put an anti-Russian spin on their country's security deal with Turkiye in late February. These unfriendly actions occurred despite Russia sending Somalia two free shipments of wheat thus far so Moscow shouldn't expect that continuing to abstain from establishing ties with Somaliland will lead to an improvement in Mogadishu's behavior. Quite clearly, the American-Somalian base deal from the middle of last month whereby Washington will construct five such facilities in that country has political strings attached, namely taking the US' side against Russia in the New Cold War. It's therefore time for Russia to recalibrate its regional policy in light of the changes that have recently taken place in Sudan and Somalia. Clinging to hopes that its naval base deal with the first will be implemented in the coming future and that the second's newly unfriendly attitude towards Russia will soon improve risks wasting precious time at the expense of tapping into more promising opportunities. **Somaliland could replace Russia's planned base in Sudan** and the Kremlin should explore this possibility.

**But Somaliland wants U.S. recognition and will allow bases in exchange for it**

**Hasan 24** (Yusuf M Hasan, "Somaliland Offers to Host US Military Base for Recognition", Somaliland Sun, 12-31-2024, <https://somalilandsun.com/somaliland-offers-to-host-us-military-base-for-recognition/> // DOA 12-31-2024 // [sai])

**Somaliland is mulling a barter deal with the United States. Somaliland**, which has been on a long quest to seek independence **is ready to offer the United States a military base.**

**In return, it seeks recognition. Somaliland's representative** to the US Bashir Goth recently **said** in an interview that **the region is ready to host a US military base** at its Berbera port. In 1991, Somaliland declared unilateral independence

for Somalia which firmly opposes the move. The territory is strategically located along the Gulf of Aden. Experts say Donald Trump could show interest in this barter deal. **Granting recognition to Somaliland will give the US A military edge in the critical Red Sea region.** Watch Somaliland Offers US its Port to Build Military Base in Exchange for Recognition

**Aff solves - U.S. recognizes when A.U. does**

**Rubin 23** [Michael Rubin, "On Somaliland, the African Union and UN Betrays Their Own Precedents", 04/03/2023, American Enterprise Institute - AEI, <https://www.aei.org/op-eds/on-somaliland-the-african-union-and-un-betrays-their-own-precedents/>]/S

Fighting continues between the Somaliland army on one hand, and local clan militias on the other. At stake is the status of Somaliland's Sool region. Somaliland was briefly independent in 1960, but voluntarily joined a union with Italian Somaliland to form Somalia. As Somalia failed under the dictatorship of Siad Barre, Somaliland left the union and in 1991 reasserted its independence. It held multiple elections and established a vibrant if imperfect democracy. For three decades, it has embraced the West and established moderate policies while Somalia descended into clan warfare, became a morass of corruption, and pivoted toward China. The State Department remains disinterested if not dismissive, despite Congressional calls to augment ties to Somaliland. **U.S. diplomats** resist relations and explain that they **will not** formally re-**recognize Somaliland until the African Union does so.**

**Absent U.S. recognition, Somaliland turns to Russia**

**By 23** [Written By, "Russia's Growing Footprint in Africa", 12/28/2023, Council on Foreign Relations, <https://www.cfr.org/background/russias-growing-footprint-africa>] //S.S.

**Russian influence has been gaining ground across Africa in recent years**, placing the continent at the crux of the growing geopolitical contest between the Kremlin and the White House. U.S. officials say **Russia's efforts** to develop a "multipolar" world order, its deployment of disinformation, and its use of mercenaries **have undermined democratic stability and driven**

**conflict on the continent.** Russian economic and military involvement in Africa still pales in comparison to that of both China and the West. Yet, amid the upheaval of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, some **African governments**, such as South Africa, **are moving closer to Moscow.** **Analysts say this shift can be attributed to long-standing frustration with the failures of Western intervention** and to many African countries' simmering resentment over a lack of representation in international institutions. It also stems from a growing desire to avoid choosing sides between major powers, a mindset many Africans see as a relic of the Cold War—era. **Experts argue that to effectively stem Russia's growing influence, the United States and Europe need to build on previous diplomatic efforts and seek more equal partnerships** with African nations, pointing to the renewed efforts of the Joe Biden administration to prioritize African agency in global frameworks.

<https://www.aei.org/articles/the-us-needs-to-recognize-somaliland-before-russia-does/>

### **The Horn of Africa is crucial**

**Admin 20** [Admin, "Russia Plans to Open Naval Base in the Unrecognized Somaliland", 02/01/2020, Somaliland Sun, <https://somalilandsun.com/russia-plans-to-open-naval-base-in-the-unrecognized-somaliland/>]/S.S.

**The Horn of Africa is strategically important** for a number of reasons, amongst others **because it allows both power projection into the Middle East and influences over the Suez Canal** through the Gulf of Aden. An aerial starboard bow view of a Russian Navy Northern Fleet DELTA IV class nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine underway on the surface. If realized, this would be Russia's first base in Africa since the Cold War and be a **major step forward for** (Vladimir) **Putin's** programme to revive Russia's once proud **navy**. Experts believe a new "Scramble for Africa" is unfolding. The main players are China, the EU and the US. India, Brazil, Turkey, Iran, South Korea and the Gulf countries are also interested in increasing cooperation with Africa. Russia's volume of trade and economic interaction with Africa is inferior to almost all of the abovementioned players. Currently, Russia's trade with Africa accounts for less than \$12billion.

### **Ukraine won't be an issue**

**By 23** [Report By, "Russia Is Still Progressing in Africa. What's the Limit?", 08/15/2023, No Publication, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/russia-still-progressing-africa-whats-limit>] //S.S.

**Russia's Continued Progress in Africa, despite the War in Ukraine** and Domestic Fissure Despite Russia's military shortcomings in Ukraine—including incurring significant personnel and equipment losses, struggling to produce advanced weapons systems, and increasing reliance on Soviet-era defense equipment—there have not yet been any tangible signs of African countries actively seeking to replace Moscow as a chief arms supplier or military partner. In fact, throughout 2022, a number of countries on the continent initiated new or continued existing military cooperation agreements with the Kremlin. Cameroon, for instance, signed a new defense deal with the Russian MOD entailing joint military trainings, and Mali received military equipment from Moscow. In 2023, the Russia-Africa summit participants agreed to establish a new permanent Russo-African security mechanism, aimed at combating terrorism and extremism on the continent. However, some negative trends have also been observed. For example, Algeria and Egypt, which have long been listed among Russia's top five arms purchasers globally, slowly started to lessen defense ties with the Kremlin in 2022. Yet, considering the large reliance of both countries on Russian-origin arms, they will most likely maintain defense cooperation with Moscow in the near term. Similar to the Russian armed forces, Wagner has sustained significant losses in Ukraine. In May 2023, Prigozhin openly accused the Russian MOD for not supplying his PMC with enough ammunition during the fight for the city of Bakhmut in eastern Ukraine. A month later, this disagreement led to the Prigozhin-orchestrated "march for justice" against Moscow, which, even if brief, has given rise to a number of questions connected with the stability of the Putin regime, as well as the future of Wagner in Africa.

## Russia Escalates through Proxies

**Borshchevskaya 24** [Anna Borshchevskaya, "Countering Russia's Strategy of Arming Anti-American Proxies", 08/02/2024, The Washington Institute,

<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/countering-russias-strategy-arming-anti-american-proxies>]/S.S.

According to a recent Wall Street Journal report citing U.S. intelligence sources, Moscow is poised to provide the Iran-backed Houthi militia in Yemen with advanced antiship missiles. If the report is accurate, it would mark yet another Russian escalation in tensions with the West and further fuel an assault on longstanding international norms. Arming or otherwise empowering proxies is consistent with the Kremlin playbook. Since the October 7 Hamas attack on Israel, Vladimir Putin has predictably aligned even more closely with destabilizing anti-American forces in the Middle East. He has chosen low-intensity conflict with the West because Russia has fewer resources. For Moscow, distracting the United States at a low cost and forcing it to expend its resources against empowered proxies has proven to be an effective tactic in its larger battle to reshape the international system. Too often, Washington's responses to Russian provocations have been siloed in specific regional theaters rather than tied to a holistic strategy. As a result, they have not appreciably changed Putin's strategy of undermining U.S. interests via proxy warfare. Syria as a Template Russia's increased reliance on proxies stretches back to 2014-15, when it illegally annexed Crimea from Ukraine and then intervened militarily in Syria. Since then, Russia has been pursuing what then-chief of staff Valery Gerasimov, speaking about Syria at the annual defense conference of the Russian Academy of Sciences in early 2019, described as a strategy of "limited action." Future warfare was a key theme of that conference, and according to expert accounts, Gerasimov appeared to imply that Syria would serve as an example for future Russian operations. Over the years, Moscow has armed Iran's top proxy, Hezbollah, on the Syrian battlefield. In the process, Hezbollah apparently learned quite a bit from the Russian military, including the ability to conduct offensive maneuver warfare. Supported by Russian air and artillery cover, the group subsequently helped regime forces destroy key rebel strongholds and turn the tide of the war in Bashar al-Assad's favor. The Kremlin relied on other actors to do the heavy lifting, especially Iran and its proxies. Indeed, the Russia-Iran relationship reached unprecedented heights as a result of Moscow's intervention in Syria, even before the invasion of Ukraine. In the absence of a consistent Western approach to countering Russia in Syria, Putin achieved both his short-term goal of keeping Assad in power and his long-term goal of establishing a permanent military position on the East Mediterranean. Moscow has since leveraged its position in Syria in multiple ways. This includes enabling other proxies in the region, thereby boosting its ability to periodically escalate with the United States. Recent Escalation Beginning in March 2023, Russia significantly escalated in Syria through increased military harassment of U.S. aircraft. This took place in the broader context of unanswered escalation across the Black Sea, where Russia repeatedly intercepted U.S. MQ-9 Reaper surveillance drones, culminating in a midair collision with a Su-30 fighter jet. In response, Washington publicly denounced the behavior of Russian forces as unsafe and unprofessional, then launched cross-theater exercises to confuse them and drain their readiness. Afterward, the harassment stopped. Then came the October 7 attack on Israel and subsequent Iranian escalation across the region, during which Russia increased its support for Israel's enemies. In response, the United States sent F-35 fighter jets and a Navy destroyer to the Middle East in a show of strength. This quieted things down. But such moves have a limited shelf life when they are temporary, reactive, and not part of a holistic strategy for countering Moscow. By November, reports were surfacing that Russian Wagner Group paramilitary forces in Syria might transfer the Pantsir S-1 (SA-22 Greyhound) antiaircraft system to Hezbollah in Lebanon, reportedly with Assad's assent. The Kremlin denied the report, but such a transfer is certainly conceivable, along with further Russian (and Iranian) escalation as the United States considers withdrawing from northeast Syria.

## The reason is simple,

**Dolbala 23** (Report By Mathieu Droin and Tina Dolbaia, "Russia Is Still Progressing in Africa. What's the Limit?", No Publication, 8-15-2023,

<https://www.csis.org/analysis/russia-still-progressing-africa-whats-limit> // DOA 1-1-2025 // [sai]

Therefore, no matter how the war in Ukraine plays out or how the fate of Prigozhin is ultimately decided, the Kremlin will likely have strong incentives to maintain its use of PMCs—including a restructured Wagner Group or its subsidiaries—in Africa to ensure uninterrupted access to the continent's gold reserves, among other benefits, and to destabilize Western strategic partnerships with different African states. Importantly, as the invasion of Ukraine will inevitably produce more veterans seeking adequate remuneration amid Russia's wartime economy, it can be expected that Russian PMCs might expand the size and scale of their current operations in Africa.

## Russia and the US could get directly involved

**Hornung 24** (Jeffrey W. Hornung, "Ukraine Is Now a Proxy War for Asian Powers", No Publication, 11-21-2024, <https://www.rand.org/pubs/commentary/2024/11/ukraine-is-now-a-proxy-war-for-asian-powers.html> // DOA 1-1-2025 // [sai])

Not all proxy wars look alike or follow the standard pattern. Sometimes, an outside power's support for one side leads that power to intervene directly. Think of the United States' gradual involvement in the Vietnam War or the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan to prop up the embattled government there. Even as the military efforts of their proxies waned, the United States and Soviet Union maintained their participation in an attempt to prevent a victory by the other superpower's proxy.

**Clare 23** (Stephen Clare, "Great power war", 80,000 Hours, 10-27-1962, <https://80000hours.org/problem-profiles/great-power-conflict/> // DOA 11-9-2024 // [SN])

Few wars cause more than a million casualties and the next great power war would probably be smaller than that. However, there's some chance it could escalate massively. Today **the great powers have much larger economies, more powerful weapons, and bigger military budgets than they did in the past. An all-out war could kill far more people than even World War II, the worst war we've yet experienced.**

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### On top

Indeed, DU 24 explains,

**Recognition would also allow the AU to guide negotiations between Somaliland and Somalia over unresolved issues. This would set a precedent for constructive conflict resolution on the continent**

On somalia

Cross apps

On secession

South sudan and eritrea ev from case

**Kahin 12-12** Nassir Hussein Kahin: a Somali scholar specializing in international politics, 12-12-2024, "The African Union's Contradictions: Why Its Charter Fails Somaliland's Unique Case", SomalilandCurrent, <https://www.somalilandcurrent.com/the-african-unions-contradictions-why-its-charter-fails-somalilands-unique-case/> //doa: 12/12/24 sr

**The African Union (AU) Charter is often cited as a barrier to recognizing Somaliland's independence**, with its emphasis on territorial integrity as a guiding principle. **Yet, Somaliland's historical, political, and legal realities expose contradictions within this principle when applied to its unique case.** Compounding this inconsistency is the **AU's** failure to act on its **own fact-finding mission's 2005 recommendations**, which **concluded that Somaliland meets the criteria for recognition. Somaliland's situation cannot be classified as secession because it was a sovereign entity before its voluntary union with Somalia in 1960.** Gaining independence from Britain on June 26, 1960, Somaliland was internationally recognized as a separate state with defined borders. **Its decision to merge with Somalia on July 1, 1960, was a political arrangement, not the result of colonial boundary adjustments.** This union was never formalized through a binding treaty and dissolved in 1991 after decades of marginalization and oppression. **By reclaiming its sovereignty, Somaliland reverted to its original borders, adhering to the very principle of territorial integrity the AU claims to uphold.** The AU's stance becomes even more contradictory when considering its own fact-finding mission to Somaliland in 2005. **The mission concluded that Somaliland satisfied the legal and political requirements for statehood, recommending recognition. However, nearly two decades later, the AU has taken no steps to act on these findings, undermining its credibility as a proponent of African self-determination and stability.** Somalia's claims over Somaliland's Red Sea coastline further distort the historical reality. These claims rest on a narrative that Somaliland is a secessionist region of Somalia, an assertion that disregards Somaliland's separate colonial history and its recognized independence prior to the union. Somalia's insistence on this point is part of a broader effort to create a false narrative of Somali unity and sovereignty—concepts rendered obsolete by decades of fragmentation and conflict. Since the collapse of its central government in 1991, **Somalia has been under United Nations trusteeship, surviving on international aid and the support of African Union forces.** Confined largely to Mogadishu and its immediate vicinity, Somalia's sovereignty is, at best, symbolic. Its accusations of foreign interference, particularly against Ethiopia, contrast sharply with its reliance on Ethiopian troops and other African forces to maintain order. At the same time, **Somalia has entered into defense agreements with nations like Egypt, Eritrea, and Turkiya, which are more interested in curbing Ethiopia's regional influence than promoting stability. These actions have destabilized the region, creating tensions that threaten to engulf the Horn of Africa in further conflict.** In stark contrast, **Somaliland has built a functioning state with all the hallmarks of sovereignty:** its own flag, police, army, currency, and passport. It engages diplomatically, hosting offices from countries like Ethiopia and signing international commercial and military agreements, including partnerships with the UAE and a recent Memorandum of Understanding with Ethiopia. Unlike Somalia, Somaliland has demonstrated its ability to govern, maintain peace, and foster democratic principles. **Somaliland's political maturity is evident in its democratic elections, which have been lauded by international observers for their fairness and transparency.** Opposition victories in both presidential and parliamentary elections have led to peaceful transfers of power, a rarity in a region where despots often cling to power. These achievements align Somaliland more closely with established democracies than many recognized states in Africa. The African Union's contradictions in handling Somaliland's case go beyond ignoring its fact-finding mission. **Precedents such as Eritrea's independence from Ethiopia in 1993 and South Sudan's secession from Sudan in 2011 show that the AU has supported the redefinition of borders when justified by historical and political realities. Somaliland's case, grounded in legal precedent, historical legitimacy, and its proven capacity for governance, is equally compelling.** As in the case of Senegambia, officially the Senegambia Confederation or Confederation of Senegambia, was a loose confederation in the late 20th century between the West African countries of Senegal and its neighbour The Gambia, which is almost completely surrounded by Senegal. The confederation was founded on 1 February 1982 following an agreement between the two countries signed on 12 December 1981. It was intended to promote cooperation between the two countries, but was dissolved by Senegal on 30 September 1989 after The Gambia refused to move closer toward union. Somaliland's achievements, from maintaining peace and stability to contributing to regional security efforts, make it a model for governance in the Horn of Africa. **Its recognition would align with the AU's principles of promoting peace, human rights, and self-determination. Conversely, Somalia's fixation on a false narrative of**



Somali unity serves only to distract from its inability to govern or address its internal challenges. The time has come for the AU and the international community to rectify these contradictions, honor Somaliland's accomplishments, and grant it the recognition it rightfully deserves. Doing so would not only reinforce the principles of justice and self-determination but also promote stability and progress in a volatile region.

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Admin 25 [Admin, "Tensions Escalate Between Somaliland and SSC-Khatumo Forces – Somali Dispatch", 01/18/2025,  
<https://www.somalidispatch.com/latest-news/tensions-escalate-in-sanag-region-between-somaliland-and-ssc-khatumo-forces/>]  
ERIGAVO (SD) – **Conflicting reports are emerging regarding the ongoing conflict in the Sanag region, particularly in the city of Erigavo, involving Somaliland forces** and SSC-Khatumo fighters. The tensions, which have persisted in Erigavo in recent months, have intensified in recent hours, creating a highly volatile situation. Military activities have been observed in the area, with social media showing images and videos of armed and prepared forces on both sides.