We Negate

C1 is Secession

Secessionary movements declining unprecedentedly - Liberation parties are decreasing more than ever before

Mhaka 24 [Tafi Mhaka, "Southern Africa's liberation movements have lost their political mojo", 12/20/2024, Al Jazeera, https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2024/12/20/southern-africas-liberation-movements-have-lost-their-political-mojo]

Southern Africa's **liberation movements have lost their political mojo** Electoral **support** for former freedom fighters **is dwindling across the region** due to their inability to deliver ethical and effective governance after decades in power. Tafi Mhaka Al Jazeera columnist Published On 20 Dec 2024 20 Dec 2024 Botswana's President Mokgweetsi Masisi attends a news conference to concede defeat after the October 30 general elections, in which the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) lost to the opposition coalition Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC), in Gaborone, Botswana, on November 1, 2024 [Thalefang Charles/Reuters] On December 3, the Electoral Commission of Namibia (ECN) announced that Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah of the ruling South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) party, has emerged victorious in the disputed presidential election conducted from November 27 to 30. It said Nandi-Ndaitwah won 57 percent of the votes, comfortably defeating her main rival, Panduleni Itula from the Independent Patriots for Change (IPC) party, who received around 26 percent. As such, Nandi-Ndaitwah, a former freedom fighter and current vice president, is now on the verge of making history as Namibia's first female leader. In the meantime, however, her party SWAPO disappointed in the parliamentary elections, barely holding on to its majority by winning 51 of the available 96 seats. By comparison, the party had secured 63 seats and a comfortable majority in the 2019 election. **Despite holding on to the presidency**, SWAPO, **the former liberation movement which has ruled Namibia** since it achieved independence from apartheid South Africa in 1990, **is clearly losing** its electoral **appeal**. The party achieved its best-ever result in the 2014 election, securing 80 percent of the vote and a supermajority with 77 seats, but **has been on a downward trajectory ever since**. Advertisement There are many reasons why Namibians appear to be slowly moving away from the movement that secured their liberation. Thirty-four years after independence, SWAPO is struggling to tackle a multidimensional poverty rate of 43 percent, address high unemployment levels, and provide essential services such as water and sanitation to long-marginalised communities. While the World Bank classifies Namibia as an upper middle-income country, it simultaneously identifies it as the second most unequal country in the world, as per the Gini index. Sign up for Al Jazeera Weekly Newsletter The latest news from around the world. Timely. Accurate. Fair. Subscribe By signing up, you agree to our Privacy Policy protected by reCAPTCHA Through the years, Namibia has established a dual economy that has negatively impacted the socioeconomic aspirations of the poor and unemployed: an economic structure that features a highly developed modern sector, alongside an informal sector that mostly emphasises subsistence. This, coupled with an apparent rise of corruption at the governmental level – which became evident in the $650m Fishrot scandal implicating senior figures within SWAPO – has turned many Namibians, and especially poor, young people most affected by high unemployment and lack of upward mobility, against the ruling party. SWAPO, once seen by many in Namibia as electorally undefeatable and synonymous with the Namibian state, is now in rapid, possibly irreversible decline. And in the Southern African region, **Namibia's** liberation movement turned political party is **not alone** in this predicament. In fact, one **liberation movement** in the region has already been **ousted from power. In** October 30 elections, the citizens of **Botswana** consigned the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) – the former liberation movement that had ruled the country since it achieved independence in September 1966 – to the opposition benches. After 58 uninterrupted years in power, the party managed to win only four seats in this year's election. Advertisement The BDP's defeat came on the back of years of poor economic growth and a 26.7 percent unemployment rate that turned the population against the government. The growing allegations of corruption directed at the BDP's Mokgweetsi Masisi, who served as Botswana's 5th president between 2018-24, did not help the party's electoral chances, either. In **South Africa**, meanwhile, the African National Congress (ANC) **lost** its parliamentary **majority for the first time** since the end of white minority rule in April 1994. In this year's May general election, the liberation movement turned governing party's vote share fell to a little over 40 percent, a sharp decline from the 57 percent they secured in 2019. Twenty years ago, in 2004, the party had the support of a whopping 69.9 percent of South African voters. Just as for the BDP in Botswana, the ANC's gradual fall from favour is tied to its inability to tackle unemployment,

shortcomings in service delivery, and charges of corruption directed at its high-ranking members. Throughout the 2010s, corruption involving senior ANC leaders dented the party's longstanding credibility and crippled state-owned enterprises, causing losses of approximately $100bn – equal to a third of the country's gross domestic product (GDP). Over the years, **millions** of voters have **distanced themselves from the ANC**, as the party repeatedly failed to ensure ethical governance and to navigate the complex and evolving socioeconomic challenges of contemporary South African society. Advertisement In other countries across the region, similar failures are plaguing long-governing former liberation movements, and making them turn to oppressive and undemocratic methods to maintain their grip on power. Take the case of Mozambique. On October 24, Mozambique's election commission declared Daniel Chapo and his ruling party, the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (Frelimo), victors of the October 9 general elections. Nevertheless, the electoral process was fundamentally flawed, marked by political killings, widespread irregularities and punitive restrictions on the rights to free expression and assembly. Frelimo has been in power in Mozambique since the country gained independence from Portugal in June 1975, following a 10-year war for freedom. However, it has failed to meet the expectations and maintain the support of the people of Mozambique after governing the independent nation. Today, only 40 percent of the population has access to grid electricity. Between 2014/15 and 2019/20, the national poverty rate escalated from 48.4 percent to 62.8 percent, with at least 95 percent of rural households falling into multidimensional poverty. To compound matters, more than 80 percent of the labour force works in the informal sector, leaving millions of everyday Mozambicans without access to social protection. Corruption is also widespread among top members of Frelimo. In 2022, 11 senior government officials, including Armando Ndambi Guebuza, the son of former president Armando Guebuza, were found guilty of offences linked to a $2bn "hidden debt" scandal that caused the loss of hundreds of millions of dollars in government-guaranteed loans and sparked an economic meltdown in the country. Advertisement As a result, Frelimo appears to have no expectation of winning the majorities it has grown accustomed to over the years in free and fair elections. Thus it continuously attempts to cover up its failings in governance through political violence and attacks on the electoral process. In Tanzania, the Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) ruling party secured a staggering 98 percent of the seats in the November 27 local polls. Nevertheless, this electoral process was also characterised by arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances, torture, restrictions on freedom of expression, and extrajudicial killings, including the assassination of Ali Mohamed Kibao, a member of the opposition Chadema party**. In Zimbabwe**, **too**, the ruling ZANU-PF, another former**-liberation movement**, has established a highly securitised state to maintain its **fragile grip on power**. Since the nation became independent in April 1980, ZANU-PF has constantly repressed opposition voices and executed a succession of fraudulent elections, such as the shambolic harmonised elections of August 2023, primarily to evade responsibility for its overwhelming incompetence. Meanwhile, in **Angola**, the ruling People's Movement for the **Liberation** of Angola (MPLA) went to great lengths to silence dissent and ensure its success in the August 2022 elections. While through these **efforts** the MPLA managed to extend its decades-long governance, it did so **with the slimmest margin of victory ever,** implying that a seismic political change might be looming. Advertisement **The times have** certainly **shifted**, and it is clear that the former freedom fighters in Southern Africa are falling short of the noble ideals of liberty envisioned in the colonial days. A state of freedom that restricts the full expression of core civic rights and disregards the right to life reflects a shallow achievement. Liberation that does not provide equitable and sufficient access to basic services, employment opportunities and economic empowerment is as degrading as the old reality of colonial subjugation. The views expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect Al Jazeeras' editorial stance.

Given this, The AU is Empirically Strict on secession

Ekeke 20 [Alex Ekeke, "(PDF) Secession in Africa: an African Union Dilemma", 02/21/2020, ResearchGate, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/339413781_Secession_in_Africa_an_African_Union_Dilemma] /SS

... Successor to the OAU, **the African Union (AU), has maintained stringent policies against secession attempts, motivated by concerns over the potential escalation of internal and external conflicts within colonially defined African States.** Despite this firm stance against secession, Africa continues to grapple with conflicts stemming from secessionist movements, underscoring the persistent challenges associated with reconciling historical legacies and contemporary political dynamics (Ekeke & Lubisi, 2019). ...

Somaliland is no different.

Affirming sets precedent for secessionary movements

Gebreamlak 24 [Hagos Gebereamlak, reporter @ The Reporter, 12-17-2024, Ethiopia's Recognition of Somaliland and the Repercussions for African Borders, Reporter Magazine, https://thereportermagazines.com/3214/] leon + BZ

After gaining independence, African states largely adopted a policy of **respecting the borders** drawn during colonial times. This principle, known as 'Uti Possidetis', is enshrined in Article 4 of the African Union **Constitutive Act**, which calls for the preservation of borders as they existed at the time of independence. The goal of this policy has been to **prevent disorder, chaos, and conflict** across the continent. African countries have generally followed this principle, fearing that the recognition of **secessionist movements could set dangerous precedents**. Although Somaliland was a separate British colony before merging with Somalia, the application of this principle may be complicated by the fact that it voluntarily joined Somalia shortly after gaining independence in 1960. Therefore, recognizing Somaliland's independence today might be seen as a challenge to the established principle of respecting colonial boundaries. Although Somaliland was a separate British colony before merging with Somalia, the application of this principle may be complicated by the fact that it voluntarily joined Somalia shortly after gaining independence in 1960. Therefore, recognizing Somaliland's independence today might be seen as a challenge to the established principle of respecting colonial boundaries. If Ethiopia proceeds with recognizing Somaliland, it could compromise the long-standing principle of preserving colonial borders. This move might encourage other secessionist movements across Africa and lead to broader geopolitical instability. The recognition of Somaliland could serve as a precedent, prompting other groups to push for independence and potentially leading to a reshaping of the African political landscape. Recognizing Somaliland could encourage **secessionist movements** and irredentist claims across the Horn of Africa, fueling instability in the region. There are already existing aspirations for independence in several parts of the Horn, and Somaliland's recognition could embolden these movements. In Ethiopia, for example, various regions, including Tigray, Oromia, and the Somali region, have elements **advocating for greater autonomy** or outright secession. Similar tendencies exist in Sudan, Somalia, and Somaliland itself. The complex ethnic landscape in the Horn of Africa further complicates these dynamics. For instance, Somalis live across Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia, and Somaliland, while Afars inhabit Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Eritrea. Similarly, Tigrayans and Oromos span multiple countries, creating fertile ground for secessionist and irredentist movements. The recognition of Somaliland might also inspire regions such as Puntland and Jubaland to **seek independence from Somalia**. These regions already enjoy a degree of autonomy, and Somaliland's formal recognition could lead them to pursue a similar path. Historically, Somalia has laid irredentist claims to Ethiopia's Somali region (Ogaden), aiming to incorporate it into a "Greater Somalia." If Ethiopia proceeds with recognizing Somaliland, it could provoke retaliation from Somalia, possibly leading to renewed claims over the Somali region of Ethiopia. Somalia could also support secessionist movements within Ethiopia as a form of retaliation. In fact, Somalia's Foreign Minister Ahmed Moalim Fiqi recently stated that if Ethiopia recognizes Somaliland, Somalia would consider backing Ethiopian rebels, essentially threatening to fuel internal conflicts in Ethiopia.

Historical Context of Tit-for-Tat Secessionist Support In the 1970s and 1980s, Ethiopia, Somalia, and Sudan engaged in a vicious cycle of **supporting secessionist movements** to destabilize each other. Somalia backed the Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF), which sought to secede the Ogaden region from Ethiopia, and the Somali Abo Liberation Front (SALF). Somalia also allowed the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front (EPLF) and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) to establish offices and use Somali passports to further their causes. Ethiopia, in turn, supported the Somali National Movement (SNM) in its fight against the Siad Barre regime, which later led to Somaliland's declaration of independence. Ethiopia also aided the Somali Salvation Democratic Front, which established the autonomous region of Puntland. Meanwhile, Sudan supported various Ethiopian rebel groups, including the ELF, TPLF, and Oromo Liberation Front (OLF). In retaliation, Ethiopia provided heavy support to the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), which eventually led to the secession of South Sudan. This cycle of support for rebel groups contributed to the downfall of the Derg regime in Ethiopia and the Siad Barre regime in Somalia. It also led to the **fragmentation** of Somalia into Somaliland, Puntland, Jubaland, and other entities. Ethiopia's involvement in Sudan similarly contributed to the eventual secession of Eritrea and South Sudan from Sudan. There is a strong likelihood that this historical pattern of reciprocal support for secessionist movements will reemerge.

Somalia may escalate its support for rebel groups in Ethiopia, particularly in regions like the Somali region, Oromia, and Tigray, where there are already existing tensions. This could fuel further instability in Ethiopia. In response, Ethiopia might encourage independence movements in Puntland and Jubaland, supporting dissatisfied clans and tribes in Somalia to rebel or seek autonomy. This would perpetuate a cycle of proxy conflicts, destabilizing the Horn of Africa further and leading to widespread insecurity. This reciprocal destabilization between Ethiopia and Somalia could easily spread, **drawing in other regional actors and intensifying conflicts** across the Horn of Africa. The region could find itself once again entangled in proxy wars, with various factions fighting for independence or control, supported by external powers. The already volatile situation in the Horn of Africa could be further complicated by the spillover effects of Middle Eastern geopolitics and the encroachment of regional powers. The intensifying rivalry between the US and China is leading to a diminishing presence and influence of both superpowers in the region. As they compete for global dominance, their potential withdrawal could create a vacuum that may be filled by middle-sized powers from the Middle East, including the UAE, Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Israel, and Egypt.

Somaliland specifically causes upheaval and reignites past conflicts - global powers involved

Ghwell 25 [Hafed Al-Ghwell, "Somaliland And Its Case For Statehood – OpEd", 12/15/2024, Eurasia Review, https://www.eurasiareview.com/15122024-somaliland-and-its-case-for-statehood-oped/]

Somaliland's quest for recognition carries a range of potential benefits and pitfalls. On the plus side, international recognition would solidify its sovereignty, allowing for increased foreign investment and development assistance which would catalyze economic growth and improve infrastructure. Recognizing statehood would also offer Somaliland the opportunity to join international organizations, further embedding it into the global diplomatic and economic system. However, **pitfalls include the risk of heightened regional instability, as recognition might prompt a severe backlash from Somalia, which considers Somaliland an integral part of its territory. Recognition** could also **set a precedent for other separatist movements around Africa and beyond**, potentially **reigniting dormant territorial disputes**, which might deter some countries from supporting Somaliland's bid. **A** newly **independent Somaliland would realign political dynamics within the Horn of Africa.** It could **alter alliances and worsen existing tensions, particularly among actors who may have vested interests in either supporting or opposing Somaliland's independence**. **Ethiopia, for instance, with its historical ties and strategic interests in Somaliland, might endorse such recognition, seeking to counterbalance Eritrean and Somali influences in the region. Nonetheless, the geopolitics of the Horn are precarious, and the global community must quickly determine whether recognizing Somaliland would bring more stability or further complicate a delicate balance of power.** Given the potential for regional upheaval, there is an argument for establishing an international coalition to safeguard post-recognition Somaliland. Such a coalition should include key global and regional actors committed to ensuring that Somaliland's transition to recognized statehood occurs peacefully. This coalition would provide not only diplomatic backing but also tangible support in the form of security assistance and economic aid to help buffer against any immediate retaliatory measures from neighboring states or non-state actors. Establishing such a coalition would signal to Somaliland's opponents that the international community is serious about maintaining stability and supporting the country's sovereignty, potentially deterring hostile actions against it. Opposition to Somaliland's recognition is likely to be driven primarily by Somalia, which views the move as a direct challenge to its territorial integrity. Other actors who fear the precedent this sets, especially those in restive regions, may also oppose the move indirectly seeking to impose diplomatic costs for any endorsement.

Hassan Adds,

Hassan 21 [Osman Hassan, researcher @ Hiiraan Online and former UN official as well as BBC reporter, 12-25-2021, Why the USA Should Not Recognize Somaliland, Hiiraan Online, https://store.hiiraan.com/op4/2021/dec/184920/why_the_usa_should_not_recognize_somaliland.aspx] leon

The USA would have no difficulty in finding some African leaders ready to do its bidding. This is the easiest part but what about the consequences? **Mr. Meservey** downplays any **Pandora box** arising from their **recognition** of **Somaliland**. As an example, he **cites** the **cases** of **Eritrea** and **South Sudan** whose **separation** from **Ethiopia** and **Sudan** led to **no outcry** or **secessions** in **Africa**. But **their separation** from their **mother countries** came through **mutual agreement** and the **rest** of **Africa** and the **world** went **happily along** with **that outcome**. What **America** is **cooking up** Somalia is **something different** – more a throwback to its worst practices in Latin America in the last

Policy and basis of boundaries would be in question

Haile 24 [Daniel Haile, "Somaliland: The Nation the World Won't Recognize but Can't Ignore", 12/08/2024, https://facebook, https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2024/12/08/somaliland-the-nation-the-world-wont-recognize-but-cant-ignore/]/SS

Somaliland, a breakaway region of Somalia since the 1990s, has been a beacon of stability, security, and democratic governance, marked by peaceful transitions of power. This accomplishment sharply contrasts with Somalia's ongoing civil war and three decades of failed statehood. Since the fall of Siad Barre, its last autocratic ruler, Somalia has descended into the "Mad Max" tier of failed states, rivaled only by Afghanistan. Given the precedents of Namibia, Eritrea, and South Sudan attaining independence, why has Somaliland been denied similar recognition? Somaliland's success is a striking anomaly within the Horn of Africa, a region dominated by fragile and failed states. South Sudan struggles with **ongoing internal conflict** and **tenuous peace agreements**. Sudan's descent into anarchy mirrors the protracted civil wars in Libya, Somalia, and Syria. Ethiopia grapples with escalating ethnic tensions that jeopardize its unity, evoking parallels to the disintegration of Yugoslavia. Meanwhile, Eritrea persists as a Marxist authoritarian relic, the "last of the Mohicans" among Africa's Communist states, and Djibouti continues to bandwagon behind Eritrea's one-man dictatorship style of authoritarian rule. Like the Balkans, the Horn of Africa is a center of gravity for instability, insecurity, and chaos. Amid this volatile landscape, Somaliland's relative success in democratic governance makes its lack of international recognition all the more perplexing. The **hesitancy to recognize Somaliland stems from** geopolitical complexities, regional power dynamics, and **the broader fear of encouraging other secessionist movements.** Indubitably, Somaliland meets the international requirements needed for recognition, including a permanent population, a defined territory, a stable governmental system, and the capacity to engage in international relations with other sovereign states. This last criterion is perhaps the most important for its recognition, given the growing competing regional interests from its parent state, Somalia, and the international players who are geopolitically vested in its unification. **Acknowledging Somaliland's sovereignty would** challenge the status quo, **forc**ing the international community **to reconsider** long-standing **policies** on self-determination and state recognition **in one of the world's most volatile regions**. Somalia and Somaliland: A Tale of Two Diverging Paths Two significant factors have contributed to how Somaliland functions today as a society. Given its proximity to the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait and the Red Sea, Somaliland has long been a breadbasket for trade and commerce, connecting early civilizations of both the Middle East and East Asia to commodities like spices and other consumer products. Secondly, early Somaliland society originated under the famed Islamic scholar Sheikh Ishaaq bin Ahmed around the 13th century, whose descendants formulated what we have today as a homogenous Isaaq clan hegemony and culture. These two geopolitical facets have long magnetized interest from international players and sparked regional upheaval. After half a millennium of rule, the Arab Sultanate was broken up in the 17th century, bringing the coastal society under Egyptian control until 1884. At that point, it became a British protectorate. During World War II and until 1960, Somaliland fell under Italian control, and in 1960, both regions united to form Somalia. The period from the 1960s to the early 1990s was characterized by the rule of Siad Barre, who ostracized any movement that challenged the ruling Darod clan. The current governance structure of Somalia was established under the provisional Constitution following the end of the previous Transitional Federal Government that reigned from 2004 to 2012. The constitution laid out how these Federal Member States should be instituted and how the dichotomous relationship should exist with the Federal Government. The House of the People of the Federal Parliament approves new states and demarcates borders. There are six Federal Member States and one Regional Administration: Puntland, Hirshabelle, Jubaland, Southwest State, Galmudug, Somaliland, and the Banadir Regional Administration. These Federal Member States generally align with the following significant clans: Dir, Darod, Rahanweyn, Hawiye, and Isaaq. On the one hand, each state should be self-governing and sustaining; on the other, they are expected to strive for a cooperative relationship with other states and the Federal Government. Above all, the Federal Government facilitates national unity, strength, and security. On the international stage, the Federal Government serves as the central authority for trade, negotiations, treaties, and foreign aid matters. **Africa's Pandora's Box: The Untold Costs of Secession and Fragile Borders Recognizing the independence of secessionist regions remains a monumental challenge for African countries, even when those regions have a legitimate and moral cause for sovereignty. Since the 1990s, only three African states have achieved independence.** Namibia gained its independence from apartheid South Africa in 1990 after 24 years of armed struggle. Eritrea secured independence from Ethiopia following a 30-year war, the most protracted continuous struggle for independence in Africa, culminating in de facto independence in 1991 and de jure recognition in 1993. South Sudan, the continent's youngest nation, became independent from Sudan in 2011 after more than two decades of civil war. **African nations have cemented the notion that recognizing secessionist movements threatens the fragile political fabric of the continent**. They fear that **granting autonomy to breakaway regions could lead to the unraveling of African states, whose borders were arbitrarily drawn by European colonizers. This fear serves as a Pandora's box for the continent,**

Instability goes nuclear.

Finnegan 20 [Connor Finnegan, state department reporter @ ABC news with a bachelors from Georgetown, 12-31-2020, Hot spots to watch: What crises could explode in 2021, ABC News, https://abcnews.go.com/International/hot-spots-watch-crises-explode-2021/story?id=74607383] tristan

The world was on lockdown for most of 2020. But from the Caucasus to the Horn of **Africa** to the Himalayas, **several conflicts**, some frozen for decades, **erupted** in **violence**. With the coronavirus **pandemic** and the ensuing **economic crisis**, **tensions** that have simmered are **threatening** to **flare up** further in 2021, especially as humanitarian need skyrockets, governments and aid groups face budget shortfalls, and climate change increasingly forces folks to flee or fight over resources. Here are the top conflicts or issues that could burst into **all-out** crises in 2021. Nuclear arms race: From rogue states to regional tensions At the start of 2020, the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists made a dramatic announcement -- its famed Doomsday Clock was the closest to midnight it's ever been, with the threats of **nuclear war** and climate change growing ever more acute. "National **leaders** have **ended** or undermined several major **arms control** treaties and **negotiations** during the last year, creating an **environment conducive** to a renewed nuclear **arms race**, to the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and to **lowered barriers** to **nuclear war**," the group said in January. Twelve months later, the last nuclear arms control pact between the U.S. and Russia is weeks from expiry, with no plans to extend it in sight. China continues to develop its nuclear arsenal, possibly even doubling it in the next decade, according to the Pentagon. It's also clashed high in the Himalayas with its nuclear-armed neighbor India, which in turn spilled blood with nuclear-armed rival Pakistan over the disputed territory Kashmir. As the global infrastructure to constrain nuclear weapons wanes, any one of these could **turn** into a **flashpoint** next year, and that's without even mentioning the rogue nuclear power states North Korea and Iran -- both of which are likely to test the incoming Biden administration. After four years of President Donald Trump's policies, North Korea has more nuclear weapons and enhanced ballistic missile capability, which it may show off with a test launch early in President-elect Joe Biden's term to try to garner some attention and leverage, according to analysts. While the likelihood of a "fire and fury" response will diminish after Trump's departure, the risk of a skirmish spiraling into all-out war remains real, according to analysts. Iran doesn't have nuclear weapons and says it won't pursue them, but it once again has a stockpile of enriched uranium and a host of spinning centrifuges that decrease its so-called "breakout time" to potentially develop the bomb, according to nuclear experts. Analysts expect its forces, under disguise or through proxies, could resume attacks in the Persian Gulf region to build leverage ahead of possible negotiations with Biden's team, risking conflict with U.S., Israeli, or Arab forces. **Terrorism threat expands**, seizing **instability** across **Africa** On the campaign trail, Trump and his senior advisers repeatedly celebrated the defeat of ISIS's so-called caliphate in Iraq and Syria. But since then, the terror threat has dispersed, with fighters and weapons flowing out of shrinking ISIS territory to new pockets around the world. Across Africa in particular, the world's youngest and fastest-growing continent, **ISIS affiliates** are now **gaining strength**, especially in Nigeria, Mozambique and the Congo -- although a few terrorism experts caution some claim to be more powerful than they are in reality. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, sub-Saharan Africa's largest country, the Allied Democratic Forces, a decades-old militant group, has traded claims of responsibility for deadly attacks with a local ISIS affiliate. The fighting compounds the deep hunger crisis there, with more than 19 million people in need, according to the International Rescue Committee, which reported that DRC now has "more people facing a severe hunger crisis... than has ever been recorded in any country." In Mozambique, Islamist militants linked to ISIS have conducted brutal attacks in the northernmost province Cabo Delgado, including beheading more than 50 civilians in November and temporarily seizing control of a port in August. The deteriorating security situation has displaced more than half a million people, according to the U.N. refugee agency (UNHCR), with continued violence likely to bring more acute humanitarian need next year. The situation is perhaps worst, however, in the **Sahel**, the semi-arid region that spans northern Africa just south of the Sahara Desert and that has seen a **sharp rise** in extremist **groups** and **fighting**. In Mali and Niger, the security situation is at best shaky, with a military junta trying to stabilize Mali amid inter-communal and jihadist violence and tense elections this week in Niger leaving the path ahead uncertain, but hopeful. But **Burkina Faso**, the landlocked country twice the size of New York, has become the world's fastest growing crisis. Over 1 million people have been **internally displaced** in just two years, according to UNHCR, and there is no end in sight of fighting between the government, militia groups and terrorist organizations, boosting the risk of famine for its 20 million people. Nigeria, the region's powerhouse and Africa's most populous country, is facing all the same trends, with even **deep**er **implications** for **global security**. Its northeastern corner has been a hotspot for over a decade, with jihadist group Boko Haram and criminal violence terrorizing and displacing millions of civilians. But Nigerian armed forces' response has been cast as failing, and the government also faced sharp criticism for its heavy crackdown on anti-police brutality protests -- signs that the state itself is increasingly **unstable**, which could **create** more **chaos** in 2021. Peace efforts fail, crises worsen in Afghanistan, Yemen Afghanistan and Yemen have been torn apart by conflict for years now, but 2021 could bring even deeper suffering for civilians in both countries. In recent months, while Afghan government and Taliban delegations sit in luxury hotels in Doha, Qatar, for peace negotiations, there has been a spike in car bombings, rocket fire, targeted attacks on police and security forces, botched Afghan Air Force bombings, and assassinations of government officials, activists and journalists. Compounded by coronavirus, that has kept Afghanistan's already victimized civilian population in continued danger, even after decades of humanitarian need. The peace negotiations were supposed to aim for a nationwide ceasefire as soon as possible, according to the U.S.-Taliban deal signed in February, but the militant group has resisted so far, using violence as leverage in talks. But if the violence is sustained into 2021, it could imperil negotiations and ignite into all-out conflict, just as U.S. troops draw down out of the country and the ISIS franchise claims more deadly attacks more frequently, according to Afghan officials and U.S. analysts. Yemen has similarly faced years of stop-and-start

peace efforts, but with coronavirus raging through the country with no health care system to track it, let alone treat it, the world's worst humanitarian crisis is expected to descend even deeper in 2021. After five years of endless fighting, humanitarian funding is drying up, leaving approximately 80% of the population in need, according to aid groups. The U.N.-mediated effort has stalled, with the Saudi and Emirati-led coalition fighting in its own ranks as much as with the Iran-backed Houthi rebels, and neither side has shown real interest in protecting civilians, let alone peace talks. One other near decade-old conflict to mention is Syria, where murderous strongman Bashar al Assad, backed by Russia and Iran, could test the incoming Biden administration by trying to finally seize control of the last pocket of rebels and jihadists in Idlib province, causing a bloodbath and pushing masses of packed Syrians fleeing into Turkey and beyond to Europe. East Africa erupting as violence spills over borders In the final few months of 2020, the greater **Horn** of **Africa** **experienced** a **flash** of **violence**, often **spilling** **over** **borders** and **threatening** to **suck** **in** the **whole** **region** in the coming months. At the heart of it is Ethiopia, whose government went to war with well-armed political forces in its Tigray region, a conflict that continues to see sporadic fighting and claims of mass killings and that could worsen ahead of 2021 elections. It may also suck in neighboring Eritrea, long at war with Tigrayan leaders and now partnering with federal forces against them, leading to cross-border rocket fire and aerial bombardment. Further endangering the region is the fact that the fighting sent tens of thousands of refugees scrambling into Sudan, itself on a rocky transitional road to democracy after decades of oppressive rule. The two neighbors are already locked in a dispute over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, and occasional clashes along the border could enflame into another frontline. Elsewhere in East Africa, Kenya and Somalia have cut diplomatic ties over Kenya's support for breakaway region Somaliland, heightening regional tension further. The move also means Kenya will likely pull its peacekeeping troops in Somalia, just as U.S. forces withdraw, leaving Somalia more vulnerable to al-Shabab, a powerful al-Qaida affiliate that will continue to plot attacks and increasingly conduct them abroad. In the midst of it all, the fragile semi-peace in South Sudan, the world's youngest country still emerging from civil war, faces "catastrophic levels of hunger," according to the U.N. "If left **unchecked** much longer, a strategic region could **devolve** into **war** -- with itself and others -- **imperiling** U.S. **interests** from the Red Sea to Europe," warned Cameron Hudson, a senior fellow at the Atlantic Council's Africa Center.

Extinction, nuclear winter!

Starr 15, 2/28/2015, Steven is an Associate member of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation and has been published by the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists. Starr is also an expert on the environmental consequences of nuclear war, Nuclear War: An Unrecognized Mass Extinction Event Waiting to Happen, Symposium: The Dynamics of Possible Nuclear Extinction, https://ratical.org/radiation/NuclearExtinction/StevenStarr022815.html)// SN

A war fought with 21st century strategic nuclear weapons would be more than just a great catastrophe in human history. If we allow it to happen, such a war would be a mass extinction event that ends human history. There is a profound difference between extinction and “an unprecedented disaster,” or even “the end of civilization,” because even after such an immense catastrophe, human life would go on. But extinction, by definition, is an event of utter finality, and a nuclear war that could cause human extinction should really be considered as the ultimate criminal act. It certainly would be the crime to end all crimes. The world’s leading climatologists now tell us that **nuclear war** threatens our continued existence as a species. Their studies predict that a large nuclear war, especially one fought with strategic nuclear weapons, **would** **create** **a** post-war **environment** in which for many years it would be **too** **cold** **and** **dark** **to** even **grow** **food**. Their findings make it clear that not only **humans**, but most large animals and many other forms of complex life **would** likely **vanish** **forever** in a nuclear darkness of our own making. The environmental consequences of nuclear war would attack the ecological support systems of life at every level. Radioactive fallout, produced not only by nuclear bombs, but also by the destruction of nuclear power plants and their spent fuel pools, would poison the biosphere. Millions of tons of smoke would act to destroy Earth’s protective ozone layer and block most sunlight from reaching Earth’s surface, creating Ice Age weather conditions that would last for decades. Yet the political and military leaders who control nuclear weapons strictly avoid any direct public discussion of the consequences of nuclear war. They do so by arguing that nuclear weapons are not intended to be used, but only to deter. Remarkably, the leaders of the Nuclear Weapon States have chosen to ignore the authoritative, long-standing scientific research done by the climatologists, research that predicts virtually any nuclear war, fought with even a fraction of the operational and deployed nuclear arsenals, will leave the Earth essentially uninhabitable.

C2 is Israel

Failure of all strategic goals dooms israel

Wolf 24 [Dr Albert B Wolf is a Global Fellow (Post-doc) at Habib University in Karachi], 10-25-2024, "Israel is Losing, but Netanyahu Won’t Back Down on His War Aims", RUSI, https://www.rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/israel-losing-netanyahu-wont-back-down-his-war-aims [DOA 12/11/24 YRM]

Israel's war aims are overambitious. Without narrowing its goals in Gaza and Lebanon, it risks military overstretch and political fallout, weakening its strategic position. International politics is the art of the possible. Israel cannot reach the war aims it has set out. It can only win if it narrows its aims, matching ends with means. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government has plainly spelled out what Israel wants to achieve: recover the hostages, secure the borders with Gaza, and destroy Hamas. A fourth aim has been added: Israelis forced to evacuate their homes in the north by Hezbollah's bombing have to be able to return. **Israel is not achieving its war aims against Hamas. First, it has only obtained a handful of the hostages. Some have been killed; the fates of many others are still unknown**. Second, **Hamas has not been destroyed. Destruction of a terrorist organisation is difficult to measure**. Some point to leadership decapitation. However, as Jenna Jordan has pointed out, attriting terrorist leaders seldom brings about their organisations' collapse. Factors such as popular support, ideology and organisational structure play bigger roles in deciding these groups' fates. When Israel assassinated Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran, for example, Yahya Sinwar, the alleged mastermind behind the 7 October attacks, succeeded Haniyeh. It is not clear what price Hamas paid for Haniyeh's death. Another measure used to determine if a terrorist group has been destroyed is if its territorial sphere has been reduced or removed. Israel has failed to deprive Hamas of the territory it governed prior to the war. Hamas has been battered in Gaza, but it is still a political force to be reckoned with. Unaffiliated Palestinian clans have refused to join in a post-war reconstruction effort for fear of retaliation by Hamas. Third, **Israel has not been able to secure its borders. While it has regained control over some border crossings, the underground infrastructure that has allowed Hamas to engage in smuggling weapons and carrying out attacks is still in place**. Some argue that peace is not possible if Hamas stays in power. Israel has potent incentives to overthrow Hamas, starting with the group's inability to make credible commitments to peace. It may also seem cheaper for Israel to overthrow Hamas than to deter it in the future. However, these factors overlook the dismal failures of foreign-imposed regime changes (FIRCs). First, any post-Hamas governing entity will face a legitimacy problem. A state has a monopoly over the legitimate use of violence within a particular territorial domain. New regimes must satisfy both domestic and international audiences. A post-Hamas regime's proximity to a foreign patron (in this case, Israel) would make it look like a Trojan Horse to its domestic audience, robbing it of its legitimacy to govern. Second, FIRCs seldom bring about the changes they were intended to make. Regime change 'often fails to improve relations between interveners and targets'. As in the case with the Taliban in Afghanistan, regime change will not eliminate Hamas's membership. Hamas's members could go into hiding, opportunistically capitalising on grievances, from Palestinian anger over the new government's inefficiency to misbehaviour by Israeli settlers. Or they could stir up trouble whenever it suited them or their foreign patrons. Netanyahu wants to avoid another decade-plus quagmire in Lebanon (a la Menachem Begin) as much as he wants to steer clear from being seen as capitulating or backing down against Hezbollah, like Ehud Barak or Ehud Olmert. After having initially enunciated limited aims in the fight against Hezbollah, however, questions remain over whether a plan for the 'day after' Hezbollah is defeated even exists. Israel's military aims toward Hezbollah in the current conflict are narrower than its aims toward Hamas, but they may prove to be just as costly. Israel is diverting resources from Gaza to fight Hezbollah. The 98th Division, which had been fighting in Khan Younis, has been redirected to the Lebanese border. Netanyahu's government signalled that it believed that it could reach a deal with Hezbollah by increasing the costs of conflict through airstrikes, eliminating senior leaders such as Hassan Nasrallah and his rumoured successor, and taking out the group's infrastructure. While the Biden administration continues to be 'extremely concerned' over the possibility of an all-out war, it also believes military pressure could force Hezbollah to back down. Two variables stand in the way of a potential deal. First, Netanyahu could face a similar political fate to Olmert if he does not follow through on his threats against Hezbollah. During the 2006 war, Olmert issued a series of explicit, public threats demanding the group return the Israeli soldiers it had captured and disarm, or else face severe military punishment until it capitulated. However, Olmert subsequently backed down on his threat to keep fighting until the soldiers were returned and Hezbollah disarmed. His approval ratings collapsed as a result, rendering him a 'lame duck' for the rest of his term in office. Failure to carry out public threats damages a country's reputation for resolve and reveals a leader's inability to manage foreign and military policy. Second, Naim Qassem, the Deputy Secretary General of Hezbollah and now its de facto leader, has signalled a willingness to go along with Lebanese Parliamentary Speaker and leader of the Shia Amal party Nabih Berri's efforts to reach a ceasefire. This suggested that the group was walking away from its earlier commitment to only negotiate once a ceasefire had been reached between Israel and Hamas. However, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Aragchi emphasised to reporters that Iran, Hezbollah's main backer, would support a deal '…on the condition that it would be…synchronised with a ceasefire in Gaza'. Hezbollah would suffer reputational consequences if it gave in to Israel's demands. Some argue that strong states face difficulties compelling weaker opponents to change their behaviours. A weaker actor could thus easily cultivate a reputation for debility, inviting further aggression in the future. Pursuing a ceasefire could jeopardise a potential bid for the leadership by Qassem. The key to avoiding overstretch and another quagmire in Lebanon is for Israel to narrow its war aims. However, Netanyahu may not be so inclined. The domestic imperatives are obvious. The first is that his current coalition partners are far-right Kahanists Bezalel Smotrich and Itamar Ben-Gvir, who are both ardent hawks. A second, less obvious reason involves false optimism. **In this context, false optimism refers to an over-assessment of one's military capabilities and effectiveness. Netanyahu has been famous for engaging in bluster but pursuing restrained military options guaranteed to pay political dividends**. The folly of positive illusions has led leaders to engage in conflicts including the Boer War, both World Wars, the Vietnam War and the invasion of Iraq in 2003. However, **the folly of overconfidence may be feeding Netanyahu's desire to expand Israel's war aims in Lebanon**. Bibi may be feeling optimistic about Israel's chances of victory after having successfully delivered several blows against Hezbollah's senior leadership, as well as pulling off unexpected tactical successes in the form of detonating pagers and walkie-talkies that belonged to Hezbollah members. **After a year at war, Israel is not achieving its aims in Gaza and faces another quagmire in Lebanon. However, domestic political and cognitive constraints on its leadership stand in the way of narrowing its war aims.**

Statehood would revitalize Israel

Feldman 24 [Nadan Feldman is a Ph.D. candidate at the History Department of The Hebrew University of Jerusalem], 11-27-2024, "All eyes on Somaliland: the tiny African state that's key to Israel's war on Houthi terror", Haaretz, https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-11-27/ty-article-magazine/.premium/all-eyes-on-somaliland-the-tiny-african-state-thats-key-to-israels-war-on-houthi-terror/00000193-6df4-da6e-afdb-7ff7e2fd0000 [DOA 12/11/24 YRM]

On the night of July 19, a drone swooped down over Tel Aviv's beaches, killing Evgeny Freder in his sleep not far from the U.S. embassy building. Israel's defense establishment was caught with its pants down – nobody thought that a small, slow, lugubrious aircraft, launched over 2,000 kilometers (1,200 miles) away, from Yemen, would be able to evade Israel's advanced air defense systems, fly around Tel Aviv, kill one person, wound 10 others and cause panic. The attack demonstrated the operational capabilities of Yemen's Houthis who, ever since the Arab Spring, have become a well-financed and well-armed proxy for Iran in its conflicts with Saudi Arabia and Israel. It also forced Israel's defense establishment – which until then had left the U.S. and Britain to come up with a military response to the Houthis – to realize that Israel must find its own solutions to defeat the Yemeni threat. Israel also realized it will not be able to send its fighter jets on long, expensive raids on Yemen every time a $20,000 Houthi drone explodes inside the country – especially given that the Houthis are believed to have one of the world's largest stockpiles of drones. Therefore, Israel has had to seek out more efficient alternatives. In the late 19th century, Britain and Italy gained control on the Somali sphere, setting up British Somaliland – which

corresponds to modern-day Somaliland – as a protectorate. **One such alternative involves a small, remote state, bereft of international recognition, that over the last year has become the arena for an explosive regional struggle, rife with geopolitical interests. That place is Somaliland** – a territory ruled by the Muslim Issa clan, that seceded from the mother-state of Somalia in 1991 and declared independence without international guarantees. Ever since then it has been trying to gain recognition from countries while fortifying itself against regional threats, primarily Somalia, which seeks to regain control of the territory. International law recognizes Somaliland only as an autonomous district within Somalia, and until 2024 not a single country recognized it as an independent country, with the exception of Taiwan, itself an unrecognized state. This has significant economic implications. Somaliland cannot take part in international trade, nor can it get financial aid from organizations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, and has to function as an autarkic economy. For that reason, one field that is thriving in the territory is maritime piracy. The demand for Somaliland's independence harks back to the colonial age in Africa. In the late 19th century, Britain and Italy gained control on the Somali sphere, setting up British Somaliland – which corresponds to modern-day Somaliland – as a protectorate. In WWII, British forces occupied Italian Somaliland, then part of Mussolini's fascist Italy, uniting the two territories into one state that operated as a political unit within the British empire. In 1960, united Somaliland gained independence and the republic of Somalia was established. The collapse of the country's central government in 1991 and the raging civil war led to the secession of the territory of Somaliland from the mother-state. Unlike Somalia, which has been plagued for decades by murderous civil wars and was ruled for part of this period by Islamic militias, primarily Al-Shabaab, Somaliland, with its 6.2 million inhabitants, has managed to consolidate a functioning democratic regime, including fair and free elections and stable democratic institutions, without bloodshed. The anarchy typical of Mogadishu, the capitol of Somalia, stands in sharp contrast to the peacefulness of Hargeisa, the capitol of Somaliland. It may be said that **Israel and Somaliland are similar in two essential ways: They are both small, vulnerable democracies, situated in areas rife with authoritarian regimes** and murderous wars. Also, both are suffering from sovereignty issues vis-à-vis the international community, and both have enemies that seek to destroy them. On October 17, the pro-Qatari news website Middle East Monitor reported that Israel secretly approached Somaliland, situated across the Gulf of Aden from the Yemeni city of Aden, with a proposal that would serve both parties: Israel will set up a military base in Somaliland that will allow it to attack and deter Houthi targets, in return for formal recognition of the country and financial investments in it. According to the report, which relies on diplomatic sources, the United Arab Emirates is mediating between the two countries, and has not only convinced Somaliland to allow the construction of the military base, but will also finance it. The UAE, a signatory to the 2020 Abraham Accords with Israel, has a clear vested interest in such a deal, as the Houthis have become a security threat for it, too, and Israeli military forces in Somaliland will certainly help it fight them. In recent years, Somaliland allowed the UAE to use the port of Berbera and its airport as a base for its military activity in Yemen, in return for a $440 million UAE investment in Berbera port, according to foreign media. The UAE mediation follows its military cooperation with Israel, the two having reportedly established a joint military-intelligence base on the Socotra archipelago, one of the world's remotest, most ecologically diverse islands, situated in the Gulf of Aden near Yemen**. "There are numerous advantages for Israel in recognizing Somaliland as an independent state,"** points out Ahmet Vefa Rende, a researcher at the Middle East Institute at Turkey's Sakarya University, who first reported the contacts between Israel and Somaliland. **"These include enhancing its national security, countering regional threats, creating new economic opportunities, improving diplomatic relations and supporting democratic governance in the region. In a region where many powers are competing for a share due to its strategic location and resources, Israel is expected to enter the race through local partner Somaliland, which is excluded by many countries**." For local regional powers, the **location of Somaliland in the Horn of Africa lends it strategic importance along with economic appeal. It is situated at the entrance to the Bab al-Mandeb straits, through which a third of the world's maritime cargo is shipped, and its long coastline along the bay provides it with diverse maritime accessibility** – to East Africa, the Middle East, the Arabian Sea and from there to the Indian Ocean. The **most important element in this maritime tapestry is the Red Sea sphere, which over the last year has become a focal point for international tension due to Houthi attacks on Red Sea shipping routes that affect the entire global trade**. Last December, several firms had to halt shipping near the Red Sea. Maersk was the first, after the Houthis attacked two of its ships. It was followed by China's OOCL, Germany's Hapag-Lloyd, France's CMA CGM and Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC), the world's biggest shipping firm. On December 14, 2023, the Houthis announced the blocking of the Bab al-Mandeb straits, and exactly one month later they fired a missile from the Yemeni port of Hudeidah at an American ship. The missile was shot down. The firing of the Houthi missile came after American forces attacked the port to enable the resumption of regular maritime traffic. The Houthis continued their terrorist activities along with their efforts to hit targets in Israel using drones and ballistic missiles. On July 18, the U.S. and Britain staged a joint attack on Hudeidah's international airport, and two days later the Israeli Air Force carried out an attack on the port of Hudeidah, coordinated with the Americans and Saudi Arabia. All this has unfolded against the backdrop of Israeli concern about Iran's attempts to gain a foothold in the Red Sea arena. These attempts have taken the form of increased Houthi terrorist activities as well as the presence of Iranian warships and intelligence ships. Despite tensions with the Houthis, Israel is merely a secondary player in the teeming arena of interests around Somaliland. The three main players in the conflict are Somalia, Ethiopia and Turkey, with Egypt, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and neighboring Djibouti also keeping their hands in the pot. Up above hover the world's two superpowers, the United States and China. **The great fear is that the crisis that developed between Somalia and Ethiopia over the future of Somaliland will ignite into a bloody conflict that pulls in additional countries**. This could happen in light of the ongoing war between Israel and Iran with its Houthi proxy in Yemen, the presence of murderous Islamist militias in the Horn of Africa and the bloody history of Somalia and Ethiopia. The two countries have a history of territorial conflicts, including two wars in the late 20th century. The move that gave rise to the current crisis between them took place on the first day of 2024. Ethiopia, which borders Somalia and has no maritime access, signed a historic agreement with Somaliland that will give it access to the Gulf of Aden through the port of Berbera, in return for eventual Ethiopian recognition of Somaliland's independence. To Somaliland, Ethiopia's recognition is an important step that could help other countries in Africa and beyond follow suit. For Ethiopia, which views itself as a regional power in Africa but is suffering from economic frailty and widespread poverty, sea access is an important key to financial growth and greater geopolitical power. With over 130 million inhabitants, this is the world's most populous country with no sea access. The agreement allows Ethiopia to lease a military naval base at the port of Berbera and to trade from it. AFP reported that Somaliland agreed to lease 20 kilometers (12 miles) of its coastline to Ethiopia for 50 years, and to allow Ethiopia to establish a naval base and a commercial port there. This step was also made possible by the UAE, which had been developing the port of Berbera in recent years for its own interests, and encourages maritime trade there. The agreement also serves the economic interests of Somaliland, which is expected to reap dividends – from tariff revenues to commercial cooperation – through the port activity of a large country like Ethiopia. The agreement provoked a sharp response from Somalia, with the government declaring it illegal and a threat to regional stability. The Ethiopian ambassador to Somalia was summoned for a reprimand and the Somali ambassador was recalled from Addis Ababa. "

goes nuclear

Taha 24 [Heba Taha is an Associate Senior Lecturer in the Department of Political Science and the Center for Advanced Middle Eastern Studies at Lund University. She received a research grant from ICAN in 2023, focusing on nuclear politics in Israel/Palestine], 11-4-2024,

"Commentary: Nuclear weapons, Israel and Gaza", ICAN, https://www.icanw.org/commentary_nuclearweapons_israel_gaza [DOA 12/11/24 YRM]

In the past year, **Israeli nuclear threats have escalated dramatically, without retraction, contributing to the dehumanization of Palestinians and increasing the risk of nuclear use**. There has been extensive attention paid (in the English-language press) to Russian nuclear threats since its invasion of Ukraine, but there has been less focus on the implications of increased Israeli references to nuclear weapons. **Despite Israel's official stance of nuclear ambiguity, there has been a significant increase in references to Israel's nuclear arsenal since 7 October 2023. Both Israeli and US officials have alluded to, or explicitly called for, the use of nuclear weapons against Palestinians in Gaza, and in some cases, even against Iran**. This includes MP Tally Gotliv's posts calling for the use of doomsday weapons to "restore the country's dignity, strength, and security." The statement insisted that Israel must crush and flatten all of Gaza, not only one neighborhood. Gotliv is a member of the Prime Minister's Likud Party. Others, such as Heritage Minister Amichai Eliyahu, indicated that a nuclear attack on Gaza was an option, insisting that there were no civilians in Gaza. Eliyahu was reprimanded by Netanyahu, but he was not suspended, as many news outlets incorrectly reported. Meanwhile, Republican officials in the US, such as Senator Lindsey Graham and Senator Tim Walberg, have invoked the US's experience in Hiroshima and Nagasaki as a lesson for Israel in its war in Gaza. While such statements have elicited widespread outrage, there has been no official retraction of these positions. **This escalating nuclear rhetoric can be seen as part of the broader dehumanisation of Palestinians, and some nuclear scholars suggest that this language, which positions colonised Palestinians as nuclear targets, overlaps with other statements that indicate Israeli genocidal intent in** Gaza. Typically, in Israel, military censors revise information containing confirmation of possession of nuclear weapons. Yet, the statements mentioned above do not only indicate possession, but even potential use. As some security analysts in Israel have noted, these statements threaten the posture of ambiguity. While it may be tempting to reduce these statements to wartime rhetoric and panic, they are particularly disconcerting when one considers that Israeli policies and conduct have not adhered to civilian protections. Many so-called 'red lines' imposed by the US or international actors have been ignored—while military assistance to Israel has not been interrupted. **These escalating statements indicate that when a state has nuclear weapons, they tend to arise as part of its considerations during times of war**. Since these weapons are part of the country's military and security strategy, this is not all that surprising. Historical precedents from 1967 and 1973 can serve as reminders that nuclear weapons were considered by Israeli leaders during moments of crisis. Meanwhile, Iran has been said to be on the brink of nuclear proliferation after the US withdrew from the Iran nuclear deal in 2018. Israel's recent attack on Iran was limited in scope, but previous reports indicated Israeli intentions to target Iranian nuclear facilities, leading to anxieties about potential nuclear war in the Middle East. Israeli nuclear weapons have not been met with sufficient critical examination. They are still routinely described as having enabled the survival of the state or even having contributed to peace – claims that have been made by officials, which are often adopted in the nuclear literature. This approach treats nuclear weapons as a saviour and a guarantor of peace, overlooking how nuclear weapons align with a broader trend of militarisation that has come at the expense of political concessions or longer-term strategic thought that could lead to a durable peace agreement.

More importantly, this focus on security overlooks the potential of nuclear weapons to inflict mass death. It ignores that **nuclear weapons themselves pose an existential threat—both for Jewish-Israelis and also Palestinians, as well as the region more broadly**. Throughout the past year, the violence in Gaza has been described using nuclear analogies, with reports indicating, for example, that the destructive power of Israeli explosives dropped on Gaza is equivalent to, or surpasses, those of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs. These metaphors try to link Gaza to these nuclear targets – to situate the destruction alongside them – as a desperate attempt to relay the extent of the violence to the world. In their attempt to make the Palestinian experience in Gaza recognisable or familiar, these reports also perhaps implicitly push back against the distinction between conventional and non-conventional weapons, since Gaza stands as a display of the immense damage and unimaginable violence that conventional weapons can cause. The calls to flatten Gaza, in other words, are being heeded, though using conventional weapons supplied predominantly by the United States and combined with Artificial Intelligence tools accelerating the speed of death and destruction. In light of escalating nuclear threats, it is essential not only to understand the existential threat posed by Israeli nuclear weapons, but also to connect them to other infrastructures and technologies of warmaking.

extinction!
Cross app starr 15

Contention 3 is Civil War

Tensions in Somaliland have de-escalated.

Mahmood 12/11 [Omar Mahmood, senior analyst @ Crisis Group with a focus on Eastern Africa, 12-11-2024, Somaliland's Peaceful Handover Withstands Neighbourhood Strains, Crisis Group, https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/somaliland/somalilands-peaceful-handover-withstands-neighbourhood-strains] BZ

What happened? Somaliland held its long-awaited presidential election in mid-November, ending in victory for the opposition and a **swift concession by the incumbent**. The vote and its aftermath underlined Somaliland's standing as a **consolidating democracy** with a reputation for **political stability** while the peaceful transfer of power marked a welcome outcome in the Horn of Africa, where such handovers are a **rare occurrence.** That said, the run-up to the vote was far from smooth, due to rising internal tensions and an unresolved conflict in the east. The harassment of government critics and the concentration of political power in the hands of a single clan also fuel concerns as to the degree of openness in Somaliland's political system. Somaliland unilaterally declared independence from Somalia in 1991. Over the last three decades it has developed many of the trappings of a state, including its own currency, security forces and civilian administration in the capital, Hargeisa. Even so, Mogadishu rejects Somaliland's independence and no country has recognised it. At the same time, its reputation for orderly polls and relatively consensual politics has come under strain recently, and disputes among politicians caused a two-year delay of the presidential vote. In the end, Somaliland's institutions and political establishment largely withstood the stress test. The results saw Abdirahman Mohamed Abdullahi "Cirro", leader of the Waddani party, secure the presidency with 64 per cent of the vote, defeating incumbent Muse Bihi of the Kulmiye party. Approximately 53 per cent of registered voters turned out – lower than the previous presidential election in 2017, when 64 per cent of those registered voted. This was partly because polls did not take place in most of conflict-hit Sool and parts of Sanaag, both of which lie in the east. What are the main political divides in Somaliland? Voters largely cast their ballots along clan lines, revealing the continuing dominance of these loyalties in Somaliland while also raising doubts as to the diversity and fairness of political representation. Politics in Somaliland is dominated by members of the Isaaq clan family. A number of clans exist within the Isaaq, but three main ones – the Garhajis, Haber Jeclo and Haber Awal – have the greatest political prominence. Other, non-Isaaq clans reside in Somaliland's western and eastern regions. In the western region of Awdal, members of the Dir clan family have long complained of marginalisation by the Isaaq. In the east, members of the Darod clan family, comprising Dhulbahante and Warsengeli clans, have mostly **rejected inclusion in Somaliland**, favouring instead a **closer relationship with Mogadishu** or neighbouring Puntland, a semi-autonomous state in northern Somalia with which they share close clan ties. These frictions were at the **heart** of the conflict that erupted between the Somaliland administration and the Dhulbahante in Sool in 2023 (for more on this, see below). The past two Somaliland presidents – Bihi and his predecessor Ahmed Mohamed Mohamoud, or "Silanyo" – were swept to victory by a Haber Awal-Haber Jeclo clan alliance, under the Kulmiye party. This fractured in 2024, with many Haber Jeclo turning against the incumbent. Instead, they voted for Waddani and its candidate Cirro, complaining that Bihi favoured his Haber Awal clan when in power. Prominent members of the Haber Jeclo clan also argued they had suffered most from the conflict in Sool which erupted during Bihi's presidency, given that their homelands are on the front lines and many prisoners of war captured by Dhulbahante militias hail from their clan. Alongside the presidential polls, Somaliland's political organisations also contested elections to determine which of them would be permitted to compete as parties in future polls, with Somaliland's political system licensing only three parties for up to ten years each. This system, in which political associations that want to become parties are subjected to a popular vote, is designed to avoid the proliferation of parties representing specific clans. Kulmiye and Waddani retained their official standing for the third and second time respectively. They are joined by a new party, Kaah, led by veteran politician Mohamoud Hashi Abdi, previously a member of Kulmiye. All three of these parties are headed by leaders from the Haber Jeclo – a first in Somaliland politics. What were the challenges leading up to the polls? The last few years have been difficult for Somaliland, sullying its reputation as a relative beacon of stability and democratic

progress in the Horn of Africa. First, presidential and local council elections had been delayed for several years due to domestic political tensions. When the licenses for Somaliland's three permitted parties expired in late 2022, there was also little clarity on how or when the next slate of parties would be chosen. Presidential polls were due in November 2022, but confusion over the elections for licensed parties delayed the timetable: the government insisted on holding the party polls before the presidential contest, while the opposition argued the reverse should be the case. A compromise was hammered out in August 2023, paving the way for a joint presidential and party election in November 2024 after a two-year delay. The agreement came after violent clashes between government forces and protesters in major cities in August 2022 as well as a short-lived clan-based rebellion near the town of Burco, the region's second-largest city, in mid-2023. Secondly, the conflict in Sool between the Somaliland government and Dhulbahante clan militias dented Somaliland's reputation for internal stability. Members of Somaliland's Isaaq clan led the agitation for independence from Somalia following years of insurgency against the country's strongman ruler Siad Barre, who held power in Mogadishu from 1969 to 1991. But the majority of Sool's population are Dhulbahante, a community that belongs to a non-Isaaq family, the Darod. The desire for independence is **not shared by all** communities in the territory claimed by Somaliland, and the outbreak of violence demonstrated this. In early 2023, Dhulbahante elders and elites formed the Sool, Sanaag and Cayn-Khatumo (SSC-K) administration in Sool region, representing the clan, along with Fiqishine and Madiban clans in the area. The administration led the campaign to expel Somaliland forces in August 2023, and has since declared itself part of Somalia rather than Somaliland. The immediate inception of the conflict in Sool can be traced to the assassination of a Dhulbahante opposition member in Las Anod, the region's administrative capital, in December 2022. Protesters gathered in the town after the assassination, complaining that the Somaliland authorities had not made enough effort to stop the repeated killings of civic leaders. Police moved in to disperse the demonstrators, using excessive force. A full-fledged insurgency ensued. The Somaliland military and Dhulbahante clan militias, backed up by other related clans, fought a fierce war between February and August 2023 in which more than 150,000 civilians were displaced, many of them fleeing to Ethiopia. Somaliland forces fell back to the town of Oog in August 2023, where they remain. Fighting **has not restarted** since, although troops remain deployed on the front lines. Coupled with the lack of engagement between Sool, Sanaag and Cayn-Khatumo and the Somaliland government, the **risk of the conflict reigniting remains**. Thirdly, outgoing President Bihi's moves to achieve the first-ever foreign recognition of Somaliland also helped shape the outcome of the election. In January 2024, he hastily signed a memorandum of understanding with Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed which reportedly stated that Ethiopia could lease land on the Somaliland coast to build a naval base, in exchange for Addis Ababa providing official recognition of the administration as a sovereign state. The agreement sparked a regional uproar: Somalia condemned it as a violation of its sovereignty and subsequently demanded that all Ethiopian forces deployed in the country depart. (Ethiopia has troops there as part of the African Union mission and on a bilateral basis in support of Mogadishu's fight against Al-Shabaab militants.) The reactions within Somaliland were more equivocal. Some hailed it as a bold step towards securing independence. Others, however, criticised the lack of transparency, as well as the prospect of Ethiopia establishing a military installation on soil inhabited by ethnic Somalis, many of whom regard the country as a regional rival. Others viewed the agreement as no more than a ploy by Bihi to strengthen his flagging political prospects through an appeal to Somaliland nationalism. With Ethiopia facing concerted diplomatic pushback, the deal has as of yet had no meaningful effect in practice. But it remains a source of contention – particularly in the Horn of Africa – and the mere existence of the memorandum of understanding contributed to a tense pre-electoral environment. None of these controversies, however, managed to override the **smooth conduct of elections**, demonstrating Somaliland leaders' commitment to the ballot box and sustaining the progress that the region has made toward developing democratic institutions. The National Electoral Commission and Supreme Court in particular showed leadership and independence during the electoral process. Bihi's administration, meanwhile, successfully oversaw logistical challenges and refrained from manipulating the vote. What should be the incoming administration's domestic priorities? The conclusion of the elections is an opportunity for Somaliland to move on from an electoral process that concluded peacefully while also exposing the extent of its divisions. Somaliland's new leadership faces a clutch of major challenges. Its domestic politics are increasingly fractious; the relationship with the Dhulbahante clan (and the frozen conflict in Sool) **remains tense**; and the memorandum of understanding with Ethiopia continues to stir diplomatic bickering. Meanwhile, electoral democracy itself could face a new threat as the benefits of holding political power and the costs of losing it rise due to mounting foreign investment in Somaliland, giving top government officials far greater economic sway and access to financial resources. Important economic developments include the 2016 arrangement for the DP World logistics company, based in the United Arab Emirates, to manage and expand Somaliland's main port of Berbera. This will allow Somaliland to profit from an important trade route linking states in the Horn of Africa to the Gulf of Aden and Red Sea shipping lanes. But for now, successful polls, and a smooth transfer of power, will go some way to **cooling domestic political tensions and redressing the reputational damage** Somaliland suffered as a result of the delayed polls and conflict in Sool. Incoming President Cirro – a long-time opposition leader who was speaker of Somaliland's lower house from 2005 to 2017 – should take the opportunity to prioritise dialogue and de-escalation, moving on from the aggressive and antagonistic approaches that have prevailed over the last few years in Somaliland. To minimise post-election tensions, the incoming administration should demonstrate its commitment to governing on behalf **of all Somalilanders**, rather than just the communities that form its clan-based coalition. A first step would

be to ensure that ministerial appointments in the new administration reflect a wide range of clans, not simply those that are most politically dominant, while also including more women's voices to counter the marked gender bias in Somaliland's political establishment. The new administration should also work to respect civil liberties and reverse recent efforts to curb these, a trend that has been manifested in the rising number of arrests of journalists and opposition politicians, including the detention of a member of parliament during the pre-electoral period.

Affirming sparks civil war --- clan dynamics ensure conflict.

Batten 24 [Dr. Karl Von Batten, senior government advisor and founder of the Von Batten-Montague-York, L.C. policy advocacy group, 12-9-2024, Growing concern that the push for U.S. recognition of Somaliland will lead to civil war in Somaliland, https://foreignpolicynews.org/2022/05/13/growing-concern-that-the-push-for-u-s-recognition-of-somaliland-will-lead-to-civil-war-in-somaliland/] BZ

Unfortunately, history shows that well-intentioned U.S. foreign policies based on a simplistic understanding of internal dynamics in each country in Africa have resulted in more problems. The upheavals in Libya and South Sudan are recent examples of American and European good intentions turning into disasters. We Americans tend to look at things through the lens of good guys versus bad guys and freedom versus perceived oppression, enacting policies or government actions based on these conceptual viewpoints. In this way, the self-declared state of Somaliland appears to be the latest potential victim of U.S. good intentions. There is a push by a group of highly respected individuals in Washington, D.C. for the U.S. to recognize Somaliland as an independent country separate from Somalia. Joshua Meservey, a senior policy analyst for Africa and the Middle East at the Heritage Foundation, is one of the finest minds when it comes to U.S. policies focused on Africa, and he is a strong advocate for U.S recognition of Somaliland as an independent country. On May 06, 2020, Joshua published a piece on the Heritage Foundation's Daily Signal website titled "Somalilanders' Quest for Independence Isn't 'Neocolonial' Plot. It's Self-Determination." In it, he said, "It is Somalilanders, and no one else, who have split themselves from Somalia, just as the Eritreans did from Ethiopia in 1991, and the South Sudanese did from Sudan in 2019"[4]. Eritrean and South Sudanese independence movements both led to wars that, in part, are still being waged today[5][6]. Therefore, I do not think those are good examples to argue for Somaliland's independence. Joshua is correct in that Somaliland did declare independence from Somalia in 1991. Nevertheless, what is missing from Joshua's comment is that not all Somalis/Somalilanders in Somaliland are pro-secession from Somalia—many are against it. This dissent is why there is **strong opposition by many** Somalis/Somalilanders and Somaliland-Americans against U.S. recognition of Somaliland. The opposition to U.S. recognition of Somaliland has little to do with independence from Somalia and everything to do with a **power struggle** between the clans. As with most African states with multiple tribes and clans, Somaliland is **not unified**. Somaliland is made up of five clans, namely the Isaak, the Dhulbahante, the Isse, the Warsangali, and the Gadabuursi. The Isaak is the clan in power and pushing for independence. The four opposing clans—the Dhulbahante, the Isse, the Warsangali, and the Gadabuursi—oppose the U.S. recognition of Somaliland because they know that will **translate to financial and military aid** to the Somaliland government, which is **controlled by the Isaak clan**. The fear among the other clans is that U.S. aid to the Somaliland government, and therefore the Isaak clan, will allow the Isaak clan to **dominate the other clans and take control of their land**. Currently, the Somaliland government only has complete control over Isaak territory, where the Somaliland capital, Hargeysa, is also located. However, the recently introduced House and Senate Bills proposing the U.S. recognition of Somaliland and the expansion of the U.S. military relationship with Somaliland have increased **political anxieties** in Somaliland. The opposing clans are now openly discussing the eventuality of a **civil war** against the Isaak clan. All it takes to start a war in Africa is a few people with Avtomat Kalashnikov (AK) 47s. .I urge caution when it comes to Somaliland. This is why I support the current U.S. policy that calls for the African Union, Somalia, and Somaliland to resolve the Somaliland issue amongst themselves—this is the right approach. It is up to Africans to decide their fate. The days of Americans and Europeans dictating or influencing the borders of sovereign African countries should be left in the last century. I am opposed to H.R. 7170, the Republic of Somaliland Independence Act, and Section 5 of S.3861, the Somaliland Partnership Act. Two pieces of legislation that directly and indirectly violate Somalia's sovereignty. U.S. foreign policy must be color blind; we as Americans cannot oppose Russia's violation of Ukraine's borders and sovereignty and then turn around and put forward legislation that violates the borders and sovereignty of an African state. The one rule for Europe and a different rule for Africa has not gone unnoticed by Africans. Instead of pushing legislation and policies that will further divide the region and lead to civil war, the U.S. can play a constructive role in the Somaliland issue; we can help the

African Union facilitate a national dialogue between the opposing clans, the Somali government, and the government of Somaliland. The U.S. can also help by assisting in developing a road map for peace that will ensure peace and prosperity for all Somalis. This is a logical way forward. Unlike Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, and South Sudan, when it comes to Somaliland, we cannot pretend that the deadly outcome of possible U.S. policy missteps is unknown.

-> add spill over, like emboldening separtist movements

Somaliland civil war draws in great powers.

Horton 23 [Michael Horton, research fellow @ the Jamestown Foundation and a co-founder of Red Sea Analytics International (RSAI), 3-2-2023, Clan fighting threatens Somaliland's independent, hard-fought security, Responsible Statecraft, https://responsiblestatecraft.org/2023/03/02/clan-fighting-threatens-somalilands-independent-hard-fought-security/] Aaron

For much of the last 20 years, the autonomous, but unrecognized, Republic of Somaliland has been a bastion of stability in the perennially unstable Horn of Africa. However, fighting between the **government of Somaliland** and **clan based militias** in the eastern region of Sool threatens to upend the **security** and **stability** Somaliland has long enjoyed. Somaliland's **strategic position** in the Horn of Africa combined with the recent confirmation of viable **oil reserves**, all mean that the **stakes are** high not only for Somaliland but for the **broader region**. The fighting may also allow **al-Shabaab** to **capitalize** on the instability and finally establish a **foothold** in Somaliland **which has,** for years, **successfully fought off the terrorist group**. Since February 6, Las Anod — the regional capital of Sool — has witnessed escalating violence as militias broadly aligned with the Dhulbahante clan battle the army of Somaliland for control of the town and its outskirts. More than a hundred people have died as a result of the fighting and **thousands** have been **displaced**. The fighting in Las Anod is partly driven, as is often the case in Somalia, by **clan-centric politics**. The Dhulbahante clan claims Las Anod as its capital and is the predominant clan in much of the region of Sool. Somaliland, which bases its borders on those that demarcated British Somaliland, regards Sool as part of its territory. Since 2007 when Somaliland seized Las Anod from militias aligned with the semi-autonomous region of Puntland, the government of Somaliland has lightly administered Sool and its capital of Las Anod. On December 26 of last year, a politician from Somaliland's opposition political party, Wadaani, who was also a member of the Dhulbahante clan, was assassinated by unknown assailants in Las Anod. Protesters subsequently took to the streets of the town and were engaged by Somaliland's security forces. Local media claims that 20 protesters were killed during altercations with security forces. On February 6, some elders from the Dhulbahante clan announced that they intended to form a semi-autonomous state administered by Somalia rather than Somaliland. Since the February announcement, fighting between Somaliland's military and clan aligned militias has intensified despite the government's declaration of a unilateral ceasefire and an attempted intervention by clan elders from across Somaliland. The fighting may also be **drawing in** forces from neighboring **Puntland** which the government of Somaliland charges with supporting the uprising in Las Anod. While there are legitimate local grievances driving the fighting in Las Anod, the conflict will almost **certainly** be exploited by **al-Shabaab**. The government of Somaliland has already warned that al-Shabaab **operatives** have **infiltrate**d some of the **militias** fighting to control Las Anod. While there is no firm open source evidence of this, it is likely that al-Shabaab will, if it already hasn't, take full **advantage** of the instability in and around Las Anod to establish itself in Somaliland's eastern regions. Al-Shabaab and the Islamic State in Somalia (ISS) are both well-established in Puntland. Al-Shabaab's intelligence wing, the Amniyat, has, for years, expertly assessed and exploited clan rivalries for its benefit. At the same time, al-Shabaab, like most terrorist and insurgent organizations, is first and foremost a business. Al-Shabaab, like any organization, must be able to fund itself and enrich its own elites. Thus al-Shabaab is deeply enmeshed in Somalia's political and economic ecosystems. Al-Shabaab operatives and fighters are often knowingly and unknowingly used as political and economic tools by Somali elites to achieve particular agendas. For years, **Somaliland's** security and intelligence services have effectively countereded al-Shabaab, and the **terror** group has not carried out a major attack in Somaliland since a suicide bombing in the capital city of Hargeisa in 2008. Somaliland's intelligence gathering and counter-terrorism efforts have long been community-centric, both because this approach has proven effective, and out of need. Somaliland's budget for its military and security and intelligence services is a rounding error when compared with that of Somalia, which has received and continues to receive hundreds of millions of dollars in aid from foreign governments, including the US. Notably, the government of Somalia, which has launched yet another campaign to combat al-Shabaab, has now adopted some of Somaliland's community-centric approaches to

counter-terrorism. Somaliland has charted an independent course since its declaration of independence from Somalia in 1991. Over the last three decades, Somaliland has, with little outside assistance, steadily built-out its **state institutions** and held **multiple internationally monitored elections**. Despite receiving miniscule amounts of international aid, Somaliland's cities, particularly Hargeisa and Berbera, have undergone **rapid development.** UAE based DP World has funded the expansion of the regionally vital port of Berbera. Most significantly, in light of the current conflict, multiple companies, including Taiwan based CPC Corp, are investing in the exploration and development of Somaliland's potentially substantial oil reserves. On the other hand, Somaliland is one of the few countries in Africa that has spurned both Russian and Chinese offers of aid and investment. Rather than accept these offers, Somaliland, which values its relationship with the UK and the US, has instead developed its relations with Taiwan and other nations that support its autonomy. **Global** and **regional powers** are **engaged** in a new battle for access to the **Horn's resources**. The Horn is viewed by **China** and the **Gulf States** as well as **Turkey** as the eastern door to Africa's **vast** and still largely **untapped natural resources.** Somaliland's **geo-strategic position** and the likelihood that it has commercially viable **oil** as well as other resources, place it at the **center** of a **combustible** mix of **competing interests** and **agendas**. The current conflict in Las Anod will almost certainly be **exploited** by not only al-Shabaab, but also those **local, regional,** and **global powers** that have an interest in moving their own particular agendas forward. If the fighting in Las Anod is not brought to a **quick end** through **meaningful negotiations by all sides**, the **conflict** will **intensify** and continue to spread to **neighboring regions**. **Al-Shabaab** and the **Islamic State** in Somalia will be the **chief beneficiaries** of such spread and intensification. **Somaliland has a history of solving problems and abating conflict through customary dispute resolution mechanisms.** All parties to the current conflict must step back from the brink and allow these mechanisms to function before groups like al-Shabaab and outside actors are able to fully subvert de-confliction efforts. Prolonged fighting will compromise not only Somaliland's hard-earned security and stability, but further erode **security** and **stability** in the broader **region**.

Extinction!

Clare 23 [Stephen Clare, "Great power war", Invalid date, https://www.facebook, https://80000hours.org/problem-profiles/great-power-conflict/]/SS

At some point **in** the 21st century, an unwinnable war may be fought. **A** modern **great power war** could see nuclear weapons, bioweapons, autonomous weapons, and other destructive new technologies deployed on an unprecedented scale. It would probably be the most destructive event in history, shattering our world. It could even threaten us with extinction. We've come perilously close to just this kind of catastrophe before. On October 27, 1962 — near the peak of the Cuban Missile Crisis — an American U-2 reconnaissance plane set out on a routine mission to the Arctic to collect data on Soviet nuclear tests. But, while flying near the North Pole, with the stars obscured by the northern lights, the pilot made a navigation error and strayed into Soviet airspace.1 Soviet commanders sent fighter jets to intercept the American plane. The jets were picked up by American radar operators and nuclear-armed F-102 fighters took off to protect the U-2. Fortunately, the reconnaissance pilot realised his error with enough time to correct course before the Soviet and American fighters met. But the intrusion enraged Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev, who was already on high alert amidst the crisis in Cuba. "What is this, a provocation?" Khrushchev wrote to US President John F. Kennedy. "One of your planes violates our frontier during this anxious time when everything has been put into combat readiness." If the U-2's path had strayed further west, or the Soviet fighters had been fast enough to intercept it, this incident could have played out quite differently. Both the United States and the USSR had thousands of nuclear missiles ready to fire. Instead of a nearly-forgotten anecdote, the U-2 incident could have been a trigger for war, like the assassination of Franz Ferdinand. Competition among the world's most powerful countries shapes our world today. And whether it's through future incidents like the lost U-2, or something else entirely, it's plausible that it could escalate and lead to a major, devastating war. Is there anything you can do to help avoid such a terrible outcome? It is, of course, difficult to imagine how any one individual can hope to influence such world-historical events. Even the most powerful world leaders often fail to predict the global consequences of their decisions. But I think the likelihood and severity of great power war makes this among the most pressing problems of our time — and that some solutions could be impactful enough that working on them may be one of the highest-impact things to do with your career. By taking action, I think we can create a future where the threat of great power war is a distant memory rather than an ever-present danger. Summary Economic growth and technological progress have bolstered the arsenals of the world's most powerful countries. That means the next war between them could be far worse than World War II, the deadliest conflict humanity has yet experienced. Could such a war actually occur? We can't rule out the possibility. Technical **accidents or** diplomatic **misunderstandings could** spark a conflict that quickly **escalates**. Or international **tension** could **cause leaders to** decide they're better off **fight**ing **than negotiating**. It seems hard to make progress on this problem. It's also less neglected than some of the problems that we think are most pressing. There are certain issues, like making nuclear weapons or military artificial intelligence systems safer, which seem promising — although

it may be more impactful to work on reducing risks from AI, bioweapons or nuclear weapons directly. You might also be able to reduce the chances of misunderstandings and miscalculations by developing expertise in one of the most important bilateral relationships (such as that between the United States and China). Finally, by making conflict less likely, reducing competitive pressures on the development of dangerous technology, and improving international cooperation, you might be helping to reduce other risks, like the chance of future pandemics. Our overall view Recommended Working on this issue seems to be among the best ways of improving the long-term future we know of, but all else equal, we think it's less pressing than our highest priority areas (primarily because it seems less neglected and harder to solve). Scale There's a significant chance that a new great power war occurs this century. Although the world's most powerful countries haven't fought directly since World War II, war has been a constant throughout human history. There have been numerous close calls, and several issues could cause diplomatic disputes in the years to come. These considerations, along with forecasts and statistical models, lead me to think there's about a one-in-three chance that a new great power war breaks out in roughly the next 30 years. 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. Could it become an existentially threatening war — one that could cause human extinction or significantly damage the prospects of the long-term future? It's very difficult to say. But my best current guess is that the chance of an existential catastrophe due to war in the next century is somewhere between 0.05% and 2%. Neglectedness War is a lot less neglected than some of our other top problems. There are thousands of people in governments, think tanks, and universities already working on this problem. But some solutions or approaches remain neglected. One particularly promising approach is to develop expertise at the intersection of international conflict and another of our top problems. Experts who understand both geopolitical dynamics and risks from advanced artificial intelligence, for example, are sorely needed. Solvability Reducing the risk of great power war seems very difficult. But there are specific technical problems that can be solved to make weapons systems safer or less likely to trigger catastrophic outcomes. And in the best case, working on this problem can have a leverage effect, making the development of several dangerous technologies safer by improving international cooperation and making them less likely to be deployed in war. At the end of this profile, I suggest five issues which I'd be particularly excited to see people work on. These are: Developing expertise in the riskiest bilateral relationships Learning how to manage international crises quickly and effectively and ensuring the systems to do so are properly maintained Doing research to improve particularly important foreign policies, like strategies for sanctions and deterrence Improving how nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction are governed at the international level Improving how such weapons are controlled at the national level Profile depth In-depth This is one of many profiles we've written to help people find the most pressing problems they can solve with their careers. Learn more about how we compare different problems, see how we try to score them numerically, and see how this problem compares to the others we've considered so far. Why might preventing great power war be an especially pressing problem? A modern great power war — an all-out conflict between the world's most powerful countries — could be the worst thing to ever happen to humanity. Historically, such wars have been exceptionally destructive. Sixty-six million people died in World War II, likely the deadliest catastrophe humanity has experienced so far. Since World War II, the global population and world economy have continued to grow, nuclear weapons have proliferated, and military technology has continued to advance. This means the next world war could be even worse, just as World War II was much deadlier than World War I. It's not guaranteed that such a war will break out. And if it does, it may not escalate to such a terrible extent. But the chance can't be ignored. In fact, there are reasons to think that the odds of World War III breaking out this century are worryingly high. A modern great power war would be devastating for people alive today. But its effects could also persist long into the future. That's because there is a substantial chance that this century proves to be particularly important. Technologies with the potential to cause a global catastrophe or radically reshape society are likely to be invented. How we choose to develop and deploy them could impact huge numbers of our descendants. And these choices would be affected by the outcomes of a major war. To be more specific, there are three main ways great power conflict could affect the long-term future: High international tension could increase other risks. Great power tensions could make the world more dangerous even if they don't lead to war. During the Cold War, for example, the United States and the USSR never came into direct conflict but invested in bioweapons research and built up nuclear arsenals. This dynamic could return, with tension between great powers fueling races to develop and build new weapons, raising the risk of a disaster even before shots are fired. War could cause an existential catastrophe. If war does break out, it could escalate dramatically, with modern weapons (nuclear weapons, bioweapons, autonomous weapons, or other future technologies) deployed at unprecedented scale. The resulting destruction could irreparably damage humanity's prospects. War could reshape international institutions and power balances. While such a catastrophic war is possible, it seems extremely unlikely. But even a less deadly war, such as another conflict on the scale of World War II, could have very long-lasting effects. For example, it could reshape international institutions and the global balance of power. In a pivotal century, different institutional arrangements and geopolitical balances could cause humanity to follow different long-term trajectories. The rest of this profile explores exactly how pressing a problem great power conflict is. In summary: Great power relations have become more tense. (More.) Partly as a result, a war is more likely than you might think. It's reasonable to put the probability of such a conflict in the coming decades somewhere between 10% and 50%. (More.) If war breaks out, it would probably be hard to control escalation. The chance that it would become large enough to be an existential risk cannot be dismissed. (More.) This makes great power war one of the biggest threats our species currently faces. (More.) It seems hard to make progress on solving such a difficult problem (more) — but there are many things you can try if you want to help (more). International tension has risen and makes other problems worse Imagine we had a thermometer-like device which, instead of measuring temperature, measured the level of international tension.2 This 'tension metre' would max out during periods of all-out global war, like World War II. And it would be relatively low when the great powers3 were peaceful and cooperative. For much of the post-Napoleonic 1800s, for example, the powerful European nations instituted the Concert of Europe and mostly upheld a continental peace. The years following the fall of the USSR also seem like a time of relative calm, when the tension metre would have been quite low.4 How much more worried would you be about the coming decades if you knew the tension metre would be very high than if you knew it would be low? Probably quite a lot. In the worst case, of course, the great powers could come into direct conflict. But even if it doesn't lead to war, a high level of tension between great powers could accelerate the development of new strategic technologies, make it harder to solve global problems like climate change, and undermine international institutions. During the Cold War, for instance, the United States and USSR avoided coming into direct conflict. But the tension metre would still have been pretty high. This led to some dangerous events: A nuclear arms race. The number of nuclear warheads in the world grew from just 300 in 1950 to over 64,000 in 1986. The development of new bioweapons. Despite signing the Biological Weapons Convention in 1972, the search for military advantages motivated Soviet decision makers to continue investing in bioweapon development for decades. Although never used in combat, biological agents were accidentally released from research facilities, resulting in

dozens of deaths and threatening to cause a pandemic.5 Nuclear close calls. Military accidents and false alarms happened regularly, and top decision makers were more likely to interpret these events hostilely when tensions were high. On several occasions it seems the decision about whether or not to start a nuclear war came down to individuals acting under stress and with limited time. This makes international tension an existential risk factor. It's connected to a number of other problems, which means reducing the level of international tension would lower the total amount of existential risk we face. The level of tension today Recently, international tension seems to have once again been rising. To highlight some of the most salient examples: China-United States relations have deteriorated, leading to harsh diplomatic rhetoric and protectionist trade policies that aim to reduce the countries' economic interdependence. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has killed about a hundred thousand people so far, raised the risk of nuclear war, and sent United States-Russia relations to their lowest point since the Cold War. Chinese and Indian soldiers fought deadly skirmishes along their countries' disputed border in 2020–21. These dynamics raise an important question: how much more dangerous is the world given this higher tension than it would be in a world of low tension? I think the answer is quite a bit more dangerous — for several reasons. First, international tension seems likely to make technological progress more dangerous. There's a good chance that, in the coming decades, humanity will make some major technological breakthroughs. We've discussed, for example, why one might worry about the effects of advanced artificial intelligence systems or biotechnology. The level of tension could strongly affect how these technologies are developed and governed. Tense relations could, for example, cause countries to neglect safety concerns in order to develop technology faster.6 Second, great power relations will strongly influence how nations do, or do not, cooperate to solve other global collective action problems. For example, in 2022, China withdrew from bilateral negotiations with the United States over climate action in protest of what it perceived as American diplomatic aggression in Taiwan. That same year, efforts to strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention were reportedly hampered by the Russian delegation after their country's invasion of Ukraine raised tensions with the United States and other western countries. And third, if relations deteriorate severely, the great powers could fight a war. How likely is a war? Wars are destructive and risky for all countries involved. Modern weapons, especially nuclear warheads, make starting a great power war today seem like a suicidal undertaking. But factors like the prevalence of war throughout history, the chance that leaders make mistakes, conflicting ideologies, and commitment problems, make me think that conflict could break out anyway. On balance, I think such an event is somewhat unlikely but hardly unthinkable. To quantify this: I put the chance we experience some kind of war between great powers before 2050 at about one-in-three.7 War has occurred regularly in the past One reason to think a war is quite likely is that such conflicts have been so common in the past. Over the past 500 years, about two great power wars have occurred per century.8 Naively, this would mean that every year there's a 2% chance such a war occurs, implying the chance of experiencing at least one great power war over the next 80 years — roughly until the end of the century — is about 80%.9 This is a very simple model. In reality, the risk is not constant over time and independent across years. But it shows that if past trends simply continue, the outcome is likely to be very bad. Has great power war become less likely? One of the most important criticisms of this model is that it assumes the risk is constant over time. Some researchers have argued instead that, especially since the end of World War II, major conflicts have become much less likely due to: Nuclear deterrence: Nuclear weapons are so powerful and destructive that it's just too costly for nuclear-armed countries to start wars against each other.10 Democratisation: Democracies have almost never gone to war against each other, perhaps because democracies are more interconnected and their leaders are under more public pressure to peacefully resolve disputes with each other.11 The proportion of countries that are democratic has increased from under 10% in 1945 to about 50% today. Strong economic growth and global trade: Global economic growth accelerated following World War II and the value of global exports grew by a factor of almost 30 between 1950 and 2014. Since war disrupts economies and international trade, strong growth raises the costs of fighting.12 The spread of international institutions: Multilateral bodies like the United Nations General Assembly and Security Council promote diplomatic dialogue and facilitate coordination to punish transgressors.13 It is true that we are living through an unusually long period of great power peace. It's been about 80 years since World War II. We just saw that a simple model using the historical frequency of great power wars suggests there was only a 20% chance of going that long without at least one more war breaking out. This is some evidence in favour of the idea that wars have become significantly less common. At the same time, we shouldn't feel too optimistic. The numerous close calls during the Cold War suggest we were somewhat lucky to avoid a major war in that time. And a 20% chance of observing 80 years of peace is not that low.14 Structural changes might have dramatically reduced the likelihood of war. Or perhaps we've just been lucky. It could even be that technological advances have made war less likely to break out, but more deadly when it occurs, leaving the overall effect on the level of risk ambiguous. It just hasn't been long enough to support a decisive view.15 So while the recent historical trend is somewhat encouraging, we don't have nearly enough data to be confident that great power war is a thing of the past. To better predict the likelihood of future conflict, we should also consider distinctive features of our modern world.16 One might think that a modern great power war would simply be so destructive that no state leader would ever choose to start one. And some researchers do think that the destruction such a war would wreak globally makes it less likely to occur. But it would be hard to find anyone who claims this dynamic has driven the risk to zero. First, a war could be started by accident. Second, sometimes even prudent leaders may struggle to avoid a slide towards war. We could blunder into war An accidental war can occur if one side mistakes some event as an aggressive action by an adversary. This happened several times during the Cold War. The earlier example of the wayward American reconnaissance plane shows how routine military exercises carry some escalation risk. Similarly, throughout history, nervous pilots and captains have caused serious incidents by attacking civilian planes and ships.17 Nuclear weapons allow for massive retaliatory strikes to be launched quickly — potentially too quickly to allow for such situations to be explained and de-escalated. It is perhaps more likely, though, that an accidental war could be triggered by a technological malfunction. Faulty computers and satellites have previously triggered nuclear close calls. As monitoring systems have become more reliable, the rate at which such accidents have occurred has been going down. But it would be overconfident to think that technological malfunctions have become impossible. Future technological changes will likely raise new challenges for nuclear weapon control. There may be pressure to integrate artificial intelligence systems into nuclear command and control to allow for faster data processing and decision making. And AI systems are known to behave unexpectedly when deployed in new environments.18 New technologies will also create new accident risks of their own, even if they're not connected to nuclear weapon systems. Although these risks are hard to predict, they seem significant. I'll say more about how such technologies — including AI, nuclear, biological, and autonomous weapons — are likely to increase war risks later. Leaders could choose war All that said, most wars have not started by accident. If another great power war does break out in the coming decades, it is more likely to be an intentional decision made by a national leader. Explaining why someone might make such a costly, destructive, unpredictable, and risky decision has been called "the central puzzle about war." It has motivated researchers to search for "rationalist" explanations for war. In his 2022 book Why We Fight, for example, economist Chris Blattman proposes five basic explanations: unchecked interests, intangible incentives, uncertainty, commitment problems, and misperceptions.19 Blattman's Five (Rationalist) Explanations for War This section discusses how great power tensions may escalate to war in the

next few decades. It focuses on three potential conflicts in particular: war between the US and China, between the US and Russia, and between China and India. These are discussed because each of these countries are among the world's largest economies and military spenders, and seem particularly likely to fight. At the end, I briefly touch on other potential large conflicts. Source: Author's figure using data from: Kevin Daly and Tadas Gedminas, "Global Economics Paper The Path to 2075 — Slower Global Growth, But Convergence Remains Intact," Global Economics Paper (Goldman Sachs, December 6, 2022), https://www.goldmansachs.com/intelligence/pages/gs-research/the-path-to-2075-slower-global-growth-but-convergence-remains-intact/report.pdf. United States-China The most worrying possibility is war between the United States and China. They are easily the world's largest economies. They spend by far the most on their militaries. Their diplomatic relations are tense and have recently worsened. And their relationship has several of the characteristics that Blattman identifies as causes of war. At the core of the United States-China relationship is a commitment problem. China's economy is growing faster than the United States'. By some metrics, it is already larger.20 If its differential growth continues, the gap will continue to widen between it and the United States. While economic power is not the sole determinant of military power, it is a key factor.21 The United States and China may be able to strike a fair deal today. But as China continues to grow faster, that deal may come to seem unbalanced. Historically, such commitment problems seem to have made these kinds of transition periods particularly dangerous.22 In practice, the United States and China may find it hard to agree on rules to guide their interactions, such as how to run international institutions or govern areas of the world where their interests overlap. The most obvious issue which could tip the United States-China relationship from tension into war is a conflict over Taiwan. Taiwan's location and technology industries are valuable for both great powers. This issue is further complicated by intangible incentives. For the United States, it is also a conflict over democratic ideals and the United States' reputation for defending its allies. For China, it is also a conflict about territorial integrity and addressing what are seen as past injustices. Still, forecasts suggest that while a conflict is certainly possible, it is far from inevitable. As of 8 June 2023, one aggregated forecast23 gives a 17% chance of a United States-China war breaking out before 2035.24 A related aggregated forecast of the chance that at least 100 deaths occur in conflict between China and Taiwan by 2050 gives it, as of 8 June 2023, a much higher 68% chance of occurring.25 United States-Russia Russia is the United States' other major geopolitical rival. Unlike China, Russia is not a rival in economic terms: even after adjusting for purchasing power, its economy is only about one-fifth the size of the United States'. However, Russia devotes a substantial fraction of its economy to its military. Crucially, it has the world's largest nuclear arsenal. And Russian leadership has shown a willingness to project power beyond their country's borders. Country Military spending in 2021 (2020 USD, PPP adjusted) United States 801 billion China 293 billion India 76.6 billion United Kingdom 68.4 billion Russia 65.9 billion Top five countries by estimated military spending, 2021. Source: SIPRI Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine demonstrated the dangers of renewed rivalry between Russia and the United States-led West. The war has already been hugely destructive: the largest war in Europe since World War II, with hundreds of thousands of casualties already and no end to the conflict in sight. And it could get much worse. Most notably, Russian officials have repeatedly refused to rule out the use of nuclear weapons. Unchecked interests and intangible incentives are again at play here. Vladimir Putin leads a highly-centralised government. He has spoken about how his desire to rebuild Russia's reputation played in his decision to invade Ukraine. Given their ideological differences and history of rivalry, it is reasonable to expect that the United States and Russia will continue to experience dangerous disagreements in the future. As of 8 June 2023, an aggregated forecast gives a 20% chance that the United States and Russia will fight a war involving at least 1,000 battle deaths before 2050. China-India India is already the world's third-largest economy. If national growth rates remain roughly constant, the size of the Indian economy will surpass that of the United States' sometime this century. India also has nuclear weapons and is already the world's third-largest military spender (albeit at a much lower level than China or the United States). One reason to worry that China and India could fight a war is that they already dispute territory along their border. Countries that share a border, especially when it is disputed, are more likely to go to war than countries that do not. By one count, 88% of the wars that occurred between 1816 and 1980 began as wars between neighbours.26 In fact, China and India already fought a brief but violent border war in 1962. Deadly skirmishes have continued since, resulting in deaths as recently as 2020. Forecasters agree that a China-India conflict seems relatively (though not absolutely) likely. An aggregated forecast gives a 19% chance of war before 2035. Other dangerous conflicts These three conflicts — United States-China, United States-Russia, and China-India — are not the only possible great power wars that could occur. Other potential conflicts could also pose existential risk, either because they drive dangerous arms races or see widespread deployment of dangerous weapons. We should keep in mind India-Pakistan as a particularly likely conflict between nuclear-armed states and China-Russia as a potential, though unlikely, conflict between great powers with a disputed border and history of war. Plus, new great powers may emerge or current great powers may fade in the years to come. While I think we should prioritise the three potential conflicts I've highlighted above, the future is highly uncertain. We should monitor geopolitical changes and be open to changing our priorities in the future. Overall predictions Below is a table listing relevant predictions from the forecasting platform Metaculus, including the number of predictions made, as of 10 March 2023. Note the different timescales and resolution criteria for each question; they may not be intuitively comparable. Prediction Resolution criteria Number of predictions Metaculus prediction World war by 2151 Either: A war killing >0.5% of global population, involving >50% of countries totalling >50% of global population from at least 4 continents. Or: A war killing at least >1% of global population, involving >10% of countries totalling >25% of global population 561 52% World War III before 2050 Involving countries >30% of world GDP OR >50% of world population AND >10M deaths 1640 20% Global thermonuclear war by 2070 EITHER: 3 countries each detonate at least 10 nuclear warheads of at least 10 kt yield outside of their territory OR 2 countries each detonate at least 50 nuclear warheads of at least 10 kt outside of their territory 337 11% When will be the next great power war? Any two of the top 10 nations by military spending are at war "At war" definition: EITHER Formal declaration OR Territory occupied AND at least 250 casualties OR Media sources describe them as "at war" 25th percentile: 2031 Median: 2048 75th percentile: 2088 Never (not before 2200): 8% No non-test nuclear detonations before 2035 No nuclear detonation other than controlled test [Note the negation in the question. It resolves negatively if a warhead is detonated] 321 69% At least 1 nuclear detonation in war by 2050 Resolves according to credible media reports 476 31% I have previously independently estimated the likelihood of seeing a World War III-like conflict this century. My calculation first adjusts historical base rates to allow for the possibility that major wars have become somewhat less likely, and uses the adjusted base rate to calculate the probability of seeing a war between now and 2100. This method gives a 45% chance of seeing a major great power war in the next 77 years. If the probability is constant over time then the cumulative probability between now and 2050 would be 22%. This is aligned with the Metaculus predictions above. We can also ask experts what they think. Unfortunately, there are surprisingly few expert predictions about the likelihood of major conflict. One survey was conducted by the Project for the Study of the 21st Century. The numbers were relatively aligned with the Metaculus forecasts, though slightly more pessimistic. However, it seems a mistake to put too much stock in this survey (see footnote).27 We now have at least a rough sense

of a great power war's probability. But how bad could it get if it occurred? A new great power war could be devastating At the time, the mechanised slaughter of World War I was a shocking step-change in the potential severity of warfare. But its severity was surpassed just 20 years later by the outbreak of World War II, which killed more than twice as many people. A modern great power war could be even worse. How bad have wars been in the past? The graph below shows how common wars of various sizes are, according to the Correlates of War's Interstate War dataset.28 The x-axis here represents war size in terms of the logarithm of the number of battle deaths. The y-axis represents the logarithm of the proportion of wars in the dataset that are at least that large. Using logarithms means that each step to the right in the graph represents a war not one unit larger, but 10 times larger. And each step up represents a war that is not one unit more likely, but 10 times more likely. Source: Author's figure. See the data here. Data source: Correlates of War Interwar dataset, v4.029 What the graph shows is that wars have a heavy tail. Most wars remain relatively small. But a few escalate greatly and become much worse than average. Of the 95 wars in the latest version of the database, the median battle death count is 8,000. But the heavy tail means the average is 334,000 battle deaths. And the worst war, World War II, had almost 17 million battle deaths.30 The number of battle deaths is only one way to measure the badness of wars. We could also consider the proportion of the population of the countries involved who were killed in battle. By this measure, the worst war since 1816 was not World War II. Instead, it's the Paraguayan War of 1864–70. In that war, 30 soldiers died for every 1,000 citizens of the countries involved. It's even worse if we also consider civilian deaths; while estimates are very uncertain, it's plausible that about half of the men in Paraguay, or around a quarter of the entire population, was killed.31 What if instead we compared wars by the proportion of the global population killed? World War II is again the worst conflict since 1816 on this measure, having killed about 3% of the global population. Going further back in time, though, we can find worse wars. Ghengis Khan's conquests likely killed about 9.5% of people in the world at the time. The heavy tail means that some wars will be shockingly large.32 The scale of World War I and World War II took people by surprise, including the leaders who initiated it. It's also hard to know exactly how big wars could get. We haven't seen many really large wars. So while we know there's a heavy tail of potential outcomes, we don't know what that tail looks like. That said, there are a few reasons to think that wars much worse than World War II are possible: We're statistically unlikely to have brushed up against the end of the tail, even if the tail has an upper bound. Other wars have been deadlier on a per-capita basis. So unless wars involving countries with larger populations are systematically less intense, we should expect to see more intense wars involving as many people as World War II. Economic growth and technological progress are continually increasing humanity's war-making capacity. This means that, once a war has started, we're at greater risk of extremely bad outcomes than we were in the past. So how bad could it get? How bad could a modern great power war be? Over time, two related factors have greatly increased humanity's capacity to make war. 33 First, scientific progress has led to the invention of more powerful weapons and improved military efficiency. Second, economic growth has allowed states to build larger armies and arsenals. Since World War II, the world economy has grown by a factor of more than 10 in real terms; the number of nuclear weapons in the world has grown from basically none to more than 9,000, and we've invented drones, missiles, satellites, and advanced planes, ships, and submarines. Ghengis Khan's conquests killed about 10% of the world, but this took place over the course of two decades. Today that proportion may be killed in a matter of hours. First, **nuclear weapons could be used**. Today there are around 10,000 nuclear warheads globally.34 At the peak of nuclear competition between the United States and the USSR, though, there were 64,000. If arms control agreements break down and competition resurges among two or even three great powers, nuclear arsenals could expand. In fact, China's arsenal is very likely to grow — though by how much remains uncertain. Many of the nuclear weapons in the arsenals of the great powers today are at least 10 times more powerful than the atomic bombs used in World War II.35 Should these weapons be used, the consequences would be catastrophic. Source: AI Impacts, Effect of nuclear weapons on historic trends in explosives By any measure, such a war would be by far the most destructive, dangerous event in human history, **with** the potential to cause billions of deaths. The probability that it would, on its own, lead to humanity's extinction or unrecoverable collapse, is contested. But there seems to be some possibility — whether through **a famine caused by nuclear winter**, **or** by **reducing** humanity's **resilience** enough that something else, like a catastrophic pandemic, would be far more likely **to reach extinction**-levels (read more in our problem profile on nuclear war). Nuclear weapons are **complemented** and amplified **by** a variety of other modern military technologies, including improved missiles, planes, submarines, and satellites. They are also not the only military technology with the potential to cause a global catastrophe — **bioweapons**, too, have the potential to cause massive harm through accidents or unexpected effects. What's more, humanity's war-making capacity seems poised to further increase in the coming years due to technological advances and economic growth. Technological progress could make it cheaper and easier for more states to develop weapons of mass destruction. In some cases, political and economic barriers will remain significant. Nuclear weapons are very expensive to develop and there exists a strong international taboo against their proliferation. In other cases, though, the hurdles to developing extremely powerful weapons may prove lower. Improvements in biotechnology will probably make it cheaper to develop bioweapons. Such weapons may provide the deterrent effect of nuclear weapons at a much lower price. They also seem harder to monitor from abroad, making it more difficult to limit their proliferation. And **they could spark a** global biological catastrophe, like a major — possibly **existential**ly catastrophic — **pandemic**. Artificial intelligence systems are also likely to become cheaper as well as more powerful. It is not hard to imagine important military implications of this technology. For example, AI systems could control large groups of lethal autonomous weapons (though the timeline on which such applications will be developed is unclear). They may increase the pace at which war is waged, enabling rapid escalation outside human control. And AI systems could speed up the development of other dangerous new technologies. Finally, we may have to deal with the invention of other weapons which we can't currently predict. The feasibility and danger of nuclear weapons was unclear to many military strategists and scientists until they were first tested. We could similarly experience the invention of destabilising new weapons in our lifetime. What these technologies have in common is the potential to quickly kill huge numbers of people: A nuclear war could kill tens of millions within hours, and many more in the following days and months. A runaway bioweapon could prove very difficult to stop. Future autonomous systems could act with lightning speed, even taking humans out of the decision-making loop entirely. Faster wars leave less time for humans to intervene, negotiate, and find a resolution that limits the damage. How likely is war to damage the long-run future? When a war begins, leaders often promise a quick, limited conflict. But escalation proves hard to predict ahead of time (perhaps because people are scope-insensitive, or because escalation depends on idiosyncratic decisions). This raises the possibility of enormous wars that threaten all of humanity.

2NC

On econ

1. [DL] Somaliland's economy is growing. Shaban Yusuf, from Saxafi Media, in 2024

[Shab'an H. Yusuf, May 28, 2024 , Saxafi Media, "The Economic Implications Of Somaliland-Ethiopia MoU: A Comprehensive Analysis"https://saxafimedia.com/economic-implications-somaliland-ethiopia-mou/]

Furthermore, **the economic performance of Somaliland is highlighted, showcasing its development** despite being an unrecognized territory within Somalia. The private sector, including telecommunications, remittances, and livestock exports, has played a significant role in driving economic growth and job creation. **The expansion of infrastructure, such as ports and road networks, has improved connectivity and facilitated trade in the region.**

In recent years, Somaliland's economy has experienced growth, with increased investment in infrastructure, trade activities, and recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic **contributing to a boost in real GDP. Inflation and exchange rate stability have been maintained, creating a favorable economic environment for investors in Somaliland.**

Overall, the paper provides a comprehensive analysis of the economic landscape in Somaliland, the implications of the memorandum with Ethiopia, and the key factors driving economic growth in the region.

Roape 23 (Roape, "Debating Somaliland", ROAPE, 7-11-2023, https://roape.net/2023/07/11/debating-somaliland-lack-of-recognition-and-conflict/ // DOA 1-4-2025 // [sai]

Commentators have suggested that **the international community, through increasing engagement** with Somaliland, has **fostered** the **conflict** in Laascaanood. We are, according to this line of reasoning, asked to believe that **accelerating external engagement is turning the state into a lucrative source of income, causing internal competition for control of the state**. As will be seen shortly, **this** line of reasoning **is problematic for a multitude of reasons.First, postponement of** a general **election**, which was initially scheduled for November 2022, **constitutes** the sole **evidence** marshalled in defence of the contention **that accelerating** external **engagement and** foreign **aid has led to internal competition for control of the state**. It should be readily evident to anyone who has studied Somaliland seriously that all presidents since 1993 have had their term in office extended.Before we can accept that **postponement of the latest general election is indicative of internal competition for control of the state, caused by external engagement and foreign aid,** one must explain what caused the postponement of previous elections. It is worth noting that the postponement of the latest general election was, as in previous cases, sanctioned by both Somaliland's upper house of parliament and the supreme court, challenging the idea that it can be construed as an example of increasing authoritarian tendencies.Second, as an unrecognized state, operating in the shadows of international relations, Somaliland has never been eligible for direct foreign aid. Furthermore, it is paramount to stress that the bulk of the funds that Somaliland receives, on paper, are often allocated to the salary of foreigners who do little more than occasionally deliver workshops on gender equality, good governance and the like.According to the World Bank, Somaliland's national budget increased threefold to about $130 million in the period between 2009 to 2012. The question

must therefore be raised of why significant increase of the national budget in the past did not raise the stakes, leading to internal competition for control of the state?A united Somaliland issued a communique to the United Nations in 1993, stressing that the organisation should keep it forces out of Somaliland and that Somaliland did not stand in need of external assistance in terms of reconciliation and peacebuilding. Representatives of all communities in Somaliland also stressed that they did not need the UN to offer food aid protection convoys as Somaliland was not receiving aid. By rejecting UN-led peace and reconciliation, social and political leaders in Somaliland also rejected foreign aid. It is indeed an empirically verifiable fact that Somaliland, at its darkest hour, recovering from a devastating civil war, rejected international assistance, including foreign aid.Yet we are asked to believe that the influx of external money is currently destabilising Somaliland by turning the state into a lucrative source of income. The suggestion that international engagement, intended to stabilise Somaliland, has had destabilising consequences is an untenable contention, devoid of evidence.The deep cause of the conflict in Laascaanood is best grasped through the intersection of limited state capacity and lack of economic development in eastern Somaliland, eroding the legitimacy of the state. As a result, the so-called international community should recognize that it, indirectly, bears a part of the responsibility for the conflict in Laascaanood.The treatment of Somaliland by the international community is deeply disappointing and raises doubts about the sincerity of the West in promoting so-called liberal values in the developing world. Somaliland has on its own achieved what the West claims to champion and is allegedly willing to wage wars for, e.g., democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.Yet, the so-called international community appears unwilling to grant Somaliland de jure recognition, thereby denying Somaliland access to global financial institutions.

1**. [T] FDI causes inequality based conflict. Kadjija Said, a Somaliland lawyer, in 2023 writes that [**Kadidja Said, 3-xx-2023, legal professional @ AQN International Law Firm based in Somaliland with a masters degree in international law from Aix-Marseille University, FDI in Somaliland: A Vehicle for Peacebuilding or a Source of Social Inequality?, Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies, https://instituteforpeace.org/publications/ipcs-briefing/FDI-in-Somaliland-A-Vehicle-for-Peacebuilding-or-a-Source-of-Social-Inequality-1.pdf] BZ

Despite lacking international recognition, Somaliland has dealt with international companies and foreign governments for economic and political purposes. But, getting **recognition will not solve** and answer the social and **economic problems faced by Somaliland.** However, this needs rethinking and reformulating the state policies and strategies, for example, create legal and political framework necessary to qualify for foreign direct investments and design forms of cooperation with the international actors. Not only the international actors, but also creating positive public posture within the state citizens and distribution of the state resources among the citizens can strengthen the social contract and cohesion. **investors in postconflict countries are not concerned about** corporate social **responsibility** and **their** main **goal is to** make **profits**. This suggests that the expectations of foreign investors to solve economic problems and contribute to the equal distribution of the benefits from the investment may not hold. In some host countries, FDI can be a source of destabilisation and disturb the existing balance, especially **in** the case of **Somaliland.** FDI Destabilizing Factor FDI presents some challenges and risks that could destabilise a country by increasing inequalities. In the case of Somaliland, FDI can disturb the existing balance of the country and lead to more tension but these challenges can be surmounted. Challenges and Risks of FDI While the attraction of FDI allows a country to improve its economic conditions, some studies show that **FDI** inflows can **increase** social **inequality and trigger** domestic **conflicts**42. Such disturbance may happen if **FDI** is going to **benefit** only **a small number** of people. The benefits of foreign investment can be captured easily by the government with a minimal spill-over to the region these investments are made. For example, foreign investment in natural resources does not need support from the locals by way of human capital, and the infrastructure they bring can be easily transferred out of the region. Moreover the workers in these types of industries are usually low-skilled and poorly paid but also poorly treated. This is one of the reasons why investments in non-resource sectors should be encouraged. As mentioned before, foreign investment in sectors other than resources draws a lot of support from the region these investments are made. For instance, manufacturing, infrastructure, and services are some of the sectors that boost the region by investing in human resources and training potential workers43.¶ Another risk associated with FDI is that it always creates winners and losers, and conflicts may emerge through this situation. Indeed, new **conflicts arise due** to the **increasing inequality between the poor** population **and** the **elite**s that are supporting and participating in foreign investment. This can lead to the decrease of the legitimacy of the political elites since they are not working to find a way to resolve the inequalities created by these investments nor put in place social justice policies44 Another problem connected with FDI is inequalities between regions in the same country. Foreign investment may alleviate the inequalities in the local economy but it is important to note that the majority of **investment is concentrated in** industrial and urban areas mainly in **big cities.** Usually, because these places have the necessary infrastructure and skills to support the development of the businesses45. This can lead to strong inequalities between regions, feed conflicts and create insurgencies. Some regions may even ask for more autonomy or independence through armed conflict. In

addition, developing countries experience large regional inequalities. Since peripheral regions are less populated than urban cities, they do not sually benefit from the improvement of living standards and incomes.¶ Therefore, insurgencies tend to occur in these areas and mobilisation takes place within local networks. Regional inequalities are more likely to be related to violent conflict than general social inequalities that affect disconnected individuals. These regional inequalities affect the same people, from the same place, so it is easier for them to unite and fight back. Usually, they are from the same ethnic background too which can make them feel like these inequalities are based on discrimination46. Some states tend to favour regions that are populated by their supporters or kin which can result in marked geographical differences. Regional income and economic inequalities are more likely to foster conflict than absolute poverty. According to various theories of relative deprivation, comparisons with those who have more wealth may inspire violent political mobilisation and radical action, especially in cases of discrimination and exploitation47. This kind of situation can be exploited by certain group leaders and conflicts entrepreneurs who can exaggerate and exploit these inequalities to achieve their own economic or political goals48¶ Foreign investment can also cause a political reaction from the local business community as it can put local entrepreneurs in a disadvantaged position. For a long time, local businesses did not have to share the market with foreign companies and investors, opening the country for foreign investment will make them lose profit in the short term and that could lead to some tensions. For example, this could be the case for Somaliland because most local businesses are not in favour of welcomfing foreign companies

On Aid

1. [DL] Al-Shabaab blocks aid and strict counterterror laws means agencies can't send regardless. Jason Burke, an africa correspondent at the Guardian, in 2017 writes that

[Jason Burke, Africa Correspondent @ The Guardian, 7-27-2017, Al-Shabaab militants ban starving Somalis from accessing aid, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jul/27/al-shabaab-militants-ban-starving-somalis-from-accessing-aid] AZ

Islamist militants in Somalia have imposed a ban on humanitarian assistance in areas they control, forcing hundreds of thousands of people to choose between death from starvation and disease or brutal punishment. In some towns, hungry and weak people have been ordered by extremist leaders to remain where they are to act as human shields against US airstrikes. Somalia is suffering its worst drought in 40 years, with the effects of climatic catastrophe compounded by war and poor governance. Interviews with villagers in the swaths of land controlled by al-Qaida-affiliate al-Shabaab, in the centre and south of the east African state, reveal a population on the brink of catastrophe, with children and older people already dying in significant numbers. Al-Shabaab has told people they will be punished – possibly executed as spies – if they have any contact with humanitarian agencies. Strict British and US counter-terrorism laws are also discouraging humanitarian organisations from delivering vital emergency assistance, aid agencies have said. Although aid officials say a huge international effort and donations by Somalia's vast diaspora have so far averted a repeat of the 2011 famine, when 250,000 people died, conditions in much of the country have continued to deteriorate in recent months. An additional 500,000 people now need humanitarian assistance, bringing the total to 6.7 million. Almost half of these people face starvation if they do not receive help. One reason for the high death toll six years ago was a blockade imposed by al-Shabaab on humanitarian assistance by international and local NGOs that did not meet its strict criteria.

On oil

Somalia empirically rejects Somaliland oil claims

Reuters 22 [Reuters, "Somalia rejects Genel Energy's "illegal claim" to oil permits", 12/28/2022, Reuters, https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/somalia-rejects-genel-energys-illegal-claim-oil-permits-2022-12-28/]

NAIROBI, Dec 28 (Reuters) - Somalia rejected on Wednesday what it called an "illegal claim" by Genel Energy (GENL.L), opens new tab to oil exploration and exploitation rights in the country's northern breakaway region of Somaliland, the country's oil ministry said. Somaliland claimed independence from Somalia in 1991, and has been largely peaceful while the rest of the country has grappled with three decades of civil war, but its leadership has failed to gain widespread international recognition. Advertisement · Scroll to continue Report this ad In a statement Somalia's oil ministry said it "categorically rejects Genel Energy plc's claim to own petroleum rights in Somalia's northern regions and calls upon Genel Energy

plc to cease its illegal claim to own petroleum rights." The oil ministry said **it was the only institution legally authorised to grant permits** in Somalia. "**Any authorisation granted in violation of Somalia's laws and regulations is unlawful and would be considered null and void," the oil ministry said.** Advertisement · Scroll to continue Report this ad Genel Energy and Somaliland officials did not immediately respond to requests for comment. The company, which is listed on the London Stock Exchange, added Somaliland to its exploration portfolio in 2012, and signed a farm-out agreement with OPIC Somaliland Corporation for a block on the Ethiopian border last year, according to its website. Earlier this month Genel said its geotechnical survey in Somaliland was complete. The video player is currently playing an ad. 00:02 Kenyan farmers use AI app to tackle pests and crop diseases "This provides the data from which to plan the main civil engineering work, set to commence in the new year," it wrote on Twitter on Dec. 15. Hydrocarbon discoveries in Uganda and Kenya and huge gas finds in Mozambique and Tanzania have stoked investor interest in other parts of East Africa's hydrocarbon potential. In October, Somalia signed a petroleum exploration agreement for seven offshore blocks with United States-based Coastline Exploration.

Non- Recognition keeps progress slow, key to keeping Somalia happy

Ucl 23 [Ucl, "Opinion: Somaliland's oil find could reset the regional balance", 01/27/2023, UCL News, https://www.ucl.ac.uk/news/2023/jan/opinion-somalilands-oil-find-could-reset-regional-balance-heres-how]

The presence of oil in Somaliland has been confirmed by a recent exploration. The discovery has raised the stakes in Somaliland's claim for independence from Somalia as it holds the potential for a new stream of revenue for the semi-autonomous state. But the **oil exploration is deepening the rift with Somalia,** which claims sovereignty over the region. Michael Walls answers five key questions. What is Somaliland's hydrocarbon potential? In 2020, Norwegian seismic survey company, TGS, estimated that the Somali basin as a whole likely holds offshore reserves of about 30 billion barrels, with additional onshore reserves, although land estimates are considerably less consistent. Assessments generally include Somaliland and would place Somalia reserves at about the same level as Kazakhstan, which would give the area the 18th or 19th largest reserve globally, as assessed in 2016. Geological conditions seem to support the view that there are likely to be commercially viable deposits in the region. Whether they prove close to estimates remains unknown at this stage. There is also evidence of offshore (undersea) reserves in the region, as well as onshore (beneath the land) in the Somali region of the neighbouring Ethiopia. Bordering Somalia, and located next to Oromia Regional State, the Somali Regional State (also Ogaden) is Ethiopia's second largest federal region. Why has it taken so long to make an oil find? This find is being billed as the first discovery in Somaliland but in fact there have been several instances of oil seepage. An oil seep occurs when geological or unrelated human activity results in oil "seeping" into the ocean or onto land. In such cases, the physical appearance of oil occurs unexpectedly rather than as a result of deliberate exploration. It is unsurprisingly taken as evidence of a substantial reserve that is close to the surface, but doesn't always indicate the presence of commercially viable quantities or accessibility. Genel Energy, the UK oil exploration firm on whose concession this discovery occurred, has held rights to explore in Somaliland since 2012. So the find isn't quite the sudden and unexpected bonus that's been implied by some reports. **Progress has been slow because Somaliland's lack of international sovereign recognition creates an uncertain context for significant investment. Somalia still claims sovereignty over Somaliland** even though the region has operated as a fully if informally independent state since 1991. This creates a vacuum. The Somali federal authorities cannot enter into meaningful agreements over exploration or extraction in Somaliland. Somaliland is limited by investment risk. And Somalia's **threats** and complaints **emphasise** that **risk**. This has not stopped Somaliland from entering into agreements, but **it has slowed activities taking place** under them. In addition, **there have been disputes within Somaliland over how the proceeds of hydrocarbon exploitation would be shared.** One of the areas with significant potential is the Nugaal Valley, which stretches across the border of eastern Somaliland into Puntland. Genel Energy was already exploring in that zone a decade ago. It withdrew for a time in 2013, citing security concerns. In the same time period, Africa Oil secured rights from the Puntland administration that overlapped with those issued by Somaliland to explore in the Nugaal Valley. A 2014 UN report expressed concern that hydrocarbon exploration in the Nugaal Valley risked fuelling violent conflict. Africa Oil ceased active operation in the area a year later. The most recent find is in a different area of Somaliland: Salaxley in the Maroodi Jeex region, which is less politically volatile. This makes it more likely that Genel Energy will be able to advance its work. What challenges lie ahead? The uncertainty created by a lack of international recognition makes it difficult to mobilise sufficient investment. And there is little doubt that Somalia will continue to remain hostile to both exploration and extraction. Similarly, local sensitivities around the sharing of financial rewards will need to be managed with care and deep local engagement. Some commentaries have suggested that the newly discovered oil could be abundant. But the reserves could also prove limited and may present technical challenges in extraction. It is therefore possible that extractive plans will operate at the margin of financial feasibility. The latest find was the result of an accidental release of oil during drilling for water rather than from deliberate exploration. This may be evidence of a significant and easily accessed reserve, but seepages and strikes like this have happened in the past in Somaliland. A more extensive geo-seismic surveying will be needed before the full extent of the reserve is

confirmed. What would be the political implications of oil wealth in Somaliland? I had previously studied the place of oil in Somalia and its breakaway states . Somali society is kinship-based. Specific groups identify with particular geographic areas. This means that the political implications vary sharply depending on the location of any oil discovery. Previous experience of exploration in the Nugaal Valley showed how socially and politically volatile the exercise could be. The area of the latest find, around Salaxley, is likely to prove less volatile. Unlike the Nugaal Valley, Salaxley has not customarily been subject to the same inter-clan and political disputes. But there will still need to be significant negotiation over sharing of the proceeds of exploration. The government will be keen to ensure that the windfall advantages those in power. Local clan groups will be keen to ensure there is a clear benefit accruing to their communities. Other clans will equally want a say in how increased wealth benefits Somaliland as a whole. Depending on how negotiations conclude, there is potential for this clan-based process to mitigate the "resource curse" effect. In other words, the system of inter-group negotiation that underpins Somali society might provide some protection from the narrow economic impact of oil wealth that has been felt elsewhere. However, that is by no means certain and the process of negotiation itself has the potential to fuel violence, just as the UN worried in 2014. Either way, the Somaliland economy remains tiny. **Any influx of** significant new **wealth**, **even on a** fairly **modest scale**, will **create** new social, economic and therefore political **tensions**. What are the implications for regional dynamics? The regional impact will depend on the extent of the discovery. **Somalia has consistently objected to hydrocarbon exploration in Somaliland as all concessions have been granted under Somaliland legislation. It would object even more strongly to commercial extraction.** Ethiopia's interest is likely to be more equivocal. Salaxley is close to the Ethiopian border, and not far from active hydrocarbon exploration concessions in Ethiopia's Somali region. If the Somaliland reserves prove to be extensive after a technical appraisal, it would suggest that those in the adjacent Ogaden Basin are also significant. In this case Somaliland and Ethiopia would hold a mutual interest in ensuring sufficient regional security to enable extraction.