# Rhetoric --- 729

We negate the resolution.

When considering Somaliland’s statehood, context is critical. **Former UN Official Osman Hassan documents:** The assumption that the people in Somaliland all support statehood could not be further from the truth. In reality, over 80% of Somalianders oppose recognition and prefer unity with Somalia. Indeed, just because Somaliland might have features of a state doesn’t mean it should become one. Instead of bringing stability, recognition would open up Pandora's Box and destabilize Africa.

Thus, African Union recognition would have two disastrous consequences.

The first is causing a war between Somalia and Somaliland.

Recent negotiations have led to harmonization of positions and deescalated the risk of conflict between regional powers. **Researcher Karr of the Institute for the Study of War reports last week:** Turkish mediated talks have led Ethiopia to withdraw its recognition of Somaliland and Somalia to decrease tensions. This lowers the possibility of conflict and signals peace.

However, affirming would upset this balance and force Somalia to reclaim Somaliland by force. **African analyst Hassan of Somaliland News warns:** What angers Somalia the most is the possibility of Somaliand slipping away. A recognition of Somaliland’s would give them no other choice but to go to war to protect their sovereignty.

In the eyes of Somalia, the cost of inaction would outweigh any harm of attacking. **The Somaliland Chronicle explains:** Somalia has openly asserted that they will defend their sovereignty by whatever means necessary. To them, international recognition of Somaliland is an existential threat and a redline that must not be crossed.

You can look to history. Following Ethiopia's agreement to later recognize Somaliland, **reporter Yibeltal of the BBC documents this year:** Somalia’s president threatened war if they did not cancel the deal. Tens of thousands of Somalis protested in the streets expressing their anger.

And make no mistake, Somalia has the capabilities. **A report by Somaliland Current indicates:** that China has delivered large scales of military assistance to Somalia, signaling that they would have Somalia’s back if a war was necessary.

War would be devastating. **The Norwich University quantifies:** The previous Somaliand war of independence resulted in the death of one million people due to violence, famine, and disease. Amidst the heavy fighting, relief efforts were unable to be carried out.

The second is spurring a wave of secession.

Understanding the potential for other secessionist movements to become emboldened, the African Union has strategically held a firm stance against Somaliand’s independence. **Researcher Seifu of Modern Diplomacy states this year:** To not give secessionists unwanted ideas, Somaliland will remain unrecognized by the African Union. This has successfully maintained the territorial integrity of Africa. Indeed, **Researcher Gebereamlak of the Reporter finds:** African states respect borders drawn during colonial times, a notion enshrined in the very constitution of the African Union.

However, affirming shatters this stability and reinvigorates a host of dangerous secessionist movements. **Gebereamlak warns:** A recognition of Somaliland would set a precedent, encouraging secessionist movements as it shows determination is rewarded with statehood. From Ethiopia to Sudan and Somalia itself, various rebel groups strive for self-governance.

This would be exacerbated by meddling states. **Gebereamlak furthers:** Historically, Ethiopia, Somalia, and Sudan have engaged in supporting violent secessionist movements to destabilize each other and achieve geopolitical goals. This would only reemerge after Somaliland is recognized. **He concludes** that the result would be a fragmentation of Africa with widespread conflict.

Again you can look to history. **Professor Woodward of the University of Reading documents:** When South Sudan gained independence, various other secessionist factions pushed for their own recognition, sparking instability.

Recognizing Somaliland would be especially dangerous. **Researcher Hassan of Hiiraan explains:** Unlike with other countries like Eritrea, Somaliand’s separation would not come through a mutual agreement with its administrator, Somalia, as they would never agree. The world was happy with previous outcomes, it wouldn’t be as such with this one.

Devastatingly, these secessionist movements empirically result in catastrophic conflict. **Researcher Haile of Modern Diplomacy laments:** In an attempt to quell rebellion, war occurs. From Sudan and Nigeria’s secessionist conflicts alone, over five million people have perished from the fighting. **Woodward concludes:** Secession has empirically ignited the largest conflicts since the second world war.

Thus, this debate is not one about development or injustice, it’s about choosing between peace and disastrous conflict, between pragmatic solutions and fantasies. Let’s not risk unravelling all of Africa for just Somaliland, and negate the resolution.

# Cards

## 1NC --- Overview

#### When considering Somaliland’s statehood, context is critical.

**Hassan 21** [Osman Hassan, reporter @ 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] BZ

A: The Voice of Northern unionists counts ¶ While it is clear what Meservey wants for the USA, he shows otherwise scant knowledge about the people in northern Somalia (former British Somaliland) and comes up with uniformed justifications for its recognition. The salient **flawed assumption** inherent in his discourse about the people in northern Somalia (aka Somaliland) is that they are monolithic and almost all support the secession. Nothing could be further from the truth. The following critical facts about the people in this region are indispensable for forming an objective judgement about the secession: ¶ · That there are five clans in the former British territory and **only one** of them, and not all of its members at that, are supportive of the secession from Somalia. It occupies **less than 20 percent** of the territory. ¶ · That the other four clans, occupying more than 80 percent of the territory, and who do not call themselves “Somalilanders” but citizens of Somalia, are unionists and oppose the secession. ¶ · That any claim as to who is the majority and who is the minority in the area, as Meservey has indulged in, is presumptuous since no official census of the clans have ever been made, ¶ · That the five clans that fell under British conquest are not exclusive to that area but are part of their fellow clans in southern Somalia (former Italian Somaliland), Ogaden region and Djibouti. ¶ · That each of the five clans, exercising its inalienable right, freely chose to join the union with Italian Somaliland. As such, no clan was forced to be part of the union just as none can be forced to be part of the secession as the one clan enclave calling itself Somalilanders is, forcing the secession on the other four unionist clans. ¶ · Even the ruling clan is not monolithic about the secession. An inter-clan civil war erupted in the heart of the enclave in 1993/94 when one of the clans supported the former Somaliland president Abdirahman Ahmed Ali who was an avowed unionist. ¶ The impact of USA recognition of Somaliland would, far from ending their resistance, do the opposite and motivate them all the more to free themselves. ¶ B. One Clan Rule and Denial of Human Rights ¶ Commitment to democracy is the key justification Meservey gives for rewarding the enclave with recognition. Admittedly, elections of some sorts have taken place albeit at long intervals and often at the behest of foreign donors. After 16 years, elections took place recently for the Peoples Chamber and only after persistent prodding from donors, No election took place for the Upper House for the same period. If members were to have their way, they would want to remain. Like a lot of façades put-up in the enclave, elections are not held as a prerequisite of democracy but as a show to win favourable international impression to win recognition. And on the whole they have been successful. A good convert is Mr. Meservey. ¶ Once the facades are out of the way, the reality is something completely different. A more fitting analogy to the enclave would be the white minority-ruled former Rhodesia. Just as all power was monopolized by the whites, so all power is exclusive to the clan. The three political parties permitted in Somaliland are in the hands of the ruling clan. No other party is allowed to compete with them which closes the doors on other clans and regions. The clan’s control permeates also both houses of Parliament, the civil service, the police and the armed forces. ¶ If one-clan power monopoly is unacceptable, what makes it intolerable is what it does with its power. Its militia, the SNM, have committed massacres against innocent civilians in unionist regions, the first taking place in Borama in the Awdal region when hundreds were brutally massacres as reprisal for allegedly being supporters of the ousted military regime. A similar massacre was committed at Kalshaale in the Buuhoodle district in 2012, also for resisting the secession. Both amount to crimes against humanity. These massacres remind many observers the Sharpeville massacre of Africans in March 1960 who were resisting Apartheid and white minority rule. ¶ No less shocking are the wider appalling rule of law and human rights situation under the one-clan authoritarian rule. Daily human rights abuses are pervasive wherever the writ of the authority reaches but worse in the parts of the unionists regions it occupies. Freedom of speech, thought, assembly and movement (to Mogadishu) are proscribed. Arbitrary detentions, long periods in jail without trial, and languishing in jail long after sentences have expired are widespread. Extra-judicial killings are common in occupied Lascanod, the capital of Sool region, and used as a tool to suppress the rising opposition to the occupation and secession. ¶ Access to justice and non-discriminatory application of the law underpin the rule of law. Yet those who do not have the means to defend themselves, or not connected to those who wield power, or belong to minority clans, are likely to be the victims of the abuse of power.. Extra-judicial killings, common in occupied Lascanod, the capital of Sool region, are used as a tool to suppress the rising opposition to the occupation and secession. Th United Nations Independent Expert on the human rights situation in Somalia has been following some of these cases which speaks for itself. ¶ What recently shocked the rest of Somalia and the international community was the deportation of thousands of Somali citizens lawfully resident in Lascanod and carted back like cattle to southern Somalia. Many Children were in the process separated from their parents. It all amounts to crimes against humanity. And yet, Mr. Meservey calls their ways as devotion to democracy, an Orwellian doublespeak if there was one. ¶ C. The Inevitable Pandora box ¶ In the end, Mr. Meservey dispenses with seeking justifications for the barter deal with Somaliland and simply urges the USA government to proceed and get the deal. To forestall anti-USA imperialistic unilateralist stigma that might arise, he urges the government to co-opt some African countries to join the action. This is to project some semblance of a united action in order to encourage many others in the continent and beyond to follow suit. As he puts, the Africans’ role is to: ¶ “ follow an American lead on recognizing Somaliland. The USA, he adds, “should coordinate the timing of its recognition of Somaliland with these countries so they can prepare to follow in quick succession. Their doing so would create momentum for even more states to recognize Somaliland by signaling that it is safe and beneficial to have relations with Hargeisa” ¶ 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 century. ¶ No matter how one looks at it, the consequences could be dire. For a star, if African governments collude with the USA in the dismemberment of a fellow African country, this could have serious consequences for the Charter of the African Union and for its member States. But even without this unholy alliance against an African country, a unilateral USA action is sufficient to open a **Pandora Box** and further **destabilize** fragile African countries already reeling from tribal separatists or Jihadist insurrection. America’s own allies in the continent would be the first victims. Africa would not be the only loser. America’s wider interest in the continent would also be seriously jeopardized. One has to ask whether a base in Berbera just to level with China in Djibouti is worth this possible incalculable damage to Africa and indeed to America’s own interests?

## 1NC --- Invasion

#### Recent negotiations have led to harmonization of positions and deescalated the risk of conflict between regional powers.

**Karr 24** [Liam Karr, Africa team lead @ Critical Threats Project and a writer @ American Enterprise Institute with a bachelors from the University of Notre Dame, 12-12-2024, Kremlin Pivot to Libya or Sudan Post-Syria; Turkey Mediates Ethiopia-Somalia Deal, Institute for the Study for War, https://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/africa-file-december-12-2024-kremlin-pivot-libya-or-sudan-post-syria-turkey-mediates] tristan \*\*brackets in original\*\*

**Somalia**: The SFG and **Ethiopia** **agreed** to **work** toward **granting** **Ethiopia** **access** to the **Red** **Sea** on December 11, after **Turkish**-mediated **talks**. This agreement will likely lead **Ethiopia** to **withdraw** from its controversial **naval** **port** **agreement** with **Somaliland** and **decrease** the **possibility** of a direct or proxy **conflict** between Ethiopia and Somalia. Ethiopia’s **withdrawal** from the **Somaliland** **agreement** would likely **lead** the Somali Federal Government (**SFG**) to **reverse** its **decision** to **expel** Ethiopian **troops** from **Somalia** and **exclude** **Ethiopian** **troops** from the new **African** **Union** **mission** in Somalia, which will begin in 2025. Ethiopia and Somalia’s **rapprochement** may quicken the **end** of an **ongoing** **dispute** between the SFG and the Jubbaland state government in southern Somalia by leading Ethiopia to cut alleged military support for Jubbaland and freeing the SFG’s military and political bandwidth to address the dispute. The SFG and Jubbaland may engage in further clashes in the following weeks, although the fighting will likely remain limited.

#### However, affirming would upset this balance and force Somalia to reclaim Somaliland by force.

**Hassan 24** [Abdillahi Hassan, Somali Journalist and Social Activist, 1-21-2024, Somalia will go to war with Somaliland, not Ethiopia, Somaliland, https://www.somaliland.com/news/somalia-will-go-to-war-with-somaliland-not-ethiopia/] leon + Aaron

Somalia Mourning Perceived Loss Opportunity ¶ To observers in Somaliland and beyond, it may seem like Somalia is throwing juvenile tantrums. **However**, it is **crucial** to **understand** that **Somalia’s reaction** is rooted in its **perception** of **recent successes** to “**bring Somaliland** back to **the fold**”. What **infuriated Somalia** the **most** is in **not** the **prospect** of **Ethiopia getting** an **access** to the sea as **President Mohamud** himself **hinted** at **his openess** to that **possibility**. **Rather** it is the **sense** of **an opportunity** to **submit Somaliland** to its **will** slipping **away** from **their hands** with the **possibilities** that this **deal opens** for **Somaliland**. ¶ This sense of a historic opportunity, however, is not the result of progress in the Hargeisa-Mogadishu dialogue; rather, they stem from setbacks plaguing President Muse Bihi’s administration in Somaliland and Mogadishu’s steps to capitalize on them. The president’s extended term in 2022 triggered a protracted political dispute, damaging his legitimacy and fostering deep polarization and mistrust in the country. That was compounded by losses in the eastern frontier conflict, where Somaliland’s army was expelled from strongholds near Las Anod after seven months of clashes. This the **Somalian government** abruptly **capitalized** on by **recognizing** the **administration** of **Las Anod** which claims **three regions** in **Somaliland** either **wholly** or **partially**. And finally, the **neglect** of **economic development** has finally **caught up** with the **country** and put **considerable strain** on its **strength**. ¶ In contrast to Muse’s setbacks, President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud’s government achieved significant successes in the last quarter of the year, securing debt relief, East Africa Community membership, and the lifting of a long-standing weapons import ban. ¶ These factors have emboldened Mogadishu’s administration to deliver what they see as the final blow to Somaliland’s quest for independence on the negotiation table. ¶ **Bitter Confrontation** in **Djibouti** ¶ Flushed with this perceived advantage, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud met with Muse Bihi in Djibouti on December 28, 2023. Sources close to the negotiations describe a tense encounter, devoid of pleasantries, where Somalia asserted its perceived advantage. Confronting Bihi on his “lack of legitimacy” and control over all of Somaliland’s territory, Somalia **further issued** a **clear threat** of **destabilization** in Somaliland’s **western regions** by exploiting **clan cleavages**. **Insult** was **added** to **injury** when **Mohamud** demanded that **president Bihi** represent only his **personal interests** and **those** of his immediate **kin group** as “**there** were **no thing** as **Somaliland** to **speak off**”. ¶ Later statements from Somalia’s Minister of the Interior Ahmed Fiqi confirm this confrontational picture. Fiqi, addressing a rally in Mogadishu, stated that President Bihi’s faced tremendous challenges and that his hope was that the President would have resolved them by “surrender to” Somalia and continuing negotiations for reunification. In fact, the **Somali side** was so **smug** about **their advantage** in **Djibouti** that **Minister Fiqi** announced that **it was** a “**historic milestone** for the **unification** of **the country**”. ¶ Indeed, the **over-reaction** from **Mogadishu** was **nothing more** than **frustration over** the **loss** of **perceived opportunity**. They see that the man whose back was to the wall had escaped their entrapment. And **for that**, they are **willing** to **go** to **war**, not **against Ethiopia** as **Somalian officials** have **repeatedly stated**, but **against Somaliland**. **Somalia** is **too weak** to **maintain confrontation** with **Ethiopia** for **prolonged time**. For one, Somalia depends on a large contingent of Ethiopian forces to keep Al-Shabab at bay. There is **great difference** in the **resources** and **capacities** of the **two nations** at this **juncture**. Even a diplomatic feud with Ethiopia is a futile endeavor for Somalia in the long run as with the exception of the impotent Egypt, there is hardly **any country** that would **pick Somalia** over **Ethiopia**. ¶ Subterfuge and Subversion ¶ In contrast, Somaliland as the setbacks of the previous year demonstrate, has its flaws that could be exploited. Somalia knows these very well and was capitalizing on them before the MoU interrupted them. So, with all its bluster against Ethiopia, it’s Somaliland that will bear the brunt of Somalia’s attack on multiple fronts. ¶ Indeed, the first direct rebuttal of the MoU from Mogadishu was mobilizing “pro-union” politicians serving in Somalia’s parliament and government to condemn the deal. Apart from the rhetoric, the first concrete reaction was to turn back an Ethiopian plane from Hargeisa International Airport and claiming that a second plane, a Thai cargo carrier, was denied request to land in Hargeisa. These steps were quite the challenge to Somaliland’s claim of sovereignty over the land, air, and the representation of the people of the country. ¶ However, **Somalia’s fury** over **Somaliland’s** self-**determination** as **manifested** in the **signing** of the **M**emorandum **o**f **U**nderstanding **does not** end **there**. What follows the **legalese arguments** is **concerted efforts** to **challenge** Somaliland’s **de facto** sovereignty **over** the **land**. This **takes** the **form** of **subversion**, **destabilization** and **attempts** to **break** the **consensus** of **Somaliland’s majority** on the **independence project**. ¶ The first move in this regard sets the tone for Mogadishu’s approach to the Somaliland question from now onwards. Ahmed Fiqi, the face of the failed Djibouti meeting, conveyed a meeting with the “members of Awdal community” to work with the federal government in opposition to the MoU on January sixteenth. This was an obvious hint that Mogadishu would resort to stirring clan divisions to destabilize Somaliland. Another decision, not yet publicly disclosed but which parties privy to it reported, was the order to Federal officials hailing from Somaliland to start subversion activities with each official starting in their hometown. Sanaag region, where the Deputy Prime Minister comes from, is a prime target as per sources. However, a more willing partner for Mogadishu would be the rebel-led Las Anod administration. Reports indicate a high-level visit from Mogadishu leaders to Las Anod to coordinate to strengthen the Las Anod insurgency to export the disorder further west to Togdheer and Sanag regions. ¶ As **tensions escalate**, the long-deferred **confrontation** between **Somaliland** and **Somalia** over **self-determination** becomes inevitable, **risking** wider **regional involvement**. In this confrontation, **Somaliland suffers** from the **obvious disadvantage** of **being led** by a **divisive** and **quite incompetent** administration. However, as resilience is synonymous with Somaliland’s narrative, this will not be the first time it triumphed in adverse conditions. It is not Somaliland who we should fear for in this battle of wills, but the 20-year international effort to reinstall a state in Somalia.

#### In the eyes of Somalia, the cost of inaction would outweigh any harm of attacking.

**SC 24** [No Author, 1-8-2024, Somali President's Desperation Escalates: Issues Threats to Ethiopia and Somaliland over MoU, Takes Off for Eritrea, Somaliland Chronicle, https://somalilandchronicle.com/2024/01/08/somali-presidents-desperation-escalates-issues-threats-to-ethiopia-and-somaliland-over-mou-takes-off-for-eritrea/] tristan

In a recent speech, President Hassan Sh Mohamoud of the Federal Republic of **Somalia** **asserted** that his **country** is **ready** to **defend** its **sovereignty** using **every** available **means**. This declaration directly corresponds to the recent Memorandum of Understanding between the Republic of Somaliland and the Federal Government of Ethiopia. The agreement encompasses the establishment of an Ethiopian naval base in the Red Sea, as well as the recognition of Somaliland as Africa’s 55th state and the initiation of significant economic cooperation between the two nations. ¶ “Do not push us. Do not push us into knocking on doors we have not knocked on before. We will defend our state, cooperate with anyone to defend it.” ¶ Hassan Sh Mohamoud, President of the Federal Republic of Somalia. ¶ The Somali government has issued multiple statements objecting the MoU and accusing Ethiopia on infringing on its sovereignty and territorial integrity. In addition to the Somali President’s hawkish and hinting of use of force to stop the deal between Ethiopia and Somaliland, other government **officials** including the spokesman for Somalia’s Ministry of Defense have threatened to **wage** **war** on **Somaliland** and Ethiopia. ¶ The potential Ethiopian naval base in Somaliland has sparked outrage from the **Somali** President. **Framing** it as an “**existential** **threat**” and rushing laws to void the memorandum of understanding between the two neighboring countries requires a closer look. Despite lacking international recognition, Somaliland has functioned as an independent entity since 1991, raising questions about the “true nature” of the **perceived** **threat** by the **Somali** **government** and its **allies**, including **Egypt** and **Djibouti**. The Somali government’s anxieties seem focused less on immediate territorial violation and more on the potential Ethiopian recognition of Somaliland. This **recognition** could effectively **erase** **Somalia’s** territorial **claim**, granting Somaliland the coveted 55th seat in the African Union, solidifying its independence and providing Ethiopia access to the strategic Red Sea.

#### You can look to history. Following Ethiopia's agreement to later recognize Somaliland,

**Yibeltal 24** [Kalkidan Yibeltal, senior reporter @ the BBC with a focus on Africa, 7-3-2024, Ethiopia-Somaliland deal: Can the Horn of Africa rift be healed?, BBC, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-67911057] BZ

Why is this so controversial?¶ For Somalia, Somaliland is an **integral part** of its territory. Any suggestion that it could make a deal with another country or that bits of it could be leased without the approval of Mogadishu is highly problematic.¶ The day after the MoU was signed, Somalia described the deal as an act of **"aggression**" that was an "impediment to… peace and stability". It also recalled its ambassador from Addis Ababa.¶ Ethiopia's ambassador to Somalia subsequently left Mogadishu.¶ In the immediate aftermath of the deal, Somalia's president also stepped up the rhetoric saying: "We will defend our country, we will **defend it by all means necessary** and seek the support of any ally willing to help us."¶ He also called on youths "to prepare for the defence of our country" and described Ethiopia as his country's "enemy".¶ Ethiopia and Somalia have a long history of rivalry.¶ In 1977 and 1978, Ethiopia and Somalia fought a devastating war for control of what is now called the Somali region of Ethiopia.¶ There have also been protests in Mogadishu against the deal, with **tens of thousands** turning up to express their opposition.

#### And make no mistake, Somalia has the capabilities.

**CS 20** [No Author, 9-24-2020, With an eye on Taiwan, China arms Somalia against Somaliland, Somaliland Current, https://www.somalilandcurrent.com/with-an-eye-on-taiwan-china-arms-somalia-against-somaliland/] leon

According to reports dated September 19, **almost** a **week** after **Somaliland** opened its **representative office** in **Taiwan**, China **delivered** ‘**large-scale**’ **military aid** to **Somalia**. The **gesture** came with a **message** impelling **Somalia** to **retaliate** against **Somaliland**, which **refused** to **kneel** to **China’s command** and **established** commercial **ties** with **Taiwan**. ¶ As per a Somali-language news report, the **addition** of **Chinese muscle** to **Somalia** has rung major **warning bells** for **Somaliland**, with its **diplomats** fearing **possible conflicts** between the **two nations** on the **behest** of **imperialist China**.

#### War would be devastating.

**Norwich University 23** [No Author, 8-xx-2023, Five Major African Wars and Conflicts of the Twentieth Century, Norwich University, https://online.norwich.edu/online/about/resource-library/five-major-african-wars-and-conflicts-twentieth-century] BZ \*\* date retrieved from source code\*\*

Somali Civil War—1991 ¶ Armed conflicts in Africa during the twentieth century caused an enormous loss of human life, the collapse of socio-economic systems, and the degradation of health and education services across the continent. From the Nigerian Civil War to the Somali Civil War, these 20th Century conflicts submitted civilians to intense physical and psychological trauma that negatively impacted development throughout many African nations. To understand the magnitude and scope of inflicted trauma, and in order to prevent its recurrence, military historians and students should consider the following five significant African wars and conflicts of the 20th Century. ¶ In 1991, a coup ousted dictator Mohammed Siad Barre, President of the Somali Democratic Republic. This shift in the balance of power sparked a twenty-plus-year civil war that killed as many as **one million** Somalis via violence, famine or disease. Following Barre’s removal from power, the Somali Democratic Republic divided into two opposing parties, the Somali National Movement in the North and the United Somali Congress of the South. This separation made it difficult to achieve control of the conflicting factions because no one ruling entity was recognized by all Somalis; those living in the north would not recognize authority from the southern faction, and those in the south opposed leadership from the Somalis in the north. The lack of a central government forced the U.S. to close its embassy that same year. ¶ The United Nations and the United States became heavily involved in the conflict from 1992 to 1995, sending military forces and humanitarian aid to the country. The United States officially ended its involvement in Somalia in 1994 due to the lack of a foreseeable resolution and financial costs in excess of $1.7 billion. The Somali Civil War’s large death toll and protracted conflict could possibly have been avoided with earlier humanitarian action, according to a 1999 report commissioned by then-United Nations’ Secretary-General Kofi Annan. However, the heavy fighting between the warlords **obstructed** timely U.S. relief efforts in Somalia.

## 1NC --- Secessionism

#### Understanding the potential for other secessionist movements to become emboldened, the African Union has strategically held a firm stance against Somaliand’s independence.

**Seifu 24** [Batseba Seifu, writer @ Modern Diplomacy with a masters of public administration from New York University and currently pursuing a PhD in public administration and policy, 6-27-2024, Somalia and Somaliland: A Complex Relationship in the Horn of Africa, Modern Diplomacy, https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2024/06/27/somalia-and-somaliland-a-complex-relationship-in-the-horn-of-africa/] Aaron

Establishment of Somaliland’s Government and Institutions Since declaring independence, Somalila nd has developed its own political system, distinct from Somalia’s. It has held regular democratic elections, established a constitution, and maintained its own security forces. Despite its self-governance and relative stability, **Somaliland’s quest** for international **recognition** has been **unsuccessful**. No country or international **organization** officially recognizes Somaliland as a sovereign state, largely due to concerns over setting a **precedent** for **secessionist movements** and the **preference** for maintaining the **territorial integrity** of African states as endorsed by the **African Union**. Somalia’s Position and International Dynamics On the other hand, the Federal Government of Somalia considers Somaliland an integral part of its territory. Successive **Somali** governments have sought to reintegrate Somaliland, arguing for the preservation of Somalia’s territorial integrity. Internationally, most countries and organizations, including the United Nations and the **African Union, support Somalia’s stance**, advocating for dialogue and reconciliation to address the issue. Continued Tensions and Sporadic Dialogue The relationship between Somalia and Somaliland remains tense, characterized by sporadic, often inconclusive dialogues. Several attempts at negotiations have taken place over the years. However, these talks have not led to any significant breakthroughs, leaving the status of Somaliland unresolved. Political Landscape of Somalia and Somaliland Independent Political Systems Somaliland: Democracy Since its self-declared independence in 1991, Somaliland has established a relatively stable and functional political system, distinguishing itself from the turmoil in southern Somalia. Somaliland operates as a de facto state with its own government, institutions, and constitution. It has conducted multiple democratic elections for the presidency, parliament, and local councils, often praised by international observers for their fairness and transparency. This democratic governance, combined with efforts to build a stable, inclusive political environment, has helped maintain peace and stability in the region. The political structure of Somaliland includes an executive branch headed by the President, a bicameral legislature consisting of the House of Representatives and the House of Elders (Guurti), and an independent judiciary. The House of Elders, composed of traditional leaders, plays a significant role in conflict resolution and maintaining social order, reflecting the integration of modern governance with traditional practices. Somalia: Struggles with Instability In contrast, Somalia faces considerable political challenges. Since the collapse of Siad Barre’s regime, Somalia has experienced prolonged periods of instability, characterized by civil war, clan-based conflicts, and the rise of militant groups like Al-Shabaab. The Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), established in 2012, operates under a federal system intended to decentralize power and promote local governance. However, its authority is often limited to Mogadishu and a few other regions, with varying degrees of control and influence over the rest of the country. Political infighting, corruption, and the ongoing insurgency have hindered Somalia’s progress towards stability. Efforts to build a cohesive national government are frequently disrupted by power struggles among political elites and regional leaders, further complicating the situation. International support, including peacekeeping forces from the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and subsequently, the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) has been important in maintaining a semblance of order, but lasting peace and effective governance remain elusive. Lack of Formal Dialogue and Ongoing Tensions The political relationship between Somalia and Somaliland is characterized by a lack of formal dialogue and persistent tensions. Despite periodic attempts at negotiations, there has been no sustained or successful dialogue process. Several factors contribute to this impasse: 1. Somalia’s Political Instability: The internal conflicts and political instability within Somalia make it difficult for the federal government to engage constructively with Somaliland. The ongoing insurgency and political divisions divert attention and resources away from addressing the Somaliland issue. 2. Somaliland’s Quest for Recognition: Somaliland remains steadfast in its pursuit of international recognition as an independent state, a position that Somalia vehemently opposes. Somaliland’s government is wary of engaging in talks that might undermine its claims to sovereignty. 3. Clan Dynamics and Regional Interests: Clan affiliations and regional politics play a significant role in the relationship between Somalia and Somaliland. Clan dynamics influence political decisions and negotiations, often complicating efforts to reach a consensus. Additionally, regional actors like Ethiopia, Djibouti, and Kenya have their own strategic interests in the stability and political alignment of Somalia and Somaliland. 4. International Stance: **The international community**, including the United Nations, the **A**frican **U**nion, and major powers, generally **supports Somalia’s** territorial integrity. This stance **discourages** Somaliland’s **push for recognition** and complicates international mediation efforts. Efforts at Mediation and Prospects for the Future Despite the challenges, there have been intermittent efforts to mediate between Somalia and Somaliland. Various international actors and regional organizations have facilitated dialogues, albeit with limited success. The most notable of these efforts include talks in Djibouti in 2012, facilitated by Turkey, The prospects for a resolution remain uncertain. Achieving a lasting agreement requires addressing the core issues of sovereignty, resource sharing, and political representation. Confidence-building measures, such as fostering economic cooperation and people-to-people exchanges, might help create a conducive environment for dialogue. Additionally, a more stable and unified Somali government could potentially engage more effectively with Somaliland. Challenges and Obstacles Entrenched Positions One of the primary obstacles in resolving the diplomatic standoff is the **deeply entrenched positions of** both Somalia and Somaliland. Somaliland remains unwavering in its quest for recognition, viewing it as essential for its political and economic development. Somalia, on the other hand, **perceives** any **concession** towards **Somaliland’s independence** as a threat to **national unity** and **stability.**

**However, affirming shatters this stability and reinvigorates a host of dangerous secessionist movements.**

**Gebereamlak 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.

#### Again you can look to history.

**Woodward 16** [Peter Robert Woodward, professor @ the University of Reading with a PhD from there as well, 9-8-2016, Somaliland wants to secede – here’s why caution is necessary, Conversation, https://theconversation.com/somaliland-wants-to-secede-heres-why-caution-is-necessary-63919] tristan

The general approach to calls for **secession** in Africa, as set out by the African Union (AU) and its predecessor the Organisation of African Unity, is that they should be **opposed**. The most frequently heard argument against secession is that granting the **right** to **one** **country** **invites** **others** to take the **same** **step**. ¶ This, the argument goes, would put at **risk** the **internationally** **recognised** **system** of post-colonial states in Africa. The issue of secession first arose in the 1960s with the wave of decolonisation and questions over the viability of the newly independent states across the continent. Two cases stood out: the Congo, where Katanga’s self-proclaimed breakaway was defeated by United Nations forces; and Nigeria, where the Biafran secession was ended by the Nigerian federal forces.¶ Africa’s new states¶ The issue has come up again in recent times. In northeast Africa two states have experienced separation. In 1993 **Eritrea** was recognised as a separate state from Ethiopia, and the world’s newest state, **South** **Sudan**, was recognised in 2011.¶ The **circumstances** in each of these cases was **different**. But the purpose here is not to revisit how and why these took place, but to consider what happened next.¶ In both cases **separation** was **intended** to **deal** with **historical** **problems** and provide an **acceptable** **alternative** in the form of a new internationally recognised state. But have they achieved these objectives? Both the Ethiopian and Sudanese examples suggest that separation isn’t always the straightforward option. The **division** has led to **violent** border **disputes**, economic complications, and poor relations with the wider international community.¶ There is also a case to be made that granting **secession** has merely served to **fuel** the **claims** of **other** separatist **movements**. Somaliland’s calls to be recognised as independent, rather than being included in the efforts to rebuild Somalia, is an example. When **South** **Sudan** became **independent** in 2011 a **Somaliland** **delegation** **arrived** in Juba, the capital, wearing t-shirts saying “**Somaliland** **Next**”.¶ Border disputes, military costs¶ Any separation involves the recognition of an accepted border between the two states involved. In the case of both **Eritrea** and **South** **Sudan** this has proved contentious. ¶ In 1998 there was an issue over Badme, a small town near the Ethiopian border which Eritrea claimed was theirs. This **ignited** one of the two **largest** interstate **conflicts** in **Africa** since the **second** **world** **war**. The other interstate conflict was Somalia’s attack in 1977 to back up its claim to Ethiopia’s Ogaden region, an area mainly populated by clans of Somali origin.¶ South Sudan’s border with Sudan also proved contentious, and there were clashes over the disputed area of Abyei.¶ Neither the Badme or Abyei issues have been resolved to the satisfaction of the two states involved. Instead they continue to fester. The continuing **border** **disputes** have **resulted** in **both** **sides** continuing to **invest** **heavily** in their **armies** and in equipment. Eritrea and Ethiopia both maintain **large** and **costly** **forces** facing each other across their disputed border.¶ And while South Sudan and Sudan agreed to an integrated joint force on their common border, it never came into existence. Mutual **suspicion** and **accusations** of **incursions** by both armies **persist**.

#### Recognizing Somaliland would be especially dangerous.

**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 century.

#### Devastatingly, these secessionist movements empirically result in catastrophic conflict.

**Haile 24** [Daniel Haile, US army officer with a masters in international affairs from Texas A&M and a writer @ National Interest, 12-8-2024, Somaliland: The Nation the World Won’t Recognize but Can’t Ignore, Modern Diplomacy, https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2024/12/08/somaliland-the-nation-the-world-wont-recognize-but-cant-ignore/] tristan

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, discouraging the recognition of regions fighting for self-determination. ¶ If the people of Somaliland have overwhelmingly chosen independence through a referendum, why should their aspirations be denied? The case of Somaliland raises pressing questions about the balance between preserving outdated borders and acknowledging the democratic will of a people striving for sovereignty. ¶ The Case for Peaceful Secession: Redrawing Borders Without Bloodshed ¶ The international community cannot ignore that Somaliland has functioned as a de facto independent and self-governing state for over 30 years. Astonishingly, the African Union and the broader international community have remained silent on recognizing Somaliland’s independence. After all, Somaliland stands as one of the only regions within the Horn of Africa that has maintained political stability, functioning institutions, and a democratic system of governance underpinned by the consent of its people. This silence is even more perplexing when contrasted with the **human** **cost** of **independence** **struggles** in **Namibia**, where 20,000 to **25,000 lives** were **lost**; **Eritrea**, which saw over **65,000 deaths**; and South **Sudan**, where over **2 million** **perished** in their quest for sovereignty. **Not** **all** secessionist movements in Africa have **succeeded**. The Nigerian **Civil** **War**, or Biafra War, remains a **poignant** **example**. During the conflict, the Igbo people, under the leadership of Odumegwu Ojukwu, a Nigerian military officer of Igbo origin, **unilaterally** **declared** the **Republic** of **Biafra** in 1967. Their attempt at independence failed after the war concluded in 1970, dashing hopes for an independent Igbo state, and **3 million Nigerians perished** during the Biafra war. Yet, the aspiration for the Republic of Biafra endures, and only time will reveal whether Nigeria will follow Ethiopia on the “Yugoslavia train” of disintegration. Against this backdrop, one might ask: could a political union, akin to the structure binding England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland, offer Somalia a framework to prevent future bloodshed? By accommodating regional autonomy within a broader national framework, such a union might provide a pathway toward stability while averting the human cost of conflict.

## Extra:

**Hassan 21** [Osman Hassan, reporter @ 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] BZ

Mr. Meservey also invokes the Montevideo Convention as supporting Somaliland demand for recognition. Article 1 of the convention sets out the four criteria for statehood that have been recognized by international organizations as an accurate statement of customary international law:

The state, as a person of international law, should possess the following qualifications:

1. a permanent population;

2. a defined territory;

3. government;

4. capacity to enter into relations with the other states.

Since the four unionist clans in northern Somaliland (aka Somaliland) do not want to secede from Somalia nor consider themselves as part of what the secessionist call “Somaliland”, the invocation of the Convention can only apply to the rebel clan. On this understanding, the enclave does have a government but one that mainly controls the clan´s traditional area. It has no permanent population since its mainly nomadic population are all the time on the move, crossing to other clans’ traditional areas in search of grazing and water. It has no defined territory since it has no demarcated border with unionist clans. It is not contiguous with the southern Somalia, Djibouti and only Ethiopia and hence cannot claim any borders with these neighbouring countries. Finally, it has no capacity to enter into relations with others States as a renegade entity. Altogether, it fails to meet the requirements for a State set by the Montevideo Convention