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UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL

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STUDY GUIDE

Agenda: The Situation in Somalia

Overview

The Somali Civil War is an ongoing civil war taking place in Somalia which the result of resistance to the Siad Barre government during the 1980s. By 1988–90, the Somali Armed Forces began engaging various armed rebel groups, including the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF) in the northeast, the Somali National Movement in the northwest, and the United Somali Congress in the south. The clan-based armed opposition groups eventually managed to overthrow the Barre government in 1991.

Various armed factions began competing for influence in the power vacuum and turmoil that followed, particularly in the south. In 1990–92 customary law temporarily collapsed due to the fighting. This precipitated the arrival of UNOSOM I UN military observers in July 1992, followed by larger peacekeeping forces. Factional fighting continued in the south. In the absence of a central government, Somalia became a "failed state". The UN withdrew in 1995, having incurred significant casualties, but no central authority had yet been reestablished. After the collapse of the central government, there was some return to customary and religious law in most regions. In 1991 and 1998, two autonomous regional governments were also established in the northern part of the country.

In 2000, the Transitional National Government was established, followed by the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in 2004. The trend towards reduced conflict halted in 2005, and sustained and destructive conflict took place in the south in 2005–07. However, the fighting was of a much lower scale and intensity than in the early 1990s. In 2006, Ethiopian troops seized most of the south from the newly formed Islamic Courts Union (ICU). The ICU then splintered into more radical groups, notably Al-Shabaab, which have since been fighting the Somali government and the AU-mandated AMISOM peacekeeping force for control of the country. Somalia topped the annual Fragile States Index for six years between 2008 and 2013.

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Timeline

Fall of the Barre Government

In May 1986, Barre suffered serious injuries in an automobile accident near Mogadishu, when the car that was transporting him smashed into the back of a bus during a heavy rainstorm. Lieutenant General Mohamed Ali Samatar, then Vice President, subsequently served as de facto head of state for the next several months. Although Barre managed to recover enough to present himself as the sole presidential candidate for re-election over a term of seven years on December 23, 1986, his poor health and advanced age led to speculation about who would succeed him in power.

In an effort to hold on to power, Barre's ruling Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC) became increasingly authoritarian and arbitrary. This caused opposition to his government to grow. Barre in turn tried to quell the unrest by abandoning appeals to nationalism, relying more and more on his own inner circle, and exploiting historical clan animosities. By the mid-1980s, more resistance movements supported by Ethiopia's communist Derg administration had sprung up across the country. Barre responded by ordering punitive measures against those he perceived as locally supporting the guerrillas, especially in the northern regions.

United Nations Intervention

UN Security Council Resolution 733 and UN Security Council Resolution 746 led to the creation of the United Nations Operation in Somalia I (UNOSOM I), to provide humanitarian relief and help restore order in Somalia after the dissolution of its central government. United Nations Security Council Resolution 794 was unanimously passed on December 3, 1992, which approved a coalition of United Nations peacekeepers led by the United States. Forming the Unified Task Force (UNITAF), the alliance was tasked with assuring security until humanitarian efforts aimed at stabilizing the situation were transferred to the UN. Landing in 1993, the UN peacekeeping coalition started the two-year United Nations Operation in Somalia II (UNOSOM II) primarily in the south. UNITAF's original mandate was to use "all necessary means" to guarantee the delivery of humanitarian aid in accordance. During negotiations from 1993 to 1995, Somali principals had some success in reconciliation and establishment of public authorities. Among these initiatives was the Mudug peace agreement of June 1993 between Aidid's forces and the SSDF, which established a ceasefire between the Haber Gedir and the Majeerteen clans, opened the trade routes, and formalized the withdrawal of militants from Galkayo; the UNOSOM-mediated Hirab reconciliation of January 1994 in Mogadishu between elders of the rival Abgal and Haber Gedir clans, which was backed by politicians from these constituencies and concluded with a pact to end hostilities, dismantle the green line partitioning the city, and remove road blocks; the UNOSOM-mediated Kismayo initiative of 1994 between the SNA, SPM, SSDF, and representatives of nineteen clans from the southern Lower Juba

and Middle Juba regions; the 1994 Bardhere conference between the Marehan and Rahanweyn (Digil and Mirifle), which resolved conflicts over local resources; and the short-lived Digil-Mirifle Governing Council for the southern Bay and Bakool regions, which was established in March 1995.

Formation of a Coalition Government

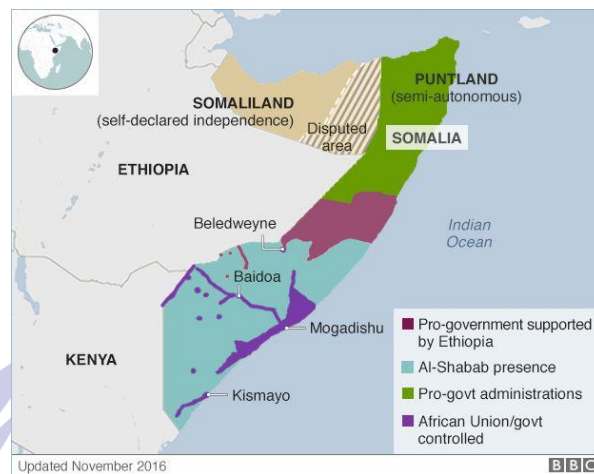
Between May 31 and June 9, 2008, representatives of Somalia's federal government and the moderate Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS) group of Islamist rebels participated in peace talks in Djibouti brokered by the former United Nations Special Envoy to Somalia, Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah. The conference ended with a signed agreement calling for the withdrawal of Ethiopian troops in exchange for the cessation of armed confrontation. Parliament was subsequently expanded to 550 seats to accommodate ARS members, which then elected Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, the former ARS chairman, to office. President Sharif shortly afterwards appointed Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke, the son of slain former President Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke, as the nation's new Prime Minister.

With the help of AMISOM, the coalition government also began a counteroffensive in February 2009 to assume full control of the southern half of the country. To solidify its rule, the TFG formed an alliance with the Islamic Courts Union, other members of the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia, and Ahlu Sunna Waljama'a, a moderate Sufi militia. Furthermore, Al-Shabaab and Hizbul Islam, the two main Islamist groups in opposition, began to fight amongst themselves in mid-2009. As a truce, in March 2009, Somalia's coalition government announced that it would re-implement shari'a as the nation's official judicial system. However, conflict continued in the southern and central parts of the country. Within months, the coalition government had gone from holding about 70% of south-central Somalia's conflict zones, territory which it had inherited from the previous Yusuf administration, to losing control of over 80% of the disputed territory to the Islamist insurgents.

Al-Shabaab

It emerged as the radical youth wing of Somalia's now-defunct Union of Islamic Courts, which controlled Mogadishu in 2006, before being forced out by Ethiopian forces. There are numerous reports of foreign jihadists going to Somalia to help al-Shabab, from neighbouring countries, as well as the US and Europe. It is banned as a terrorist group by both the US and the UK and is believed to have between 7,000 and 9,000 fighters. Al-Shabab advocates the Saudi-inspired Wahhabi version of Islam, while most Somalis are Sufis. It has imposed a strict version of Sharia in areas under its control, including stoning to death women accused of adultery and amputating the hands of thieves. Al-Shabab gained support by promising people security. But its credibility was knocked when it rejected Western food aid to combat a 2011 drought and famine. With Mogadishu and other towns now under government control, there is a new feeling of optimism and many Somalis have returned from exile, bringing their money and skills with them. Basic services such

as street lighting, dry cleaning and rubbish collection have resumed in the capital. But Somalia is still too dangerous and divided to hold democratic elections - the last one was in 1969.



Islamic Courts Union

The rise of the Islamic Courts in Somalia began in the mid-1990s with the alliance of a group of Muslim legal scholars and business people led by Hassan Aweys (former leader of the AIAI) and Sharif Ahmed, with two other powerful elements: Yusuf Mohammed Siad "Indha'adde" the self-declared governor of Shabeellaha Hoose, and the militant Islamist group al-Itihaad al-Islamiya led by Hassan Abdullah Hersi al-Turki, forming the Islamic Courts Union.

Until the end of 2006, they controlled most of southern Somalia and the vast majority of its population, including most major cities such as Jowhar, Kismayo, Beledweyne, and the capital Mogadishu. The ICU was supported by warlord Yusuf "Indho Ade" Mohamed Siad who ruled Lower Shabelle but later became defense chief of the ICU, who aided in the defeat of the Mogadishu warlords. Only the Northern regions (Puntland, Somaliland), and the furthest interior regions of the south were outside their control. In December 2006, the ICU lost much territory after defeats at the battles of Baidoa, Bandiradley, and Beledweyne, retreating to the capital, Mogadishu. On 28 December they abandoned Mogadishu, leaving the city in chaos while they moved south towards Kismayo, which allowed the TFG and Ethiopian troops to take over the city. After a stand at the Battle of Jilib, the ICU abandoned the city of Kismayo on 1 January 2007. Stripped of almost all their territory, it was speculated the ICU would pursue guerrilla-style warfare against the government.

Islamic State in Somalia (ISS)

The origins of the Islamic State in Somalia trace back to 2012, when Abdul Qadir Mumin was sent by the al-Shabaab leadership to its remote outpost in Puntland, far from the terrorist group's primary areas of operation in southern Somalia. Mumin's role in Puntland was originally to attract recruits for the numerical small and militarily weak local al-Shabaab group, which was led by Mohamed Said

Atom at the time. In 2014, however, Atom defected to the government, and Mumin was forced to take control of the Puntland group, isolated. As a result, Mumin began to consider himself more and more independent.

Meanwhile, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant had launched a propaganda campaign to convince al-Shabaab to join to them, which was "angrily refused" by al-Shabaab's central leadership. Mumin, however, pledged *bay'ah* to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and the Islamic State in October 2015. This caused a violent split within Puntland's al-Shabaab, as only 20 of the 300 local Islamist fighters joined Mumin, while the al-Shabaab loyalists attempted to kill these defectors. The small group of Islamic State followers proceeded to form *Abnaa ul-Calipha* or the *Islamic State in Somalia*.

International Action

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) was established on 3 June 2013 by UN Security Council Resolution 2102, following a comprehensive assessment of the United Nations in support of the establishment of the Federal Government of Somalia. The mandate of UNSOM was subsequently renewed by Security Council resolutions 2158 (2014), 2221 (2015), 2232 (2015), and 2275 (2016).

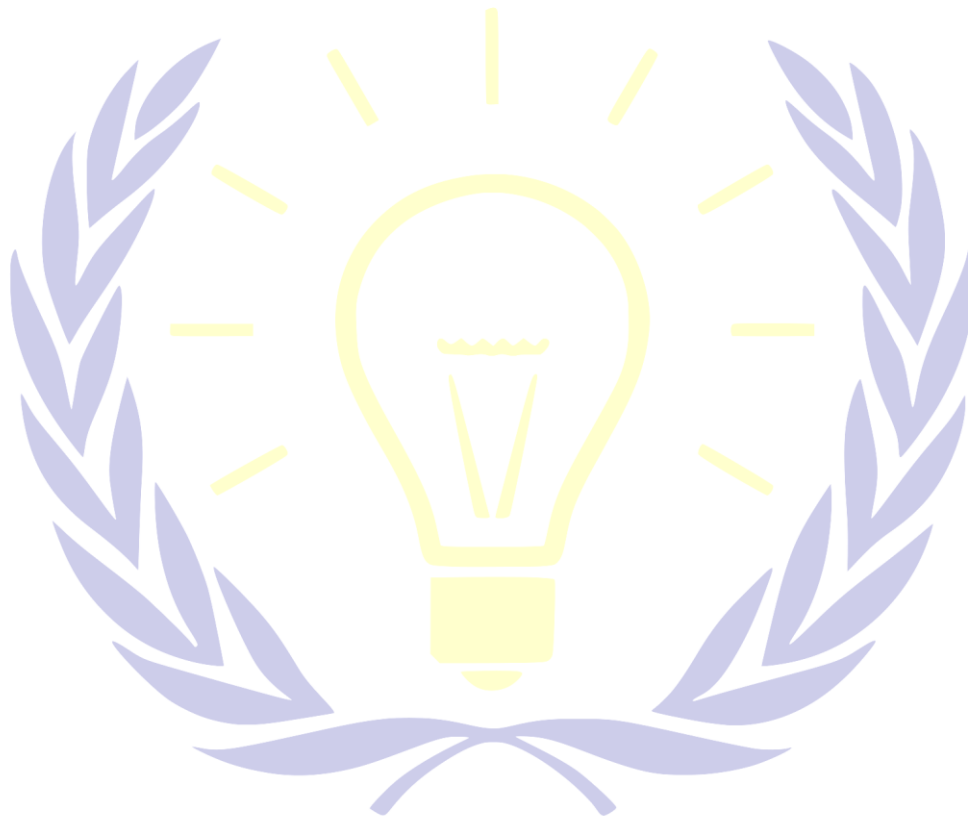
Among its other mandated functions, UNSOM is helping build the Federal Government's capacity to promote respect for human rights and women's empowerment, promote child protection, prevent conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence, and strengthen justice institutions. Further, it is monitoring, helping investigate and reporting to the Council on any abuses or violations of human rights or of international humanitarian law committed in Somalia, or any abuses committed against children or women.

In line with the Security Council decision, UNSOM is based in Mogadishu with presence in capitals of existing and emerging federal member states including Puntland, the Interim Jubba Administration, Interim South-West Administration, and also in the future merged administration of Hiraaan and Middle Shabelle. Presence in the Galmudug Interim Administration will be established once AMISOM is fully deployed in the area.

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Questions a resolution must answer

1. What steps should the Federal Government take to tackle various extremist factions present all over Somalia?
2. What should be done to bring the separatists and rebels under the control of the Federal Government?



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Research Links

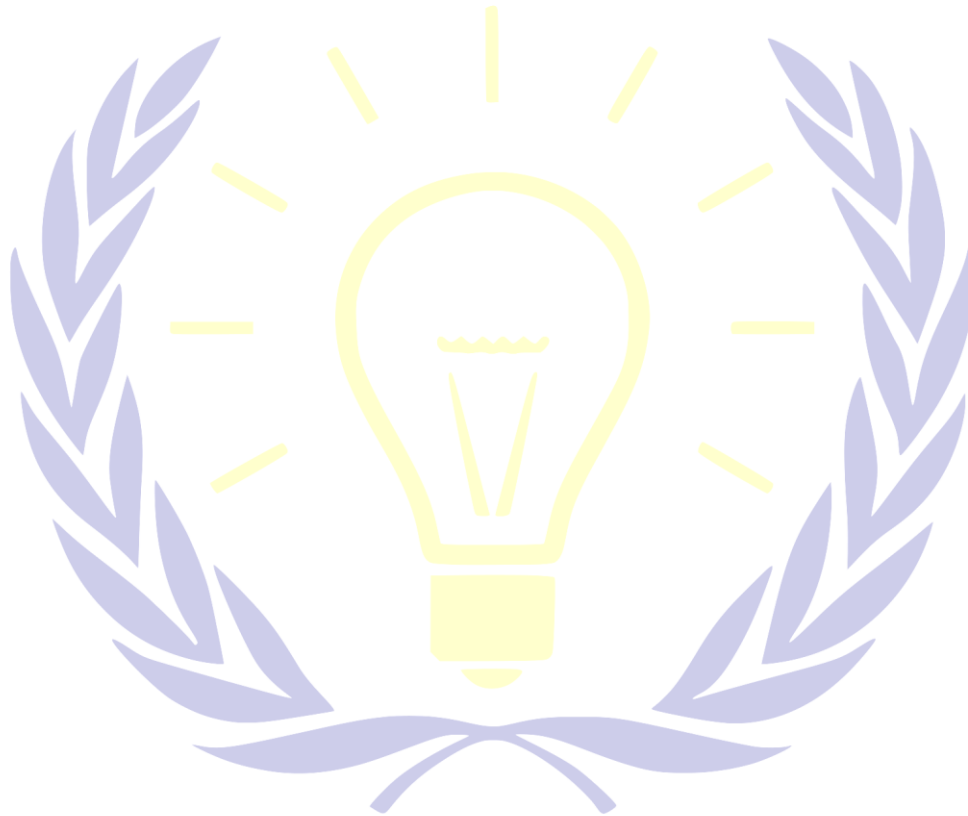
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