

# **Somalia: The Roots of Reconciliation**

**PEACE-MAKING ENDEAVOURS OF CONTEMPORARY LINEAGE  
LEADERS:**

**A SURVEY OF GRASSROOTS PEACE CONFERENCES IN "SOMALILAND"**

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A piece of original research commissioned by ActionAid, 1993

## CONTENTS

|  |    |
|--|----|
| 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....   | 4  |
| 1.1. OBJECTIVES .....  | 4  |
| 1.2. METHODOLOGY .....   | 4  |
| 1.3. SYNOPSES .....  | 5  |
| 1.3.1. SOCIAL ORGANIZATION .....   | 5  |
| 1.3.2. TRADITIONAL SOURCES OF POWER AND AUTHORITY .....                                    | 5  |
| 1.3.3. TYPES OF CONFLICT .....   | 6  |
| 1.3.4. TECHNIQUES OF PEACE-MAKING .....  | 6  |
| 1.3.5. CONSTRAINTS ON EFFECTIVE PEACE-MAKING .....   | 7  |
| 1.3.6. ACHIEVEMENTS .....  | 7  |
| 1.3.7. CONCLUSIONS .....   | 7  |
| 1.4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS .....   | 9  |
| 2. GENERAL .....   | 10 |
| 2.1. INTRODUCTION .....  | 10 |
| 2.2. SOCIAL ORGANIZATION .....   | 12 |
| 2.3. DISTRIBUTION OF CLANS IN "SOMALILAND" .....   | 15 |
| 3. ORGANIZATION AND FORMAT OF PEACE-CONFERENCES .....                                      | 17 |
| 3.1. THE HIGHEST LEVEL COUNCIL: Guurti .....   | 17 |
| 3.2. COMPOSITION OF THE GUURTI .....   | 18 |
| 3.3. LOCAL CLAN COUNCILS .....   | 20 |
| 3.4. LINEAGE LEADERS: REVITALIZATION AND PROLIFERATION<br>OF SULTANS .....                 | 21 |
| 3.5. AKILS: DIA-PAYING LINEAGE POLITICAL LEADERS .....                                     | 26 |
| 3.6. SPIRITUAL LEADERS SHEIKHS AND WADAADS .....   | 29 |
| 3.7. POETS .....   | 30 |
| 4. TYPES OF CONFLICT .....   | 31 |
| 4.1. PASTORAL CONFLICTS .....  | 31 |
| 4.1.1. CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENTS .....  | 31 |
| 4.1.2. PEACE-CONFERENCE OF THE EASTERN ALLIANCE .....                                      | 33 |
| 4.1.3. PASTORAL CONFLICTS: PATTERNS .....  | 40 |
| 4.1.4. ESTRAGED RELATIONS BETWEEN THE EASTERN HABAR<br>YONIS AND EASTERN DHULBAHANTE ..... | 41 |
| 4.1.5. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF<br>PASTORAL TREATIES .....                    | 42 |
| 4.2. SEDENTARY CONFLICTS .....   | 45 |
| 4.2.1. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS .....   | 45 |
| 4.2.2. LAND DISPUTE IN ERIGAVO DISTRICT: THE<br>GAHEYLE ISSUE .....                        | 46 |
| 4.2.3. GRAZING RESERVES .....  | 47 |
| 4.2.4. LAND DISPUTE IN THE AGRICULTURAL NORTHWEST,   |    |

|   |    |
|---|----|
| BORAMA AND GABILEY DISTRICTS: RER NUR AND<br>JIBRIL ABOKOR GROUPS .....                     | 48 |
| 4.2.5. THE ISSUE OF THE DISPLACED BAHA SAMARON .....  | 51 |
| 4.2.6. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE<br>AGREEMENTS BETWEEN SETTLED GROUPS ..... | 51 |
| 4.3. POLITICALLY INSTIGATED CONFLICTS .....   | 54 |
| 4.3.1. BURAO CONFLICT .....   | 54 |
| 4.3.2. BERBERA CONFLICT .....   | 55 |
| 4.3.3. SIGNIFICANCE OF SHEIKH PEACE-CONFERENCE .....  | 57 |
| 5. TECHNIQUES OF PEACE-MAKING .....   | 58 |
| 5.1. WOMEN'S ROLE IN PEACE-MAKING: .....  | 58 |
| 5.2. INFORMAL AND HOLISTIC APPROACH .....   | 60 |
| 5.3. INTRODUCTION OF HARSH PENALTIES .....  | 61 |
| 6. CONSTRAINTS ON EFFECTIVE PEACE-MAKING .....  | 62 |
| 6.1. LIMITED AND DIFFUSE AUTHORITY OF THE ELDERS .....                                      | 62 |
| 6.2. FREELANCE MILITIAS: THE DEYDEY .....   | 63 |
| 6.3. SIZE, TIME, PROTOCOL AND OTHER CONSTRAINTS .....                                       | 65 |
| 7. ACHIEVEMENTS .....   | 66 |
| 8. CONCLUSIONS .....  | 68 |
| NOTES .....   | 69 |

**PEACE-MAKING ENDEAVOURS OF CONTEMPORARY LINEAGE LEADERS:  
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## **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **1.1. OBJECTIVES**

1. Generate adequate and reliable information that can help ACTIONAID manage better its present and future reconstruction and development work in "Somaliland".
2. Share with other interested NGO and multilateral organizations ACTIONAID'S positive experience of working with the elders in Erigavo region, where the organization operates reconstruction activities in the areas of water supply and animal health.
3. Review the political processes documented by I.M. Lewis (1961) in his classical work "A pastoral Democracy". This was made imperative by the paucity of serious contemporary Anthropological studies on the northern Somali society. Compared to similar societies in Sub-Sahara Africa, this northern primarily nomadic society remains the least documented. Moreover, working in an unstable situation requires a clear understanding of the local politics of the project area in particular and the wider social context in general.
4. Produce an updated study on the traditional system of governance, by examining the changes that took place in contemporary post-independence period (1960-1993).
5. Explain the security differences between the relatively peaceful study area and the troubled south.
6. Explore the relevance of traditional political leaders for consolidation of peace, reconstruction activities and institutional building.

### **1.2. METHODOLOGY**

This survey of the northern peace conferences took a period of four months to complete. It started in June 1993 in London with two weeks review of the literature. The bulk of the recently produced relevant material was found to be prescriptive and based mostly on superficial quick studies, or dilating upon the causes of the crisis. Shortage of reliable and in-depth sociological data of recent origin became apparent from the literature survey. This influenced the decision to use I.M. Lewis (1961) "A Pastoral Democracy" as a point of departure, and to undertake field survey.

Under the supervision of I.M. Lewis, A.Y. Farah (a social anthropologist from northern Somalia) undertook a six-week field trip in Erigavo (three weeks), Hargeisa (two weeks) and Awdal region (one week) in the self-proclaimed "Republic of Somaliland". The researcher would have liked to observe a peace-conference in full-swing, since participant-observation is an important anthropological technique of data collection. Unfortunately, the researcher was denied the opportunity to participate in the Erigavo conference, which was scheduled to take place on 10 April 1993 and wrongly assumed to take place sometime during the trip, but was delayed several times during the survey period.

The raw data presented in the study, was obtained from several sources. Ensuing legal agreements between reconciling parties were collected and studied with the help of the local authorities of Somali customary law (*'xeer'*). Most of these were kindly provided by Abdi Abdillahi, a graduate of the Lafole College of Education, who was actively engaged in the secretariat work for the peace functions of the *Guurti* of "Somaliland". The Sultan of the Eastern Habar Yonis in Erigavo issued the bilateral agreements between his clan and neighbouring Wasangeli and Dhulbahante. A former secondary school classmate, Jibril in Erigavo, provided the treaty of the Eastern alliance. The Rer Nur past and present petitions, were obtained from the *Guurti* of Rer lineage of the Gadabursi and Mr Kheyre Hussein.

Valuable information was also collected through informal and open discussions the researcher have had with lineage leaders at various levels of political segmentation, and other social groups (intellectuals, modern politicians, poets, religious men and women) who have participated in most of the peace-conferences. In addition, the researcher enjoyed an illuminating video show on the Borama conference, which was organized by Somali Relief and Rehabilitation Association in Hargeisa.

### **1.3. SYNOPSES**

#### **1.3.1. SOCIAL ORGANIZATION**

The three clan-families who live in the north are: Dir, Isaq and Darod. The largest of these, the Isaq, occupy its homeland at the central part of the self-proclaimed "Somaliland". Dir groups of Gadabursi and Lisa live on the west of the Isaq, and the Darod groups of Dhulbahante and Warsangeli inhabit their traditional territory east of the Isaq.

The elaborately segmented patrilineal descent formation of the northern Somali society, sub-divides the major groups into varying segments at different levels of political grouping. In a pervasive agnatic context built of elaborate segments, the structurally and functionally important points of cleavage are: "clan-family", "clan", "primary lineage" and "dia-paying group". The latter group is the most stable political unit, which guarantees the Somali security of his life and property. Apart from the agnatic principle which binds close kinsmen in this corporate group, its endurance is further enhanced by the collective obligation to pay and receive blood compensation *dia*.

Though susceptible to manipulation by reckless personalities, the fluid segmentary social system of the northern Somali society, has the capacity to place each and every kinsman in a *dia*-paying lineage where his basic rights are guaranteed and obligations defined.

#### **1.3.2. TRADITIONAL SOURCES OF POWER AND AUTHORITY**

Today, the highest level council of elders is known as *Guurti*. Headed by clan leaders (Sultans), the *Guurti* consists of a body of elders, which represent the lineages of the clans. Most commonly, a significant number of these representatives are *dia*-paying group leaders, *Akils*- "Local Authorities". The *Guurti* of the clans and large sub-clans attend to the internal affairs of the groups and represent

them in inter-clan, regional and national peace-conferences and other matters of wider common interest.

The *Guurti* of the clans are commonly townsmen who live in the urban centres dominated by their respective groups. However, they are tied to their rural kinsmen by agnatic bond and common treaty. They also typically own livestock in their home areas. This economic interest enhances the obtaining social ties between kinsmen in urban and rural domains.

Apart from the participation of the northern peace-conferences by politicians, military officials and professionals who served past regimes, and the adoption of techniques used in modern hall-conferences; nevertheless, they can essentially be described as traditional lineage ad hoc councils (*shirs*) participated by prominent adult men of the concerned parties. The *Guurti* play a central role in the peace process, which harnesses the services of the sacred authority of the religious leaders and persuasive power of the distinguished poets. Perhaps linked to the natural demographic growth, our study found that political offices had proliferated among the clans in the study area. Most probably, this was also fostered by the need of the clans and sub-clans to assert independence in a situation of turmoil and uncertainty with an explicit tendency to search for solutions in the traditional lineage structure, given the absence of effective modern law and order authorities.

### **1.3.3. TYPES OF CONFLICT**

The three main types of conflicts discussed in this section are: pastoral conflicts over range lands, conflicts over arable land in settled areas, and politically instigated conflicts that chiefly resulted from competition for political dominance and access to limited resources among major Isaq groups. Pastoral and sedentary conflicts are more pronounced in areas with multi-clan composition, eg Erigavo and Gabiley districts respectively. Burao (Habar Yonis and Habar jelo) and Berbera (Habar Yonis and Lisa Musa) conflicts in 1992, exemplify politically instigated conflicts.

Pastoral conflicts over basic resources whose distribution are determined by environmental factors appear relatively easier to resolve than disputes over arable land in settled areas. Investments made by holders in arable land make this fixed property valuable. Also such property is usually scarce, particularly in Borama and Gabiley districts that have a relatively prolonged history of settlement and cultivation in the north. These factors and the different clan origin of local groups involved in dispute make the resolution of such conflicts more difficult.

### **1.3.4. TECHNIQUES OF PEACE-MAKING**

Traditionally, to seal a peace treaty, women were sometimes exchanged. This was done in some of the major peace agreements in "Somaliland". Introduction of unprecedented rules contributed to peace-keeping. To dissuade armed militias from seizing herds of opposed groups, the elders decreed that the responsibility of paying damages inflicted by armed groups should be shouldered by the immediate agnates of the perpetual offenders.

In reconciling embattled clans, the central *Guurti* made use of the services of distinguished leaders of

poets and religious men. Reconciling parties were encouraged to make peace themselves in order to avoid futile and protracted litigations and also to make agreements enduring.

### **1.3.5. CONSTRAINTS ON EFFECTIVE PEACE-MAKING**

The traditional system of governance that relies primarily upon the moral authority of lineage leaders and the good will of their kinsmen, has limited power to effectively maintain peace and prevent the occurrence of crime and violence. Clan-based armed militias pose the greatest threat to peace and stability. Yet, despite improved relations between clans, chiefly as a result of elders' peace movement, inter-clan suspicion still lingers. This is hindering demobilization and disarmament which indeed is the expressed wish of every person in "Somaliland".

### **1.3.6. ACHIEVEMENTS**

The sustained effort of the lineage elders, firmly established an encouraging tendency, in which peaceful dialogue is favoured as a means to settle legitimate grievance in lieu of the use of force. Individual acts of violence are constrained not only by legal ruling which places increased responsibility upon the offender, but also by the predictable condemnation of agnatic kinsmen and opposition of implicated social units. Legal contracts promulgated through a series of peace conferences, presently define political and socio-economic relations between local clans in contemporary northern Somalia.

### **1.3.7. CONCLUSIONS**

Using I.M. Lewis's "A Pastoral Democracy" (1961) as a point of departure, A.Y. Farah has conducted a brief field survey of current political processes and local level peace-making in Somaliland (North-west Somalia). During the period of Scientific Socialism in Somalia, the military government claimed that it had abolished clanship and similar claims have been rather wistfully made by various Marxist writers on Somalia. Others have asserted that the traditional clan system and the system of lineage governance analyzed in 1961 by I.M. Lewis no longer exists. Our findings are entirely contrary. Lineage elders are alive and well and positions of lineage leadership, far from disappearing, have actually proliferated over the last thirty years.

In the wake of the overthrow of Siyad's regime in the north, in the absence of any effective centralized successor government, the lineage elders have been propelled to the centre of the political stage. Although they are often based in towns, the elders (in principle all married men) are deeply involved in the rural, predominantly pastoral society and typically own livestock. Today, as in the past, they deliberate policy and take decisions for these groups at extremely democratic meetings in which now, as before, oratory and poetry play important political roles.

In inter-group peace-making, which was our central concern, wives are regularly employed as intermediaries and ambassadors since intermarriage between clans is a general feature. As in the past, we found that in a number of cases the collective exchange of women in marriage was employed to seal peace treaties between previously hostile clans and lineages. This was over and above the solemn oaths which were sworn by the signatures in the presence of the traditional men of religion (*wadaads*)

who opened and closed the peace-conferences with their blessings and readings from the Qoran. The terms of peace-agreements were set out formally as traditional contracts or treaties (*xeer*), and included the usual Somali provisions of compensation for death and injury in subsequent breaches of peace.

The supreme achievement and symbol of the vigour of these traditional grassroots political processes is demonstrated in the appointment by the peace elders of the new "Somaliland" government. This is a remarkable climax of these local-level peace-initiatives and proof of the vitality of the "pastoral democracy" which has, in effect, replaced "modern" political activity which our findings testify. The continuing strength of traditional political processes, two developments are important to note. The first is the concentration of collective responsibility within the close family of the miscreant who persistently breaks the peace and attacks the property or persons of others without the authorization of his kin group. In some cases, persistent offenders have been executed by their own kin. This is a very significant innovation aimed at countering the unauthorized violence of freelance bandits (the "*deydey*"). Of similar importance in peace negotiation, is the use of local radios to communicate with estranged or hostile groups and persuade them of the good intentions of the negotiations.

When we contrast the effective, low profile, locally based, inexpensive northern Somali peace process with the expensive, externally directed and less successful peace initiatives in the south, a number of factors seem to be involved. There is first the general genuinely popularly rooted desire for peace in the north, associated with the ultimate goal of international recognition. Although both north and south are plagued by "freelance" bandits, there are no significant power hungry war-lords in the north vying for power on the scale characteristic of southern Somalia. Although three different families of clans are represented in "Somaliland" they are not locked in a desperate power struggle with ramifying implications for other communities. The relative success of northern peace-making highlights how the presence of such bellicose figures impedes peace and reconstruction. It is also evident that the concentration of aid resources in one place (Berbera in the north, Mogadishu in the south) is a potent stimulus to conflict.

In summary, our short study shows clearly how the "bottom-up" road to peace and reconstruction works in Somalia. The government formed by the SNM guerilla movement which liberated the north-west in 1990 could not achieve popular support and withered away. It was left to the local clan elders to weave a web of peace and inter-clan relations from the grassroots. This is a slow process- but two years after its commencement has been crowned with success. Peace in Somalia, of course, is a relative matter in this essentially warrior society of pastoral nomads. It is unrealistic and ethnocentric to expect a complete absence of conflict and raiding in Somali society. The most that can be hoped for is that institutions capable of resolving conflict should be in place and functioning. This is the situation today in the north, and it will obviously be improved further as the demobilisation of armed bands proceeds. We also emphasize the importance of effective communications between clans- the persuasive power of peace poetry and the use of radios in negotiations as a preliminary to actual meetings between groups. Finally, it is very striking how the over-concentration of relief supplies in one area, in the absence of generally agreed plan for inter-clan distribution, fuels competition and conflict.

This modest success story largely despite, rather than because of UN or other foreign intervention, highlights the effectiveness of low-level, grassroots peace negotiation. It needs to be replicated in the north-east region which has similarly, by its own efforts, achieved a comparable degree of harmony.



The situation in the south, obviously, also urgently needs to be examined. Although the UN appears to have facilitated some local peace initiatives outside Mogadishu and is currently promoting the formation of local and district councils, we do not know to what extent these are genuinely representative of local clan interests thus how effectively they can form part of a wider, popularly supported, governmental organization.

#### **1.4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The northern peace-making model indicates the significance of traditional system of governance in chaotic situation of utter failure of the state and its law and order machinery. Given the dismal record of the modern state in Somalia and in Africa in general, the notable peace-making role of northern elders highlights the examination of native political institutions in unstable contemporary African societies. The remarkable peace-keeping effort embarked upon by the traditional lineage leaders, is rightly signified by the people in "Somaliland" as a notable achievement at this critical period. The realized fragile peace not only restrained freelance violence and inter-clan strife, it restored a sense of hope and confidence, which were affected deeply by the prolonged social upheaval. Eminent leaders and ordinary people derive from this fluid achievement a sense of pride. The situation in the north is frequently compared to the less stable south which is thought of as source of Somalia's tragedy.

The grassroots northern peace initiative needs encouragement and support. Desperately needed external assistance for massive reconstruction, which could not proceed without restoration of stability, should be handled carefully. External assistance should be timely, measured and appropriate. This is necessary in preserving the self-help effort of the local peace initiative, while in the meantime supplementing it with additional required resources. Traditional peace-making is sturdy and cumbersome. Hence, it can accommodate extensive cash and kind assistance without any predictable improvement in its nature and outcome. Few of the series of the peace-conferences gratefully received dry ration and limited cash for transport, fuel and other necessary items.

Elder's peace duties should not be considered as a panacea that can solve prevailing security problems in "Somaliland". The relentless effort of the clan leaders, which reached its height in peace and state formation conference held at Borama, raised the expectations of the people, who are desperate to see positive developments which might bring international recognition and solve the vexing security issue. The elder's moral and customary skills are not good enough at preventing the occurrence of violence and warfare. The authority they have had in reconciling estranged groups is not efficient, for it ultimately depends upon consensus and persuasion techniques of traditional peace-making. This leads one to suggest that elder's peace prerogatives should be examined in the wider context- the formation of modern law and order institutions, which are needed to supplement the law and order responsibilities of the lineage leaders.

The elder's peace-keeping functions are indispensable in the short-term, until effective modern law and order organs are put in place. To place the balance in favour of modern system of governance means the denial of the natural role of Somali elders, which could have drastic repercussions if the former system collapses. Professionals and civil servants of the failed state tend to emphasize the significance in the formation of a modern state infrastructure. Restoration and reconstruction of essential facilities and basic infrastructure are apparently needed, but given the scale of destruction, this will take time and substantial resources lacking in the war-torn "Somaliland". Presumably, limited resources and

expertise should be targeted in reconstructing vital ministries, eg finance, interior and security. The task of reconstructing basic services should start at the district level rather than from the top downwards. This approach is attuned to the decentralized system of governance which is enshrined in the interim national charter formulated by the elders in the Borama conference.

The elders can play a vital role in the creation of a modern local system of administration. Without the support of the lineage leaders, imposed system of governance had a little chance to survive. Elders should also be consulted in balancing the representation of local groups in the administration. Equitable distribution of political and economic resources is very important, since competition for access to resources between rival groups and appropriation of resources by particular groups, were foremost among the factors which instigated the civil war.

Failure of the SNM interim administration to undertake meaningful attempt in organizing the triumphant guerillas to a regular security forces, led to a loose and disenchanted armed bands. This engendered freelance banditry and fuelled political bickering among rival political groups in the administration. This enhanced the elder's moral authority, whose sustained peace-keeping endeavour reached its hight at the Sheikh conference of November 1992, which successfully reconciled the embattled Habar Yonis and Iisa Musa clans. To consolidate their peace duties, the elders placed the control of the armed militias under the political leadership of kin groups. This has the implication of actively involving the elders in the expected disarmament and demobilization of the armed militias.

## **2. GENERAL**

### **2.1. INTRODUCTION**

After the flight of Siad Barre from Mogadishu in January 1991, competing armed militias established clan fiefdoms in areas dominated by their respective social groups. This dismemberment of Somalia, is most pronounced in Mogadishu city, where hostile warlords ( ALi Mahdi and Aidid) who both belong to Hawiya and its political organization USC, divided the city into two halves-north and south. The north is controlled by the Ali Mahdi, while the south is under the domain of Aidid.

In contrast to the faction-ridden and unstable south, the self-proclaimed "Republic of Somaliland" (the former British Protectorate) formed in May 1991, has seen relatively peaceful conditions in the turbulent post-military regime. Several factors can be surmised to account for this. The first, is an environmental factor. The predominantly nomadic rural and localized dry farming subsistence agriculture, has flourished during the last two years; while some areas in the south were afflicted with drought that triggered the massive relief aid programme. The extortion of relief goods, and income derived from a monopoly of the import of certain goods needed by the relief agencies, further strengthened the war-effort of heavily armed and power-crazy warlords in the south.

Second, the bulk of the comparatively limited relief assistance donated to "Somaliland" during the reign of the SNM interim administration, May 1991-May 1993, was largely looted by competing clan militias. This led to the termination of relief assistance and evacuation of most NGOS in 1992. However, the cessation of relief supplies denied the armed clan-based militias of a major cause of contention- access to valuable relief goods.

Third, the social upheaval in the south appears to have degenerated into a war of attrition, mainly because the major warring parties are militarily balanced. Therefore, no clan has the might to exert control over the others and impose or greatly influence the terms of settlement, with or without the consensus of the defeated parties. In contrast, in the north, the numerically largest group, the Isaq, became militarily dominant. Though the SNM administration reproduced this dominance in the interim government to the chagrin of non-Isaq groups, nevertheless the feared Isaq subjugation of the other hostile clans that were associated with the previous government did not take place.

Fourth, and perhaps most important, is the "bottom-up" approach to the restoration of peace and stability that has been pioneered in "Somaliland" by genuine clan leaders of the hostile clans. To contain clan wars, the legacy of the tyrannical military rule, and perpetuated by the successor SNM administration thwarted by rival political groups who manipulated clan differences for political ends, clan elders initiated a sustained grassroots reconciliation effort. This comprehensive peace movement was first initiated at the local level by traditional political leaders using conventional mechanisms of arbitration between disputing adjacent and affinally related clans.

Initiated at the grassroots level, the elder's peace endeavour progressed to district and regional levels. It reached its height at the Borama conference, where 150 delegates (*Guurti*) comprised of clan delegates representing all the groups in "Somaliland" managed to produce separate national and peace charters. And moreover, for the first time, at post-independence period extended their peace-making function by acting as an institutional framework for the formation of executive interim government.

Except for the Borama national conference which obtained generous international support (more than US Dollar 100,000, and excluding token support provided by some of the NGOs to some of the conferences), clan reconciliation conferences in "Somaliland" were financed through community self-help. In contrast to the inordinate costs expended on the high-profile and widely publicised UN and other peace and reconstruction forums organized by Somali diaspora abroad, the locally driven "Somaliland" peace forums produced, with little external contribution results in terms of preventing overblown clan wars in the region, and in successfully reconciling some warring clans.

In addition to the general interest of the security differences between "Somaliland" and southern Somalia, ACTIONAID sponsored this study also because of its experience of working with the elders in Erigavo region. The Guurti has provided invaluable support to ACTIONAID'S work of reconstruction concentrating on urban and rural water supplies and animal health. For instance, ACTIONAID has sought the advice of the Guurti in matters concerning equitable distribution of limited resources among the local groups residing in Erigavo district. It is, moreover, the Guurti which has guaranteed ACTIONAID'S security, a duty the elders have taken seriously and discharged satisfactorily, since the end of 1992.

Table 1: Major Guurti Reconciliation Conferences in Somaliland, 1991-93:

| <b>Reconciling Clans</b>             | <b>Meeting Place</b> | <b>Duration</b>      | <b>Propitious Title<br/>(see table 2)</b> |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---|
| Gadabursi/Iisa                       | Borama               | 17-19 May 1991       |   |
| Baha Samaron/Jibril Abokor           | Borama               | 17-19 October 1992   | <i>Guul Alla</i>                          |
| Habar Yonis/Iisa Musa                | Hargeisa             | 4.10.1992            |   |
| Habar Yonis/Iisa Musa                | Sheikh               | 28.10 to 08.11 '92   | <i>Tawfiq</i>                             |
| Dhulbahante/Habar Yonis              | Dararweyne           | 2.1 to 5.2 '93       | <i>Khaatumo</i>                           |
| Warsangeli/Habar Yonis               | Jiideli              | 6.10 to 9.10 '92     |   |
| Warsangeli/Habar Tol jelo            |                      | 11.08 to 18.08 '92   |   |
| Habar Tol jelo/Dhulbahante Sawaqroon | Garadag              | 23.11 to 1.12 '93    | <i>Danwadaag Beri</i>                     |
| Borama National                      | Borama               | 24.01 '93 to May '93 | <i>Allaa Mahad leh</i>                    |

Table: 2.

| <b>Propitious Peace Conference Title</b> | <b>Meaning/Translation</b>            |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <i>Guul Alla</i>                         | Allah Disposed Victory.               |
| <i>Tawfiq</i>                            | Understanding or unanimous consensus. |
| <i>Khaatumo</i>                          | Ultimate reality.                     |
| <i>Danwadag Bari</i>                     | Eastern Alliance.                     |
| <i>Allaa Mahad leh</i>                   | Tribute be to Allah.                  |

## **2.2. SOCIAL ORGANIZATION**

"The evocative power of kinship as the axiomatic natural basis for all social co-operation and as the ultimate guarantee of personal and collective security is deeply rooted in Somali society. For the weaker and less successful members of the Somali lineage, kinship is an indispensable source of protection and safety- readily manipulated by their stronger more politically ambitious clansmen for whom kinship is an elastic resource, conveniently and accessible and infinitely negotiable. "Our kinsmen right or wrong" is the basic motto of Somali social life. As the foundation of social co-operation, kinship enters into all transactions between and amongst individuals. There is no significant area of Somali social activity where the influence of kinship is absent." (I.M. Lewis in a forthcoming work, "Blood and Bone").

The unyielding hold of kinship upon the Somali which the quoted paragraph trenchantly illustrates, explains the need to start this paper with a summary of the significant features of the patrilineal descent system of the predominantly pastoral Somali.

The highest level of political grouping among the pastoral Somali has been designated by I.M. Lewis (1961) as "clan-family". Widely distributed in space across the Somali region in the Horn of Africa, and with populations sometimes in excess of a million (eg the Darod), clan-families are too unwieldy to act traditionally as political entities. The Isaq clans joined forces against the military regime during the civil war, but fragmented into traditional rival clan factions after the downfall of the regime in 1991.

The symbolic link which binds members of the clan-family, mainly derives from links to a common remote ancestor, who is usually depicted as the central figure in the original creation myth of the group. Those members of the clan-family who are able to participate, occasionally reinforce social solidarity by organizing large memorial feasts at the tomb of their ancestor.

Most importantly, the loose ties which obtain at this level of social formation, are established by an elaborate and extensive genealogy (20-30 generations) in which the living generation count to the founding eponym. This extensive genealogical reckoning, which acts as a device that defines social relations in the elaborately segmented patrilineal system of the Somali, is learned by rote by each Somali, in early life, under the instruction of his dutiful mother. Moreover, the extensive genealogy of the clan-family is sometimes eternally recorded in venerated texts by religious men literate in Arabic, and today in Somali by educated members of the clan-family.

The total Somali nation whose remarkable homogeneity is founded upon common language (Somali-written in Latin script in 1972), religion (Islam), and predominant pastoral economy, is divided into six clan-families: Isaq, Darod, Dir, Hawiya, Digil and Rahanweyn. The four former powerful clan-families are primarily pastoral and widely dispersed, while the latter two are largely agricultural and concentrated in the riverine region of southern Somalia.

Within the clan-family, the next most important social unit has been described by Lewis (1961) as the "clan". Traditionally, the clan marks the upper level of practical political action. Hence when the situation demands and the common interest of its members are at stake, a clan unites its forces against rival and often hostile clans.

Its political importance is further enhanced by the clan's territorial tendency whereby each clan is associated with a particular area that is frequented by its members. Also the dry season corporate deep-wells and trading centres dominated by clan members occur in its sphere of influence that is delineated by reference to ubiquitous place names. The territorial interests of the clan is collectively defended if threatened by antagonistic rival units. The clan is further distinguished by the titular office of clan leader.

In descending order, the next important social segment has been designated by I.M. Lewis (1961) as "primary lineage". The sanctioned alliance seeking tendency, among kinsmen which belongs to this unit, and also the predisposition among its members to identify themselves with this lineage in ordinary kinship discourse, are its essential sociological features.

Within this segmentary system of relatively mobilised groups, the basic political and jural unit is the *dia*-paying group. Its strongly bound agnatic members commonly count from four to six generations to a common ancestor. Its strength varies from a few hundred to a few thousand persons.

Apart from the principle of close agnation which binds members of the *dia*-paying lineage, its enduring social solidarity is also further cemented by the collective obligation to pay and receive blood-*dia* compensation and payments regarding other acknowledged delicts. Here both principles which define social solidarity and political action, agnation and contract *xeer*, neatly supplement each other to produce a cohesive and stable political unit.

Because it integrates both principles, agnation and contract *xeer*, forces that act as the foundations of stable social solidarity, mutual cooperation and assistance; this group functions as a civil institution which provides the protection and security of the pastoral Somali. The crucial importance of this lineage appears to have led past colonial and successive independent governments to appoint stipended *dia* paying lineage leaders titled as "chiefs" or local authorities-*Akils*. These elders assumed the important role of maintaining law and order among their kinsmen, and acted as emissaries between them and the government.

The short review highlights only the structurally and functionally important points of cleavage within an all-pervasive agnatic context built of elaborate segments. Thus, it must not be considered that clan, primary lineage and *dia*-paying group, constitute the only possible units of segmentation of the major Somali clan-families. In practice, the actual levels of bifurcation are much more extensive.

This ordered, but outwardly intricate, segmentary social system has the capacity to place each and every citizen in a corporate *dia*-paying lineage where his basic rights are guaranteed and obligations clearly defined. Moreover, it establishes social relations between *dia*-paying groups and other levels of political groupings, in a turbulent social situation where alliances need to be created to defend pastoral resources or else retrieve access to pasturage and water usurped by an opponent.

The eternal search for adequate pasturage and water, in a semi-arid or arid nomadic environment that is characterized by unevenly distributed and often scarce resources, provides uncertainty and generates fierce competition among members of different lineage groups. In practice, clans fight against clans, primary lineage groups of a particular clan and those of different neighbouring clans get locked into a battle, in the same way, the *dia*-paying lineages of the primary groups confront one another in armed conflict.

This fluid social situation, which has been so ruthlessly manipulated by Somalia's power-mongering warlords, has been eloquently described by Samater (Samater, SS 1993 "A nation in turmoil". Minority Rights Group. p.25.):

"Stripped of the scientific razzle-dazzle with which it is often presented, segmentation may be expressed in the Arab Bedouin saying: my uterine brother and I against my half-brother, my

brother and I against my father, my father's household against my uncle's household, our two households (my uncle's and mine) against the rest of the immediate kin, the immediate kin against non-immediate members of the clan, my clan against other clans and, finally, my nation and I against the world! In lineage segmentation one, literally, does not have a permanent enemy or a permanent friend, only a permanent context. Depending upon a given context, a man - or group of men, or a state, for that matter-may be your friend or foe. Everything is fluid and ever changing"

### **2.3. DISTRIBUTION OF CLANS IN "SOMALILAND"**

The Isaq is the largest group in "Somaliland". Flanked on the western and eastern sides by ethnically distinct clans, this numerically dominant group inhabit its traditional territory that covers the central part of the "Republic of Somaliland".

The Isaq country include Hargeisa and Burao regions, a substantial portion of Sanag region which also shelters Darod groups, namely the Warsangeli clan and Naaleeye lineage of the Dhulbahante. This constitutes the bulk of the grazing areas available in "Somaliland" and major trading towns of Hargeisa, Burao and Erigavo. The principal export town of Berbera and other small ports in Erigavo region, Mait and Heis, are all situated in territories inhabited by different Isaq clans.

The north-west region of Awdal that lies adjacent to Gabiley district is the area occupied by the Gadabursi and Iisa clans, both of whom belong to the Dir clan-family. The regional capital of this dominantly Gadabursi land, Borama, is the major urban and trading town; while the dilapidated medieval port of Zeila provides the main overseas gateway. Control of Zeila is currently disputed among the Gadabursi and Iisa clans; but controlled by Jibril Abokor militias of the Isaq, who remained behind after the other joint militias of the Isaq left.

The SNM managed to extend control over Awdal region in February 1991, after the defeat of the despotic military regime. This led to an exodus of Gadabursi refugees, many of whom are still based in camps across the border in Ethiopia- Teferiber and Dhar Wanage camps.

The eastern border of the central Isaq territory is occupied by Dhulbahante and Warsangeli clans of the Darod clan-family. The Sool region which lies adjacent to Burao region, is largely inhabited by the Dhulbahante, while the Badhan District in Erigavo is the Warsangeli land whose territory extends to the western areas of the neighbouring Bosaso district that is dominated by the Majerten clan.

Some distinct minority groups of various sizes commonly live among the major clans in the region. For example, among the Habar Yonis in Erigavo district there live several small groups of different origin. They are: Gahaile, Jibrail, Miisanle, Magadle, Aaba Yonis and even nomadic Arab community.

The largest of these are the Gaheyle and Jibrail which exist as independent *dia*-paying lineages and therefore possess acknowledged heads-*Akils*. The Gaheyle claim Sawaqroon identity (Majerten) while the other traces Ogaden kinship ties.

The Gaheyle strongly supported the previous government in its fight against the Isaq and are accused of having committed atrocities against the neighbouring and affinal Abul Hamud lineage of the Habar Yonis. As a result, they fled from their homelands in the northern mountainous region of Erigavo after the military forces were defeated. Most of them have not returned and live with the Majerten in Bosaso region where they took refuge. Most of the other smaller groups stayed during the civil war with dominant host Habar Yonis lineages where they still reside in the subordinate protected status *magan*.

Despised low status, "occupational" groups who lived scattered among the "aristocratic" pastoral clans in "Somaliland" practice derided occupations: shoe making and leather tanning, iron smithing and hair dressing. Collectively dubbed as Madhiban in Erigavo region, they are divided into three main groups: Tumul, Midgan and Yibir.

These segregated groups which are difficult to distinguish from "noble" Somali, act as closed endogamous communities which intermarry among themselves. Marriage with the "noble" Somali is still strictly forbidden and rarely takes place, despite the previous government's attempts to improve the social standing of these groups and Somali women.

The Tumul are mainly engaged in disdained iron work, cutlery and processing domestic water containers that are increasingly replacing traditional fibre water vessels. The Midgan and Yibir work as shoe makers and cobblers, or do the also despised hair dressing.

About three hundred families are estimated to have lived in Erigavo town before the civil war displaced most of these low status groups, as a result of their support for the despotic military regime. At present, only nine families who remained with the Isaq during the struggle, live in Erigavo town. The bulk of those displaced from both Erigavo town and its rural areas are said to have fled to neighbouring Bosaso region populated by Darod.

In Erigavo town where the bulk of the low status groups have not yet returned home, it is interesting to note that some of their specialized despised activities had been taken up by some "noble" Isaq families during their absence. At present, all twelve shoe-making corrugated iron shops in operation in Erigavo town, are owned by Isaq families who are mostly nomadic families impoverished by the civil war.

Why the hard-pressed Isaq families took up shoe making rather than the other equally despised occupations is difficult to say. However, one may suggest that metal work demands a special skill lacked by the noble Somali, while hair dressing may be thought of as more degrading than shoe making.



### 3. ORGANIZATION AND FORMAT OF PEACE-CONFERENCES

#### 3.1. THE HIGHEST LEVEL COUNCIL: *Guurti*

Current peace forums are described as *shir*, which is the traditional council of elders that deliberated matters of common concern at all levels of grouping. In spite of the urban bias of present day elders, political leaders involved in the peace process are built of a core of *dia*-paying leaders and other distinguished elders of the reconciling groups. The traditional informal method of conducting peace and other socio-economic affairs, adopted modern conference techniques. Thus, most peace forums are chaired by a selected committee, which is assisted by a secretariat. A technical committee which often includes professionals of the disintegrated Somali state, military officials, is also appointed to prepare the agenda and a general framework for resolutions that are endorsed by the *Guurti*.

Quite commonly, conference resolutions are legitimized by unanimous consensus of the delegates of the reconciling parties. In addition to peace-making, the Borama national conference tackled the building of an executive government for "Somaliland". Therefore, it integrated both principles of legitimizing resolutions, that is traditional consensus and modern majority vote.

The most important elder's council, at present, is known as *Guurti*. Headed by sultans, the nominal political leaders of clans and large sub-clans, the *Guurti* is described as the highest traditional authority. A perceptive Warsangeli elder described *Guurti* as: "*wax garad xul ah oo qabiil ama ummad laga soo xuley*". Roughly translated this means, "the most enlightened and judicious persons that are found in a group or a nation at large".

The Somali name of the clan council, *Guurti*, does not occur in "A Pastoral Democracy", however I.M Lewis (See Note 1) described a similar institution, which was suggested to have occurred in the traditions of the past dynasties of Gadabursi and Iisa clans. The *Guurti* is sometimes referred to as *Ergo*. However, the latter can probably be described as a party of elders who usually represent a group to settle an important affair with a different group. An *Ergo* commonly consists of influential members of the *Guurti* of a particular group, but not exclusively of it. As delegates who are assembled as the situation arises, the *Ergo* can be distinguished from the standing clan council of elders. The *Guurti* not only participates in inter-clan affairs but also acts as the highest political and jural official body of clans and large sub-clans.

The cited elder described *Ergo* as a particular group of elders appointed to settle a matter between two clans or states- "*Odayaal hawl laba qabiil ama dawladdood u dhaxeysa loo direy. Xeerbeegti*", is another adhoc arbitration council of elders that is given the mandate to settle affairs between groups or members of a corporate group. Knowledge of tradition, not *Sharia* or modern law, is an important criterion for membership of *Xeerbeegti*. The *Xeerbeegti* and the *Ergo* are familiar political and jural institutions of the Somali. In contrast to the *Guurti* and *Ergo* whose mandates are to handle both practical and judicial matters, the *Xeerbeegti* acts as an arbitration panel of elders mainly assigned to adjudicate disputes according to customary law. *Ergo* and *Xeerbeegti* council of elders did not entirely lose their traditional functions at modern times in "Somaliland", but the *Guurti* appears to be an eclipsed traditional institution which has obtained current use because of the increased role of lineage leaders in peace-making.

### 3.2. COMPOSITION OF THE GUURTI

Although the total number and social composition of the *Guurti* varies from one clan to another, it is true that the Akils are well represented in general. The following table gives a limited sample which indicates the size of the *Guurti* of representative clans in "Somaliland".

Table 3:

| Clan                       | Region   | Size of Guurti |
|----------------------------|----------|----------------|
| Gadabursi                  | Awdal    | 21             |
| Habar Awal                 | Hargeisa | 18             |
| Habar Yonis+Habar Tol jelo | Erigavo  | 42             |
| Warsangeli                 | Erigavo  | 43             |
| Dhulbahante                | Sool     | 33             |

To illustrate the social composition of a particular *Guurti*, I consider the case of the Habar Yonis clan in Erigavo district. Of the 42 mixed Isaq *Guurti* in this multi-ethnic district, 33 members are Habar Yonis. It is comprised of a core of 11 Akils who represent the 11 *dia*-paying Habar Yonis lineages found in Erigavo district. Table 5 illustrates the proportion currently engaged in 3 major economic activities: Herding, Agriculture and Trade.

Figure 4: Major Occupations of the Habar Yonis *Guurti*, Erigavo District.

| Major Occupation | Number    |
|------------------|-----------|
| Herding          | 19        |
| Trade            | 8         |
| Agriculture      | 6         |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>33</b> |

Of the eight *Guurti* members who identified themselves as traders, one is an ex-civil servant while three of the herdsman are also employees of the former military government.

The result of the same *Guurti* to the enquiry on permanent residence is of the given in table 10.

Table 5: Place of Permanent Abode of the Habar Yonis *Guurti*, Erigavo District.

| Place of Permanent Abode       | Number    |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| Erigavo town                   | 16        |
| Other villages in the district | 15        |
| Rural agricultural settlements | 2         |
| Rural nomadic encampments      | 0         |
| <b>Total</b>                   | <b>33</b> |

The limited time for field research and regional perspective of this study prevented the conduct of similar examinations on other *Guurtis* in "Somaliland". In spite of the absence of data that are necessary for a general comparative exercise, the results of the case examined are interesting in several aspects.

Except two members who live in settled agricultural areas, almost the entire thirty three Habar Yonis *Guurti* live in major towns and villages of the district- roughly half (16) in the district town of Erigavo. Although none of them reside in the nomadic interior to manage their herds, more than half (19) primarily subsist on income derived from livestock.

The apparent tendency of the *Guurti* to reside in urban towns despite their nomadic base signifies an urban bias of the powerful nomadic groups that has been going on unabated since the 1940s. The continuation of social and economic links between kinsmen in rural and urban settings stands as a diversification strategy which aimed to benefit families from the economies of both domains.

The concentration of the *Guurti* and other powerful social groups, eg traders, in the urban settlements, has resulted in the shift of power from the rural nomadic groups to centres of trade and modern administration which continued since the 1940s. It is erroneous to consider the *Guurti* as an urban clique, lacking the experience and expertise to offer credible leaders to their rural subjects. With vital economic, agnatic and contractual ties that obtain between the *Guurti* and rural kinsmen, the traditional leaders are migrants to the recent interior towns in "Somaliland".

As already mentioned, the Habar Yonis *Guurti* in Erigavo district is founded upon a Clan Council. Its 33 members are constituted of two social groups. The first comprises a core made up of 11 *Akils*, who act as legitimate leaders of the corresponding constituent *dia*-paying lineages of the clan. These are assisted by the 22 other members who are appointed to the standing *Guurti*. Supported by two assigned members, each *Akil* has primary responsibility in the affairs of his *dia*-paying group. In external matters that are of common interest to the clan , eg arbitration of disputes and reconciliation with other clans, the total *Guurti* act together to defend its collective interest.

Distributed in relation to the constituent *dia*-paying social units, the Habar Yonis *Guurti* is fairly representative of the clan. However, in practice, stronger lineages dominate clan affairs including political offices. The Gadabursi 21 Elder Clan Council is distributed among its three major divisions in terms of their relative strength. The largest sub-clan, Makahil, is allocated 9 members, while each of

the remaining two, Mahad Ase and Habar Afan, is allocated 6 each.

The attachment of the *Guurti* to the corporate and stable jural and political *dia*-paying group, certainly affords it structural permanency. Nevertheless, the membership changes frequently. In many *Guurti* functions, members fail to attend due to personal reasons, engagement in more serious duties, etc. Nevertheless, kinsmen of the absentee members often delegate others of outstanding character to fulfil their role.

A comparison between the *Guurti* signatories of the successive bilateral peace treaties that act as legal contracts which tend to promote harmonious co-existence between estranged neighbouring clans in "Somaliland", illustrates significant divergence between the signatures of the different accords. Moreover, the formal clan *Guurti* does not prevent a clan or clans to appoint a special committee for particular purposes. For example, in the on-going preparation for the Erigavo regional meeting, the host Isaq clans, Habar Yonis and Habar Tol jelo, found it fitting to appoint a new joint committee to attend to security despite the existence of a formal *Guurti*. This can be seen as an attempt to bury their differences and work together to guarantee the safety of the guest *Guurtis* representing formerly enemy clans.

### **3.3. LOCAL CLAN COUNCILS**

There is a need for reinforcement and implementation of the partial agreements, eg access to water and pasturage effected by the Clan Council of Elders between often suspicious adjacent clans. Sufficient and regular presence of the mainly urban based central *Guurti* for this task at sensitive pastoral buffer-zones is apparently lacking. This role is fulfilled by joint community committees formed of respective groups residing in a grazing region.

Somalis call such grass-root committees *Guddia turxaan bixin*. This implies the committee responsible for uprooting common impediments to community peace contracts, cooperation and co-residence. Formed of locally dominant clan elders, in Erigavo region such committees respond rapidly to acts of violence and stock plunder, regulation of exchange of goods at agreed points of trading, return of stray animals to their owners, etc.

As the highest legal authority, the clan council of elders deliberates upon and arbitrates major conflicts between clans. The expected Erigavo regional meeting was given the mandate to resolve outstanding complex property rights between regional clans- land and urban properties. These contentious issues were judiciously postponed in the previous meetings for the benefit of building up confidence and trust between hostile clans.

At the local level, particularly at the buffer-zones between reconciling clans, joint security committees are established to solve minor disturbances and prevent opportunistic banditry. Such grassroots committees are locally known as *Guddida turxaan bixinta*, which literally corresponds to "the committee which uproots unwanted plants from a field". Here the act of weeding a farm from smothering plants, is employed as a metaphor for the pernicious effect of violent acts upon the mutually desired peace. Formed mainly of local elders, in Erigavo region, these local committees

respond rapidly to acts of violence and stock plunder, and also effect the exchange of stray livestock between neighbouring groups. Moreover, they endeavour to see that the bilateral contracts are observed.

Apart from the participation in the peace conferences by politicians, military officials and professionals who served past regimes, and the adoption of techniques used in modern conferences; nevertheless, they can essentially be described as traditional clan councils (*shirs*). The organization and format of this remarkably informal assembly of elders, was described by Lewis (See Note 2).

Membership of a strong group and inherited status may increase the influence and status of some aspiring elders. However, factors that determine successful leadership are generally open and attainable to potential candidates. Personal qualities and fortunes, including wealth, political acumen, strength and courage; cultural values such as expertise in traditional law and religious knowledge, generosity, fairness and impartiality, probity; seniority and skill in oral poetry and oral discourse in general, all constitute ideals that are associated with distinguished traditional leaders. These qualities which are possessed, in various combinations, by outstanding lineage leaders, indeed cause the opinions of more successful leaders to carry weight and command following among rebellious kinsmen and the public at large. Nevertheless, as I.M. Lewis observed (in "A pastoral democracy" p196-198), it is difficult to rank leadership qualities in terms of their importance.

It is worthwhile to briefly consider the motivation of elder's active involvement in peace-making. First, it is truism to retort that maintenance of peace has always been the moral obligation of lineage leaders; notwithstanding the fact that centralized law and order authorities had to some degree diminished this function in modern times. Second, the authority of the clan elders started to gain increasing significance during the civil war. In 1988, the repulsed massive offensive launched by the SNM against the government forces in Burao and Hargeisa, effectively undermined the capacity of the SNM as a military organization. This led to the formation of an Isaq *Guurti*, of 53 members, that took the responsibility of providing clan militias and logistical support the impaired war effort. Held at Adarosh near the Ethiopian border, this important conference was organized by elders. Because of the vital collaboration between the elders, who had influence on Isaq groups, and military leaders, the Isaq *Guurti* was given recognition in the constitution of the SNM. In the same year, the Gadabursi clan conducted a general conference that deliberated on the defense of its land and people against the SNM at Qunujed.

The elders are certainly delighted by their increased peace-making role and its attendant benefits. For instance, the host group lavishly entertains the visiting *Guurti* functionaries during a conference. The generously supported Borama conference, continued for four months. During this period, the elders were sumptuously fed. This led the meeting to be dubbed as buulo, which means "the nursing and care provided for a sick person". The hospitality and generous meals provided to the elders, was alleged to have the effect of recuperating the elders from the effects of the lean civil war period.

### **3.4. LINEAGE LEADERS: REVITALIZATION AND PROLIFERATION OF SULTANS**

Perhaps linked to natural demographic growth, this study found that political offices had proliferated

among the clans in "Somaliland". Most probably, this was also fostered by the need of the clans and sub-clans to assert independence in a situation of turmoil and uncertainty with an explicit tendency to search for solutions in the traditional lineage structure, given the absence of effective modern law and order authorities.

"Lack of any stable hierarchy of political units is characteristic of the Somali social system. In conformity with this, there is no formal hierarchy of political or administrative offices. Each of the main orders of segmentation - *dia*-paying group, primary lineage-group and clan - does not have a specific office of leadership associated with it. At every level of lineage allegiance, political leadership lies with the elders of the group concerned, and only at the level of the clan is there sometimes the special office of clan-head." (Ibid p196)

Despite the absence of any real instituted centralized power and authority by clan-heads, recent turmoil in "Somaliland" and the failure of the central government to maintain law and order, appear to have brought about a resurrection and expansion of the office of sultan. A comparison of the following two tables, which show the past and present distribution of sultans among the clans inhabiting "Somaliland" illustrates the point.

Table 6: Distribution of the Office of Sultan among Clans inhabiting "Somaliland" Prior to Independence in 1960.

|   | <b>Clan</b>    | <b>Number of Sultans</b> |
|---|----------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | Gadabursi      | 0                        |
| 2 | Iisa           | 1                        |
| 3 | Habar Awal     | 1                        |
| 4 | Arab           | 1                        |
| 5 | Iidagale       | 1                        |
| 6 | Habar Yonis    | 0                        |
| 7 | Habar Tol jelo | 1                        |
| 8 | Dhulbahan      | 2                        |
| 9 | Warsangeli     | 1                        |

Source: Based on information derived from (I.M.Lewis, 1961:204)

Table 7: Current Distribution of Sultans Among Clans Living in "Somaliland".

|   | <b>Clan</b> | <b>Number of Sultans</b> |
|---|-------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | Gadabursi   | 5                        |
| 2 | Iisa        | 1                        |

|   |                |   |
|---|----------------|---|
| 3 | Habar Awal     | 4 |
| 4 | Arab           | 1 |
| 5 | Iidagale       | 1 |
| 6 | Habar Yonis    | 2 |
| 7 | Habar Tol jeli | 1 |
| 8 | Dhulbahante    | 4 |
| 9 | Warsangeli     | 1 |

Examples of the clans that did not have sultans prior to independence are the Gadabursi and Habar Yonis. Because of the great distance between the portion of the latter clan that live in the west (Hargeisa and Burao) and their collateral groups in who reside in the far east of "Somaliland" (Erigavo region), the eastern Habar Yonis elected a new sultan in 1967. Apart from this notable geographical factor, this move may also have been initiated by a desire of the eastern Habar Yonis faction (Muse Ismail, Muse Arre and Sa'ad Yonis) to establish independence from the more influential kinsmen in Hargeisa and Burao regions.

The Gadabursi traditionally had a celebrated dynasty of Sultans which had become disrupted, in the 1950s, as a result of disagreement to succession and also because of the division of the clan between the British and Ethiopian administration (I.M. Lewis, 1961:204). In an important clan meeting that took place in Borama town between 12-16 April 1992 the Gadabursi paramount Ugaas was reinstated. This meeting which was sponsored and participated by this clan's Committee of Intellectuals based in Riad, Saudi Arabia, generated several resolutions apart from the reinstallation of the Ugaas as a symbol of Gadabursi unity.

The proclamations of the Gadabursi meeting included a decision to send elder's peace delegations, which had been effected, to reconcile the warring Isaq groups in Hargeisa, Berbera and Burao and a call to organize a general meeting which would deliberate upon the restoration of peace and future prospects of the destabilized "Republic of Somaliland". The creation of a combined Gadabursi force to defend this clan's territory and interests stands as another resolution, however this did not materialize.

The remaining four Gadabursi Ugaas are heads of major segments of the clan: Nur Yonis, Jibril Yonis, Habar Afan, and Baha Samaron. The last group is indeed an amalgamation of Gadabursi lineage-groups who lived in Gabiley district before their displacement following the establishment of SNM rule in "Somaliland" in 1991.

The Dhulbahante clan which is concentrated in the Sool region, although some live in the multi-clan Erigavo region (eg Naaleeye Ahmed lineage), afford a different arrangement. Here each of the two major groups of the clan, Mohamoud Gerad and Farah Gerad, which previously had one Gerads now had two Gerads.

In addition, the smaller Khalaf lineage of the Dhulbahante clan asserted its independence by appointing

its own Sultan. It is interesting to note that this small faction adopted the title Sultan for their head rather than Gerad. This is because the Dhulbahante believe a hierarchy of clan leaders where the Gerad reigns supreme and therefore the position of the Sultan is subordinate. Lewis (Ibid p204) described the existence of a hierarchy of lineage leaders among the Majerten clan in Bosaso region. Ranked in terms of their of their authority these are: Islan, Ugas, Gerad and Boqor.

The Sad Muse sub-clan of the Habar Awal clan is credited as the only group that had a Sultan in the past, although the Iisa Musa is said to have made several unsuccessful attempts to institute the office so as to assert independence from the former (Ibid p204). At present, the Iisa Musa and other two sub-clans of the Habar Awal, Jibril Abokor and Abdalla Abokor, have their own independent Sultans.

Each of the remaining clans found in "Somaliland", in the past, had its own independent Sultan and remains so at present- Iisa, Arab, Iidagale, Tol jelo and Warsangeli. However, the Iisa Ugaas who is acknowledged as the paramount traditional leader of those living in "Somaliland", neighbouring Djibouti and Ethiopia, resides at Diridawa in Ethiopia.

A period marked by drift to turmoil and uncertainty dawned upon the Somali people following the 1977-78 war with Ethiopia. After the flight of the despotic Siad Barre from Mogadishu in January 1991, this traumatic and ruinous period was replaced by the emergence of unscrupulous and aggressively opposed warlords who established clan fiefdoms in their respective areas of origin.

In the "Republic of Somaliland", such grievous circumstances appear to have induced clans to delve into the depths of their culture, in an effort to salvage society from the evils of the destabilizing forces of raging civil war and endemic opportunistic plunder of private, community and public property. The noted revival and expansion of the traditional institutions, in the present case the Sultans, can be interpreted as part and parcel of this increasing disposition to fall-back on tradition at this critical time.

In the past, among the northern clans which had the office of clan-head, only the Dhulbahante had more than one sultan. All the others had a paramount sultan: Iisa, Habar Awal, Arab, Iidagale, Tol jelo, Warsangeli.

There is no evidence which suggests that the increase of the number of Sultans that head the different sections of a particular clan, significantly contributed to the maintenance of law and order within the clan or between the concerned clan and others. This does not mean to deny that the Sultans in "Somaliland", as part of the legitimate heads of local clans, made a significant contribution to the now institutionalized elders reconciliation process that succeeded in keeping fragile peace between the clans in this region.

The multiplication of the office of Sultan within a clan can conversely be said to undermine cohesion and solidarity. In practice, the heads of the sub-clans may vie with one another for dominance in the affairs of the clan.

Although the existence of a sole titular clan-head certainly consolidates the often nominal authority of



the office, nevertheless it can not be said this counts as the most important reason for group solidarity where this occurs. The case of the Warsangeli Sultan which is the most powerful and venerated of its current counterparts in "Somaliland" deserves some examination.

The present Warsangeli Sultan is the repository of a dynasty of clan-heads that extends, from the present incumbent, over about twenty five generations. This resulted in the office, over centuries, being intrinsically linked with the history of the clan, its origin and survival. The steady continuity of the office, the need of the Warsangeli for a uniting institution to survive in a region inhabited by other stronger clans, all combine to produce the magnificent authority vested in the status of their Sultan.

Other recent developments appear to have enhanced the authority of the incumbent Sultan. The Warsangeli popularly believe that the reign of the present Sultan, since 1961, was a propitious period which brought them prosperity in wealth and remarkable demographic growth-developments cherished by the Somali.

Because of these positive developments the current Sultan, Abdisalaan Sultan Mohamoud, is characterized as a spiritual leader which is expressed in the idiom of *caanood* (literally milk.) This livestock product, which is the main staple diet of the Somali nomad, generally symbolizes prosperity and peace in this pastoral culture.

The current Sultan who is associated with peace and prosperity, two uncertain but coveted commodities in a nomadic society blighted by hostility and precarious nomadic economy, is contrasted with his predecessor, Sultan Mohamoud Ali Shire. The latter is distinguished as "warrior Sultan"-*Sultan colaadeed*. Apart from the reign of such leaders which is remembered as one rife with hostility, their authority is also said to depend less on moral and spiritual content, the prerogatives of a distinguished Sultan, and more on temporal power.

Projected as ideal Gerad, the present sultan of the Warsangeli, has unmatched authority compared to his contemporary clan-leaders in "Somaliland". Therefore his leadership appears to be especially effective and his decisions carry weight. In concordance with tradition, he also maintains a detached existence among his kinsmen, which enhances his spiritual and mystic attributes. In contrast to many of his counterparts, who were recently appointed for the need of leadership in difficult times, and who frequently socialize with their kinsmen, the Warsangeli Gerad avoids mixing with his kinsmen except for official duties.

In the execution of routine tasks, eg the well-being of his clan and the urgent current issue of the elusive internal external and peace, the Warsangeli Gerad is assisted by his brother who acts as his accredited representative and a clan council of elders *Guurti*, comprised of forty three distinguished elders. Among his clan, the Gerad supports peace initiatives and condemns any acts of violence that threaten stability. Infringement of his ruling is thought to bring disaster among his kinsmen. Last year, he called for a general meeting to be held at Yubbe, but his kinsmen conducted the meeting in Dhahar without the consent of the Gerad. Immediately after this SNM forces attacked and captured the Warsangeli Armale village. This unfortunate event is attributed to the failure of his kinsmen to follow the Sultans ruling on the venue of the meeting.

Among the indigenous clans in "Somaliland" in general, those who belong to Isaq, are more egalitarian and anarchic than Dir and Harti clans. Respect for and cooperation with the clan-leaders and other distinguished elders who currently strive hard to promote peace and stability in this war ravaged region, is relatively less marked among the Isaq than the others.

As a matter of fact, fragile peace and stability appears more pronounced in the peripheral regions of Awdal, Sool, and Sanag regions in relation to the central mainly Isaq populated areas of Hargeisa and Burao regions. The former regions are settled respectively by the Gadabursi, Dhulbahante, mixed Isaq and Warsangeli and Naleeye Ahmed of the Dhulbahante.

The relative difference of peace and stability between the Isaq domains and other areas in "Somaliland" could not be entirely attributed to the corresponding divergence of the authority held by the leaders of the respective clans. Trade goods and *Khat* business that tend to attract opportunistic looting are concentrated in the principal administrative towns of Hargeisa and Burao. Therefore, the traditional Isaq leaders have had to deal with relatively frequent incidents of armed banditry which sometimes degenerate into communal strife.

### **3.5. AKILS: DIA-PAYING LINEAGE POLITICAL LEADERS.**

Lewis suggested that the office to the *dia*-paying leader, *Akil*, had a long history, since it occurs in the classical work of the great traveller in this region, R.F. Burton- Memorial Edition 1894 (Ibid p200). The successive foreign colonial administrations in Somaliland, eg the Egyptian rule along the coast (1875-85) and afterwards the British, certainly institutionalized this position as spokesmen for the Somali pastoral lineages.

The adoption of this leadership role by the colonial administrations and successive independent Somali governments after independence in 1960, rests on the fact that the *dia*-paying group stands as the most stable social unit of the elaborately segmented social system of the egalitarian Somali society, where hierarchical political offices are at most diffuse if not entirely lacking. To introduce the acclaimed colonial policy of indirect rule into their Protectorate, the British instituted a system of Local Authorities founded upon the *Akil* in 1950.

Despite initial resistance to its introduction by the Sultans, who feared that the position would erode their nominal authority and prestige; and despite the powers vested in the office, which was contrary to the ethos of "pastoral democracy" of the highly egalitarian Somali, the political institution remarkably survived continuously to the present. Lewis wrote on the formal obligations of the Local Authorities and apparent constraints during British colonial rule (See Note 3)

Torn between the sometimes conflicting demands of loyalty and support for the cause of the agnatic kinsmen they represent and the official demand to maintain order, it is not surprising that *Akils* occasionally failed. The following case testify the point.

"In the situation of tension between Habar Tol jelo and Dhulbahante clans, a prominent Habar Tol jelo *Akil* was temporarily removed from office for refusing to co-operate with the Administration. He had been requested by a District Commissioner to accompany a party of police to arrest three men of his group who were suspected in connection with the murder of a Dhulbahante clansman. Later the *Akil's* son was arrested as a suspect."

The attraction of a small but steady stipend, realization of the importance of an intermediary to further the interest of the lineages in government circles, the officially enhanced role of the *Akil* to maintain law and order- together motivated accredited traditional leaders to accept an indirect Local Authority system, that improved peace and stability among the turbulent rural nomadic populace in the Protectorate during the colonial period. In spite of the discordance resulting from the interaction between imposed modern administration and the traditional kinship system, which certainly undermined the effective functioning of the Local Authority; I.M. Lewis noted that, during British colonial rule, there was competition between different elders of the lineages for appointment to the office. Despite the already mentioned attractions of this political office, such competition underlined the inherent predisposition among rival lineages to represent themselves as viable *dia*-paying units. Indeed such status was conferred by the official appointment of Local Authority for those units that were considered to have the capacity to function as independent political entities.

Notwithstanding the relevance of the *Akil* system for administration, which led government to harness it as an instrument of rule, its tenacity is ultimately derived from the fact that it is anchored to the most stable *dia*-paying political unit that provides the foundation for the pervasive segmentary Somali social formation that permeates every facet of social life. And it may well endure until such remote time in the distant future, when the currently overarching kinship based social formation of this nomadic society is entirely replaced by other modern forms of organization.

The successive independent Somali governments (1960-69), which later degenerated into divisive "parliamentary clan democracy", appear not have effected any meaningful change to the traditional nature of the *Akil* system. This is not to deny that nationalist elements that participated in the first independent governments condemned the *dia*-paying arrangement and affiliated *Akil's* office, which they saw as a formidable impediment to the creation of a modern Somali state. Conversely, at those latter stages marked with tribalization of the parliamentary process, candidates for the cabinet appear to have inflated the existing *Akil* posts in order to canvass support from their respective clans. Thus the promise of further appointment of *Akils* was used as economic leverage to build patronage among kinsmen by politicians determined to get access to power and government resources.

The "commercialized anarchy", as I.M. Lewis has felicitously described the prevailing situation at the end of the parliamentary era, was brought to an end in a bloodless coup by the socialist military revolution that came to power in 1969. Apart from its other achievements that were realized during those early constructive periods that preceded the 1977-78 war with Ethiopia, the military regime restored peace and stability to a degree never seen before in Somalia. Well trained, disciplined and professional security forces created by the initially populist military government, were largely responsible for the social peace that reigned throughout Somalia for almost the first decade of the revolution.

The proscription of the collective *dia*-paying responsibility and the practice of other forms of agnatic solidarity, eg the public use of kinship terms of address, undoubtedly weakened the *Akil's* political office. Stigmatized as a vestige of indirect rule inherited from the colonial era, which had also been perpetuated by the corrupt past civilian governments, the military government abolished the position of *Akils* and village head-men in the early 1970s.

To dislodge the salaried *Akils* from the *dia*-paying social units they belong to and officially represent, an initiative to transform them to loyal government employees was undertaken. This transferred the *Akils* and Village Head-men to local government departments to work there as watchmen. In Erigavo few *Akils* volunteered to assume their new role, while many opted to cease government employment altogether after being assured by local officials that they would not be punished for doing so.

For reasons that are difficult to ascertain, later the *Akils* were called upon by the government, soon after its initial unpopular decision. A National seminar was held for the *Akils* and Village Head-men. It was stressed in this seminar that they were government employees. Therefore, they should give loyalty to the state rather than their *dia*-paying group.

A neutral name was bestowed upon the *Akils* and Village Head-men, *nabadoon* and *samadoon* respectively. The former translates as "peace seeker" while the latter as "promoter of wise judgement".

In 1978, the *Akils* were assembled from the different regions of the country to attend a military training course and socialist orientation program at Halane Military academy in Mogadishu. Regular ministerial visits which gave the *Akils* an opportunity to enter into direct discussion with the higher officials, and organized tours which took them to see the economic achievements of the country, among other factors impressed the leading elders of the nation.

At a time when the country was beginning to disintegrate, following the loss of the popularly supported war with Ethiopia, the *Akils* were told, by Siad Barre, that they were the genuine rulers of their peoples. Hence, it is no wonder that *Akils* of the major clans were given weapons on behalf of their clans, as a result of the dictators factional policy in which he incited one clan against another to prolong his despotic rule.

At present the *Akil* system, in "Somaliland", is firmly established and given un-paralleled significance by the absence of effective central administration support it or has the capacity to undertake its traditional role of peace keeping in rural areas. Indeed its functions have been expanded by the demand for the traditional elders to assume leadership and administrative roles made vacant by the lack of effective modern administration.

Thus every clan and some of the larger sub-clans, in "Somaliland", now have their own Supreme Council of Elders *Guurti*. These act as both the legislative and executive body, which are responsible for dealing with both everyday internal affairs of the clan and attend to matters between different clans.

### 3.6. SPIRITUAL LEADERS SHEIKHS AND WADAADS

Despite the fact that some distinguished religious men engage as successful traders or else possess substantial important community resources, mainly animal wealth and agricultural land in the north west-sedentary region; religious men are ultimately regarded as spiritual leaders with primary responsibility in religious jurisdiction. The sacred prerogative of Sheikhs appears to be validated by the general distinction northern Somalis make between a religious man *wadaad* and a warrior *warranleh* (spear bearer). Therefore, ideally religious men do not act as political clan leaders as do the sultans, Akils and other informal clan elders. However, some religious leaders manage to further their authority with sacred knowledge.

Two main religious titles, which are acquired through learning and devotion to sources of sacred power (*Sharia*, Koran and the traditions of the Prophet Mohammed) are distinguished. The first title is *Aw* which is prefixed to the name of a *wadaad*. The holders of this title occupy the bottom of a hierarchy of learned people that are distinguished in terms of sophistication and devotion to Islamic learning.

In contrast to *wadaads* who possess a rudimentary knowledge of Islam are the *Sheiks* equipped with a more commanding thorough knowledge of Arabic literature and religious works. At the apex of this hierarchy, stand the *Ulama* whose command of religious knowledge earn them veneration as the living epitomes of the Prophet and his immediate religious-political successors.

Religious men attend to the various aspects of religious life of their lineages. They lead regular daily prayers and where there is sufficient congregation Friday prayers. They officiate at religious ceremonies and the periodic commemoration in honour of a *Sufi* saint, or lineage or a clan ancestor. They run Islamic schools that are widespread in both rural and urban areas.

Some of the limited magical services provided by *sheikhs* and *wadaads* are: to protect people and their livestock from impending calamities through prayer and sacrifice, to bless sick people and animals, to prepare amulets and prophylactic medicine for the sick.

Apart from the pervasive traditional rule based on contract *xeer*, the *Sharia* is also an important source of law among the Muslim Somali and therefore the British colonial administration encouraged its application in the Protectorate. I.M. Lewis has observed,

"In the interior, a *sheikh* or *wadaad* living with his kinsmen, performs all those duties fulfilled by Government *Kadis* in the towns. They solemnize marriage, advise on the interpretation of the *Sharia* in divorce, and to a limited extent in inheritance, and they assess compensation for injuries. As has been seen, although they are firmly attached to Islam, the Somali pastoralists interpret the *Sharia* in the light of their segmentary lineage principles and those aspects of the *Sharia* which conflict with these principles are ignored. Far from weakening the authority of the religious law, the foreign Administrations have, if anything strengthened it in the jurisdiction which they allow to official *Kadis*. For the latter, with the weight of the Government support behind them, are in a position to apply the *Sharia* more widely than *wadaads* can in the interior."

I.M. Lewis (See Note 4) also documented the enhancing role of religious men in peace making.

As devout Muslims, many Somalis, especially religious men, suspected the socialist principles advanced by the military regime. Such ideology was regarded as not compatible with Muslim belief and practice. The 1975 family law, that for the first time in Somalia, decreed the equality of the opposite sexes brought the military regime to a collision course with the religious leaders. The introduction of monogamy and the levelling of a woman's and man's inheritance rights, greatly incensed religious leaders in Mogadishu where some intrepidly preached the violations of the introduced principles of the Sharia. This led to a brutal government reprisal in which ten religious leaders were massacred.

In response to the general desire of the public for peace, in response to their duty as holy men destined to lead the pan-Somali brethren where common belief and practise in Islam forms communal solidarity in lieu of the pervading and divisive agnatic principle, *sheikhs* and *wadaads* played an active role in the gradual process of bringing reconciliation and peace among the clans in "Somaliland". To induce fighting groups to live together in peace, independent delegations of renowned holy men actually participated in all of the major peace efforts between previously hostile clans in "Somaliland".

### **3.7. POETS**

Ethnographers of the Somali correctly describe the extensive poetic repertoire of this society as one its major achievements. The distinct style of oral craft of the Somali is extensive in scope. It varies from the short love lyric to serious long poems which address important issues: historical, philosophical, religious, socioeconomic and current affairs. Hence, poetry acts as a popular media which animates and eternalizes the cultural facets of the Somali. Moreover, it is used as an influential instrument to influence the opinion of kinsmen to rally for a common cause.

Several reasons explain the significance of poetry in Somali society. First, it acts as popular media, which in contrast to its specialized and limited role in the West, can appeal to the bulk of people. With built-in structural mechanisms, eg alliteration and rhythm, that facilitate the retention and oral spread from one mouth to another; important poems often contain "encoded messages" authors want to convey.

An interest to decipher the actual message poets want to express, which needs familiarity with the circumstances that prompted the creation of a particular poem, may itself provide the excitement Somalis show towards the oral craft. Furthermore, poetry appeals to the aesthetic feeling of the Somali-what is expressed poetically is imbued with more weight and attracts the audience more than the plain language.

The authors quoted at the beginning of this section cogently expressed the essential communication function of poetry among the Somali; its role has been compared to that carried out by powerful medias of television and radio in the West. Because of its role as an influential public media, poetry acts as formidable instrument that can be exploited for both evil and noble purposes.

For instance, clan poets create and recite inflammatory verses aimed to incite their clan against a rival clan. Conversely, the same media can be used to reconcile warring clans by appealing to belligerent groups. In the competition for public support, it is no wonder that previous governments and opposition groups both used famous poets to promote their strategies. Nationalists and leaders of colonial resistance movements used popular poetry to rally all Somalis regardless of clan origin in their struggle against colonial powers.

The Somali poets, therefore, act as central figures since they can influence the current opinion of this poetic and predominantly nomadic society. And in the recent elder's peace and reconciliation initiative in "Somaliland" they supplement the efforts of the elders, religious leaders and other groups promoting peace. For instance, in major clan reconciliation gatherings, eg the Eastern Habar Yonis and Dhulbahante clans meeting at Dararweyne village in 1992, poems were recited in the inauguration and closing ceremonies.

I translate a few lines drawn from a long poem (*Muruqa Laba Suul*) chanted by Jama Gaashaan Adde at the inauguration of the Borama conference. The same author also narrated another long poem (*Gacal Wadaag*) at the closing ceremony. In the cited lines, the artist emphasizes major role reversals that took place at recent times, in an attempt to explain the predicament faced by the people in "Somaliland".

|   | Somali text   | Translation   |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | <i>Soomaalilaandey, saakana sideed cudur, sidee lagu daweeayaa!</i>         | People of "Somaliland", I wonder how to cure eight maladies!  |
| 2 | <i>Bal siyaasi guurti ah</i>  | A modern politician in the shoes of the traditional Guurti  |
| 3 | <i>Sakratari mucaarid ah</i>  | A rebel secretary   |
| 4 | <i>Saraakiil qabiili ah</i>   | Clannish military officials   |
| 5 | <i>Suldaan taliye guuta ah</i>  | A sultan who heads a factional military regiment  |
| 6 | <i>Suuq jooge xaakin ah</i>   | An unlettered ordinary citizen offering judicial advice   |
| 7 | <i>Saaxiibu-doolaar, halkuu siisan lahaa nabad, saad hayaha dagaalka ah</i> | A magnate who instead of promoting peace with Dollars, assumes the supply management of his militia faction |
| 8 | <i>Dad salaad tukanayoo, subcinaaya diintoo, sakhiraaya baabkale</i>        | Religious fundamentalists observing basic rules and well versed in Islam, but entertaining cynical motives  |

## 4. TYPES OF CONFLICT

### 4.1. PASTORAL CONFLICTS

#### 4.1.1. CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENTS

The series of peace conferences that unfolded in "Somaliland" produced commonly bilateral

agreements between previously embattled local clans. Except the Shimbirale peace-conference where an English translation was obtained from ACTIONAID, the legal agreements presented at the end of the study are translated from the collected Somali treaties (See note 5 for the agreements between pastoral clans in Erigavo region). The Shimbirale peace-conference between the self-styled "Eastern Alliance"- a group of clans typifies the traditional legal agreements that were used in contemporary peace-making.



## 4.1.2. PEACE-CONFERENCE OF THE EASTERN ALLIANCE

### The Fifth Conference

23 November - 1 December 1992

Garadag

#### Introduction:

The Eastern Alliance is constituted of four different groups: Eastern Habar Tol jelo, Warsangeli, Dhulbahante (Mohamound Gerad) and Gaheyle (Sawaqroon-Majerten). The alliance is based upon and epitomizes values of respect for neighbourhood, peace, cooperation, brotherhood, long-term interest in the well-being of the amalgamated groups, and finally on an understanding to forget the tragedies of the past.

The delegates representing the groups which form the Alliance undertook the fifth conference under the leadership of the *Sultans*, *Gerads*, *Akils*, intellectuals, military officials and the *Guurti* of the respective groups.

The conference was also strengthened by honourable guests, eminent elders and military officials, representing the Western Dhulbahante and Western Habar Tol jelo.

The conference received a message of congratulation and encouragement from the coastal community Saaxil - Isa Musa clan.

Garadag peace conference is the culmination of successive peace conferences that were held at Oog, Yagori, Eil Qohle, Kulal/Awr Bogeys, Shimbirale and Huddun.

#### The Agenda of the Conference:

1. Finalization of the resolutions of the previous conferences.
2. Seeking a settlement to the outstanding issues in Erigavo area.
3. The prevailing circumstances in "Somaliland".

The following achievements were realized during the interval between the present conference and the preceding one:

- a) Exchange of both animate and in-animate properties (*nool iyo mood*) between the parties.
- b) Joint exploitation of the traditionally open and scarce pastoral resources of pasturage and water.

- c) Promotion of free movement of goods and people and exchange of stray animals.
- d) Resurrection of traditional values, eg veneration of kinship morality- agnation and affinal obligations, and also respect for rights and duties of neighbourliness.
- e) Implementation of many of the previous resolutions, and commitment to settle the outstanding issues.

The above mentioned achievements reduced the focus upon inter-clan security affairs and made possible consideration of matters of general interest, most importantly the future of "Somaliland".

The Guurti of the Eastern Alliance candidly discussed the items of the agenda and agreed on the following resolutions:

1. Finalization of the Resolutions of the Previous Conferences:

- a) No major security problem has taken place in the areas resided by the groups of the Eastern Alliance in the interval between the Shimbirale and Garadag conferences. This indicates the yearning of people for peace which needs further consolidation. The reinforcement of the previous local-level resolutions, which tackle common impediments to peace *go'aanadii turxaan-bixineed*, has been unanimously agreed upon.

2. Seeking Settlement for outstanding Issues in Erigavo Area:

The conference deliberated upon this item on the third day. This was preceded by group reports.

- a) The peace delegation of the Eastern Habar Tol jelo reported their mission to the Eastern Habar Yonis concerning unresolved urban and range reserves in Erigavo district and peaceful coexistence between the regional groups. This task was given to the Habar Tol jelo during the Shimbirale conference.
- b) Report on the peace talks the Warsangeli have had with Habar Yonis at Jiideli.

After the reports, the conference opened deliberation on the disputed issues in Erigavo region. Despite lack of progress on this issue which were attempted to be resolved by resolutions at the previous conferences of Berbera (May 1991) and Sheikh, the conference decreed:

- 1. To resolve the disputes in Erigavo area through peaceful means.
- 2. The Eastern Alliance appointed a special committee to look into this matter.
- 3. The General Situation in "Somaliland":

Considering the enormous destruction and security crisis prevailing in "Somaliland", and lack of effective central government;

Considering the failure of the SNM central committee (legislative council) to undertake its regular

meetings, and the approaching tenure of the interim SNM administration, the conference promulgated:

- 1) The future of "Somaliland" should be determined by a national conference participated in by all the clans inhabiting this region, as the Eastern Alliance had earlier called for in their previous conferences of Awr Bogeys and Shimbirale;
- 2) The UN Programme:
  - a) The UN should present to the people in "Somaliland" a written document relating to its peace and military policy, reconstruction and rehabilitation.
  - b) However, to refuse or accept UN policy is the basic right of the citizens of "Somaliland" who are organized in clans.
  - c) Until such time as a representative government supported by all the clans in "Somaliland" is established, assistance operated by the UN, foreign countries and NGOs that benefit the respective clans of the Alliance, should liaison with the central Guurti of the Eastern Alliance.
- 3). The Position of Itihad Fundamentalists in Laskorey:

The Eastern Alliance welcomes the Warsangeli approach to resolve the Itihad occupation of Laskorey coastal area through peaceful means. The Alliance is anxiously waiting the outcome of the continuing dialogue.

### **A Message of Support and Encouragement:**

The conference received enthusiastic support from:

1. The Sahil (coastal) community- Isa Musa clan
2. The Western Habar Tol jelo West- guest members attended the conference.
3. The Dhulbahante Ooded - guest members attended the conference.
4. ACTIONAID in Sanag

The supporting clans and ACTIONAID expressed their wish for the attainment of long-lasting peace and general understanding between the peace-making parties. They also encouraged the extension of peace throughout the clans in "Somaliland". Likewise, the participants of the conference, extended good will, success and peace, to ACTIONAID and the enthusiastic clans.

### **Proclamation:**

1. The fifth conference of the Eastern Alliance, appreciate the Sheikh reconciliation conference which successfully reconciled the embattled Isa Musa and Habar Yonis clans. It would also like to congratulate the eminent Guurti and distinguished leaders who played a significant role in the organization and implementation of this historic peace conference.
2. It is the wish of the conference that "Somaliland" communities establish a representative and effective modern administration. To achieve this objective, we suggests the formation of a preparatory but representative Guurti, which determines the time and place for a national conference.
3. In spite of appreciation of the UN interest in "Somaliland", the conference cautions against

a unilateral UN military intervention without the consent of the leaders of the local clans.

4. The communities of the Eastern Alliance pledge to maintain law and order among their respective groups and moreover effectively contribute to the general peace and stability in Erigavo region. We call for other neighbouring communities to participate in the process of restoring peace to the region. Moreover, we invite communities in the other regions of "Somaliland" to join the Alliance particularly welcome are those who hold the values and strategies of the Alliance.

### **Denunciation:**

The Garadag conference denounces any preemptive move by the present SNM administration to create a government without the consent of all the constituent clans in "Somaliland". A unilateral preemptive imposition of unpopular government by SNM will be tantamount to igniting a new cycle of hostility between the clans in "Somaliland". The conference is vehemently opposed to such a deadly stratagem.

The conference agreed on the creation of a central co-ordinating committee. This would be formed in a period of ten days with effect from second of December 1992. A meeting will be held in Laasanood at the end of December.

### **Criticism:**

The UN and NGO assistance in "Somaliland" is focused upon the central regions of Burao and Hargeisa, although Berbera receives a fair share. The rest of the country is largely neglected. Furthermore, there is little awareness of and interest in of major occurrences that take place outside these favoured areas, such as peace and war, outbreak of epidemics and famine. This neglect can be illustrated by the lack of external interest in the sustained peace initiatives of the Eastern Alliance. Let alone support for the enhancement of this local peace movement, the UN and the NGOs based in "Somaliland" know very little about current issues affecting the concerned communities.

Therefore, the fifth conference of the Eastern Alliance expresses its disapproval against the UN and NGOs regarding equitable distribution of resources.

We request the UN and NGOs to be careful and considerate, in the future, in terms of the distribution of resources. We suggest that limited development resources should be channelled to the following priority areas:

- Clearing the mines widely scattered across "Somaliland"
- Livestock and human health
- Water supply
- Education
- Agriculture
- Institutional support for the development of an effective regional administration.

## **Finalization of the Resolutions of the Previous Conferences:**

### 1) Exchange of Livestock:

a) The communities at Garadag, Eil Afweyn and Awr Bogeys:

The two large plundered herds (Isma Dhahasho and Ina Dhimad/ Ina Dhageyro) will be subject to the previous agreement. With effect from 01.12.1992, the exchange of the camel herds between the implicated clans, Eastern Habar Tol Jelo and Eastern Dhulbahante, should be completed within a period of two and half months. A party which fails to deliver the camels it owes to the other, will be collectively raided in order to extort the owed camels. Damages incurred during the raid will not be compensated.

Habar Jelo Elders Accredited to Oversee the Return of Ina Dhimad/ Ina Dhageyro herd are:

Representative of the Sultan- Hasan Sheikh Haji Du'ale

Aw Aden Jama Farah

Awl Abdulla Nur

Abokor Hasan Dhunkal

Mohamed Du'ale Elmi

Yusuf Mohamoud Mohamed

Yusuf Ali Jibiril

Dhulbahante Elders Accredited to Oversee the Return of Isma Dhaxasho herd are:

Gerad Suleiban Gerad Mohamed

Abdi Awke

Mohamed Farah

Mohamoud Ismail

Arshe Farah

Abdulle Ahmed

### 1) The camels looted from Laf Weyne (Owned by Dhulbahante and looted by Habar Tol jelo):

Concerning the unpaid two hundred and sixteen head of camels, the following agreement applies:

The outstanding camels should be paid on 10.01.1993. A homicide compensation rate of 110 camels should be paid to the kinsmen of the man, Farah Suleiban Ogle, who was killed in the raid. This should be settled at Huddun on 1.11.1992-1.3.1993. The injured man, Mohamed Roble Hersi, should be paid appropriate compensation as soon as possible.

2) The previous agreement on the homicide compensation of the Habar Tol jelo herdsman (110 camels + bride), Salah Mohamoumd Mohamed, who was killed by a Dhulbahante raiding party at Awr Bogeys, remains binding.

The two parties, in addition, agreed to the following resolutions:

- Stray animals, past and present, should be voluntarily exchanged between the two sides. Claimants of stray animals have the right to prove their cases.
- Any member group of the Eastern Alliance that participates in a raid launched against an external group is solely responsible for the consequences, with effect from 27.11.1992.
- The Alliance is not responsible for acts of violence committed by social groups who are not members of the Alliance. The same applies to the damages incurred by outsiders.

#### 3) Ali Barre and Jama Siad (Habar Tol Jelo and Dhulbahante Lineages)

The two parties agreed to settle existing differences after they return to their home areas. They thought it important to consult neighbouring groups, Omer and Rer Yonis lineages who are absent from the conference. They also concurred to meet within a period of thirty days, with effect from 01.12.1992.

#### 4) Warsangeli and Boho (Habar Tol jelo):

The two sides pledged to exchange livestock outstanding from the previous agreements as early as possible. Within a month, starting from 02.12.1992 - 03.01.1993, the two sides will meet for further discussion at Dheryo or any other location the nomadic encampments of the two groups is concentrated at the time.

#### 5) The Missing Truck of Hassan Haji Elmi (Dhulbahante):

The arbitration of the missing truck has been postponed for three months, with effect from 2.12.1992.

#### 6) Jama Siad (Dhulbahante) and Rer Idle (Habar Tol jelo):

- The camels looted by Jama Siad from Boramo on 28 October 1992, should be returned within a period of twentytwo days, starting from 2.12.1992.
- The camels and two guns seized by Rer Idle from Jama Siad should be returned within a period of twenty-two days starting from 2.12.1992.
- Both mentioned camel herds should be brought to Jiideli for exchange.
- Other remaining differences between the two groups will be settled at Jiideli.

Table 8: Size of the Delegations:

| Clan                         | Number of Delegates |
|------------------------------|---------------------|
| Eastern Habar jelo           | 300                 |
| Warsangeli                   | 130                 |
| Mohamoud Gerad (Dhulbahante) | 180                 |

|                      |            |
|----------------------|------------|
| Gaheyle              | 30         |
| Distinguished guests | 80         |
| <b>Total</b>         | <b>720</b> |

Important Government Officials Who Participated the Conference as Observers:

Mohamed Kahin Ahmed  
Osman Kasim Kodah  
Mohamoud Ahmed Ali  
Ali Haji Abdi Du'ale

The distinguished Somali lawyer, Mariano, participated in the conference at the closing stage.

The conference selected a chairing committee, comprised of seventeen elders. This functioned as an arbitrating panel. A nine-member secretariat was also appointed.

The Chairing Committee of the Conference:

Representative of Sultan, Hasan Haji Du'ale Jibril  
Gerad Suleiman Gerad Mohamed  
Representative of Sultan, Ismail Sultan Mohamoud  
Abdillahi Haji Du'ale  
Bashe Ali Omer  
Yusuf Mohamed Ali Heyd  
Mohamed Ali Shire  
Fu'ad Aden Ade  
Mohamoud Elmi Ahmed  
Jibril Ali Salad  
Husein Sahal Ise  
Mohamoud Abdi Ahmed  
Ali Isa Bos  
Osman Ashur Abdualle  
Mohamoud Mohamed Gure  
Saed Aw Ali Saed  
Fahiye Mire Ibrahim

### 4.1.3. PASTORAL CONFLICTS: PATTERNS

In 1988-1991, at the height of the civil strife in "Somaliland", Isaq clans abandoned many of their traditional pastoral lands. Grazing areas left by the Isaq were taken over by the Darod clans, as happened at the border zones in the multi-clan Erigavo region in particular. While competition for seasonally varying, often scarce and unevenly distributed pasturage and water, stands as the main cause of incessant pastoral feuds of the Somali in the past, the following reasons can be surmised to have lessened the severity of pastoral conflicts in this region.

First, the post-military 1992-93 years are climatically relatively favourable times, blessed with adequate rainfall bringing plenty and prosperity to the nomadic groups in "Somaliland". Adequate nomadic resources made possible the localization of clan livestock and prevented the need for the usual congregation in grazing regions controlled by different hostile clans.

Second, free access to basic nomadic resources is an established pastoral tradition that is beneficial for the mobile herding of the northern Somali. To observe this tradition is of mutual benefit to rival clans. In the past, they forged a common treaty to regulate the joint exploitation of deep-wells by different clans in the dry jiilaal season. This entrenched tradition is reinforced by a popular belief which postulates that pasturage and naturally occurring water, are endowed by provident Allah for the benefit of all the nomadic communities. To deny individuals or groups access to these vital gifts is sinful, risking adverse consequences may fall the perpetrator in the form of a mishap in this life, or may be delayed to the after-world.

Third, the established interim SNM administration in "Somaliland", May 1991-May 1993, failed to proportionately represent non-Isaq clans to abate suspicion inherited from the preceding comprehensive civil war. However, the internal civil wars which mainly afflicted the Isaq clans, led to past suspicion and hostility being replaced by a general desire for peace and reconciliation. This was most marked in the nomadic areas where commonly neighbouring matrilateral Isaq and Harti groups in Erigavo now intermingle in grazing areas of the respective clan territories. In the north-west of "Somaliland" although few of the Baha Samaron lineages (Gadabursi) displaced from Gabiley district have yet returned to their permanent agricultural villages and towns, the nomadic segments of the Baha Samaron and Jibril Abokor practice migratory nomadism outside the settled areas in Gabiley district.

The predisposition among the major clans to impose control over their traditional territories was most pronounced during the civil war and immediately after the acquisition of power by the SNM. This land grabbing propensity, has been attenuated by the improving relations between the different groups, the dominantly nomadic clans in particular – Habr Yonis and Habar Tol jelo, Dhulbahante and Warsangeli. With respect to relations between the Isaq and Harti clans in Erigavo region, a relatively harmonious coexistence obtains between the Warsangeli and Isaq clans.

The internal security of the Warsangeli and Gadabursi is much better in relations to others. This internal harmony appears to be replicated in the external relations the Warsangeli has had with neighbouring clans. Moreover, this clan and the eastern Habar Yonis in Erigavo had an acknowledged boundary that certainly reduces territorial dispute. It runs between Geel Weyto along the coast and stretches inland as far as Damala Hagare.



In contrast, relations between the Dhulbahante, numerically stronger than the Warsangeli, and the eastern Habar Yonis which dominates the affairs of Erigavo district, are comparatively tense and fraught with disputes including those over pastoral land. In the first place, there is no discrete territorial boundary between the two clans. One area with a strong Dhulbahante presence before the end of the civil war is Jiideli which the Dhulbahante have not yet returned to in numbers. Prior to the civil war, these two matrilineal neighbouring clans intermingled greatly. This prolonged interaction explains the relatively extensive land dispute between Habar Yonis and Dhulbahante.

#### **4.1.4. ESTRANGED RELATIONS BETWEEN THE EASTERN HABAR YONIS AND EASTERN DHULBAHANTE**

Unlike the Eastern Habar Yonis and Warsangeli, whose adjacent territories are demarcated by an acknowledged boundary, the absence of a designated territorial boundary between the greatly intermingled, in the past, Habar Yonis and Dhulbahante accentuated the prevailing land dispute. This is further complicated by the dramatic sedentarization of Erigavo district which controlled by the Habar Yonis but traditionally resided by both groups.

The Eastern Habar Yonis and the Warsangeli started successive and successful reconciliation meetings at war-ravaged Yubbe village. The first one took place there on June 1991 it was succeeded by the second Yubbe meeting on October the same year. The apparently belated peace and reconciliation effort between the Habar Yonis and Dhulbahante reflects the complex land issues which remain to be solved among them.

During the civil war, the Eastern Habar Yonis took refuge in the strategic mountain formation, and abandoned most of the open border pastoral areas the Isaq and the Harti clans traditionally resided in together. The Harti clans occupied these vacated mixed grazing areas and Erigavo town. The defeat of the Darod dominated military regime, in February 1991, reversed the process. The Harti clans re-grouped in their stronghold areas, and abandoned the mixed border grazing zone, which was taken over by the victorious Eastern Habar Yonis.

In the multi-clan Erigavo region, where such a problem appears profound, Jiideli is a typical example of an area that changed hands, as a result of the shifting clan fortunes in Somalia's tragic civil war. Before the outbreak of the upheaval, the area supported mixed lineages of Dhulbahante, Habar Yonis and some Warsangeli. It is currently controlled by returned Habar Yonis, but the displaced Dhulbahante that comprised, in the past, the largest ethnic group, have not yet returned.

Given the nature and scope of land conflict between the Eastern Habar Yonis and Eastern Dhulbahante, it is no wonder that conduct of their first major reconciliation initiative at Dararweyne village was difficult. Though both parties agreed the meeting should start on 2.1.1993, it was inaugurated on 26.1.1993. The prolonged absence of the suspicious Dhulbahante Guurti caused this extensive delay.

The Eastern Dhulbahante (Naaleeye Ahmed lineage), whose territory lies in Erigavo region, suspected

the implications of the venue of the meeting- Dararweyne. Although Dararweyne lies at the border area between Laasanood region which is populated by the Dhulbahante and the adjacent Erigavo region, it is administered from the former region. To conduct the conference in a place which is administered from Laasanood, was viewed by Naaleeya Ahmed as a cynical tactic devised by their opponents, in order to deny them their basic land rights and other interests in Erigavo region.

It took a lot of effort on the part of the "Somaliland" *Guurti*, to convince the sceptical Naaleeye Ahmed that there was nothing cynical about the selection of the meeting place. Enhanced by the remarkable success achieved from the completion of the reconciliation process between the bitterly embattled Iisa Musa and Habar Yonis clans at Berbera on November 1992, the "Somaliland" *Guurti* eventually won the cooperation of the sceptical Naaleeye Ahmed. This was achieved through the constant radio contact the *Guurti* maintained with the Naaleeye Ahmed. Radio communication, mainly private and NGO owned, now functions as the major means of communication between towns in "Somaliland". It also connects this region to Djibouti, and trade motorized-boats that ply the Red Sea water between this region and neighbouring Arabian states. Radio communication, in the past, was the monopoly of government authority and registered NGO and international organizations.

As shown by the persevering patience of the Eastern Habar Yonis *Guurti* during the prolonged absence of its counterpart in the treaty, such fortitude of the traditional leaders is remarkable. This inspires one to wonder if modern Somali political leaders can withstand such a pressure for so long. The wait and see policy of the Eastern Habar Yonis *Guurti* and the determination of the "Somaliland" *Guurti*, together saved this important reconciliation effort from collapse.

The first agenda on the enhancement of peace between the contracting clans, and regulation of access to pastoral resources, received unanimous support. The two remaining agenda items proved too difficult to be resolved at this first major meeting. Thus, the contentious issues on range reserves that were established in Erigavo district by the defeated military regime and urban properties were judiciously postponed to be settled in the forthcoming Erigavo regional meeting.

#### **4.1.5. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PASTORAL TREATIES**

Having presented a translation of the usually ambiguous contracts between the dominantly pastoral clans in Erigavo region, it is now apposite to examine the pastoral resolve to settle disputes. First of all, it is notable that the parties to the Eastern Alliance were engaged in looting each other's herds despite the prolonged and promptly undertaken mutual peace talks. This is particularly true in the case of the stronger clans, the Eastern Habar Tol jelo and Eastern Dhulbahante.

Despite the usual violations of the previous resolutions, the maintenance of the peace contracts between the parties of Eastern Alliance indicates the capacity of traditional pastoralism to survive at critical times of turmoil. The already mentioned belief that views basic pastoral resources as a gift of Allah reinforces free access. This is further enhanced by the pastoral exigency to share often scarce and variously distributed basic nomadic resources.

Moreover, there are institutional mechanisms which ensure free access to pastoral resources and

enhance fragile peace among pastoral clans. For example, the privileges of a treaty one social unit has with another can be extended to a third party. Thus, the Eastern Dhulbahante had no treaty with the Eastern Habar Yonis prior to the 1993 Dararweyne conference, but they had a compact with the Warsangeli.

In 1992, the first *gu'* rains had fallen at the Habar Yonis side of the previously mixed Jiideli area in district Erigavo. The Warsangeli utilized the right of access to the fresh pasturage and water, which was guaranteed in the treaty with the controlling group. Some Dhulbahante herdsmen encamped with the Warsangeli with whom they had a treaty. The protection of the stocks and lives of the Dhulbahante in hostile territory is the contractual duty of the Warsangeli. Therefore, the Warsangeli exacted from the Eastern Habar Yonis the compensation for a homicide committed against the Dhulbahante by a member of Habar Yonis.

The greatest danger to peace among the pastoral clans is the cyclic plunder of camel herds. Isma Dhahasho and Ina Dhimcad/Ina Dhegaeyro camel stocks provide a quintessential example. The first herd claimed to number 140 heads were plundered in 1991 by a 40-man Dhulbahante raiding party. The retaliatory raid that seized the other herd, estimated to number 480 camels, was organized by 30 Habar Tol jelo men assisted by two machinegun mounted vehicles. Four men lost their lives in this raid, while two died in the other raid.

The continuation of unabated stock raiding which also causes human loss stands as the major factor that undermines the cherished peace among the pastoral groups. The obligation to pay collectively the damages incurred by members of a corporate unit, failed to contain violence.

The *dia*-paying collective obligation worked under normal circumstances. Within the *dia*-paying unit and also between larger social units, traditional mechanisms regulated to deter it from being employed for particular individual or group advantage. For instance, members of a social unit are not legally allowed to plunder stocks owned by different groups, whose cooperation and harmonious existence is vital. Stock raids may be organized, with the consent of the corporate unit, against hostile groups but usually for good reasons. To retrieve missing stocks looted by an opposing group, if it fails or blatantly refuses to return the booty, could precipitate a legitimate use of force.

The apparently clan-based, protracted and intricate civil strife that intensified after 1988 in "Somaliland" left a legacy of suspicion and profound grievance between local clans. Absence of central authorities that can control the different and heavily armed clan militias which, at times, deliberately ignore the governance of elders, accentuated the practice of looting stocks. Faced with the immense security task of maintaining law and order in an explosive situation, clan elders introduced alternative contracts to contain cyclic plunder of property. To dissuade armed militias from seizing herds from opposing groups, the elders decreed that the responsibility to pay damages inflicted by armed groups should be shouldered by the families of the perpetual offenders. If the bandit is not able to pay compensation, the burden falls upon his close agnates (father, brothers) who have the means.

This presumably unprecedented ruling that placed the responsibility for acts of violence upon the family and the immediate kin of the villain, undoubtedly discouraged the practice of blatant raiding of

property. Instances of habitual looters killed by their immediate kin who could not bear any more the burden of their violent acts, are cited by some clans in the region.

The success of the local peace-making endeavour in the pastoral areas lies in the trust and confidence it inculcated among nomadic groups. Thus, it is now common for herds of different clans to graze together in the border areas between the clans. At the time of the survey, the herds of the Habar Toljelo, Warsangeli and Dhulbahante, were grazing together at Eil Qohle area. This was not the case in 1992, when stocks of different clans pastured at a distance from one another inside controlled areas. This marks a desired return to the normal migratory patterns in which clans penetrated into each others' territory to make use of occurring resources.

The shrinking grazing barriers that are of mutual interest to herding clans had the effect of closing the no man's land, which separated neighbouring clans prior to rapprochement. These abandoned buffer-zones acted as hide-outs for the operation of clandestine stock-raiding.

Encampment in adjacent grazing areas facilitated trade and social interaction. Hence exchange of goods and livestock trading takes place, at present, at centres that are located at the border areas: Jiideli, Eil Qohle. This interaction which is indeed a tangible result of the sustained local reconciliation also indirectly contributed to the consolidation of peace. For instance, local peace committees maintain direct contact to exchange information on suspected or actually planned acts of plunder. As soon as a group finds out or even suspects some of its members are planning to launch a raid against the other, both parties are alerted to keep vigilance, and according thwart the development of the real or imaged aggression.

The factors examined in this section certainly reduced the mainly linked stock raiding and homicide, and undoubtedly improved the relations between the primarily pastoral clans in Erigavo region. Nevertheless, they did not entirely resolve the extensive security problems. The failure to settle outstanding livestock between the reconciling parties testify to the point.

Foremost among the factors that undermine prompt and complete settlement of looted stocks, is the current looting of camels by young armed militias for economic ends. Some young urban raiders aspire to acquire camels not to keep them in rural areas but as source of cash which they consume to satisfy basic needs and entertainment in towns and villages. Thus the seized camels are instantly sold in market towns.

The innocent buyers get implicated in the process of retrieving camels, once they are traced by the rallying elders. The purchasers ask the value of camels as a condition for their surrender. To secure the looted camels, the elders have no choice but to pay the market value of the camels. However, both cash payments and the expenses of the mediating elders are charged against the miscreants. This acts as an additional incentive to the families of the offenders to constrain their members since they are obliged to shoulder the consequences.

As well as the collective interest of the corporate group in its total camel herd which reinforces social

solidarity, individual herds are primarily owned by individual adult kinsmen of the lineage. Individual camel herds bear the corporate brand of the owning groups, and are known to the actual holding families who are emotionally attached to their beasts. Therefore, dispossessed families prefer to get back their own lost camels rather than substitutes whose desired qualities, eg sturdiness or milk yield, are not known to them. This prevents camel thefts between two parties being settled through a simple calculation in which the balance is paid to the group that owes more to the other.

## **4.2. SEDENTARY CONFLICTS**

### **4.2.1. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS**

Disputes over fixed agricultural land are more difficult to resolve than those over nomadic grazing resources. Two main factors are responsible for this. First, pastoral land is little developed, and the available pastoral resources are determined by environmental factors that are beyond the control of the nomadic groups. Apart from trading centres, valuable long-term developments are confined to the construction of underground water tanks *barkads*. These are built by wealthy nomadic families that undertake such ventures in order to ensure a reliable supply of water for family herds, and moreover sell the surplus water to supplement the income earned from the herd.

As already mentioned, the unreliable distribution of pastoral resources necessitates sharing of fundamental pastoral resources across areas controlled by different clans. If a particular clan or lineage refuses rival groups access to pasturage and water that occur in its sphere of influence, it will face similar treatment at a time of distress when exploitation of grazing controlled by others is indispensable.

Second, investments made by holders in arable land make this fixed property valuable. Also such property is usually scarce, particularly in Borama and Gabiley districts that have a relatively prolonged history of settlement and cultivation (For details see Lewis, 1961:90-126). Production of sorghum and maize spontaneously developed in these two districts at the turn of this century. This important economic transformation of traditionally pastoral groups involved influence of the neighbouring sedentary Oromo in Ethiopia. An important supplementary production of cattle and sheep and goats, is practised by the diversified settled cultivators in Borama and Gabiley districts.

Outside these two settled districts in the north-west, Erigavo district represents a relatively sedentarized area. Here regulated small-holder dry farming and small-scale family irrigation agriculture, that were concentrated along perennial streams found along the precipitous mountain complex, started during British rule. In spite of this controlled agriculture, however, this district remained a largely nomadic locality prior to the 1970s. Like the bulk of nomadic populations elsewhere in "Somaliland", primary stocks of camels and small species supported primarily pastoral population in the district.

Erigavo district is distinctive in the sense of being greatly diversified. In addition to livestock husbandry and agriculture, localized frankincense production is carried out in the escarpment. Thus, in common with neighbouring Badhan district and mountain areas of Eil Afweyn, frankincense collection

is practised as a supplementary activity of the mainly poor pastoral families found in the north-east frankincense regions: Erigavo and Bosaso.

Conflict is accentuated by the multi-clan composition of the settled districts where land disputes are most pronounced. Accordingly, Isaq and Harti lineages live together in sedentarized areas of Erigavo, while Isaq and different Gadabursi groups live in Gabiley district. In general, at the height of the civil war, the Isaq became displaced from their settled homelands which were taken over by rival co-residents. This process was reversed after the end of the civil war which led to the return of the Isaq to the mixed, sedentary areas. As a result, the non-Isaq groups were displaced and are now absent from their areas of settlement.

#### **4.2.2. LAND DISPUTE IN ERIGAVO DISTRICT: THE GAHEYLE ISSUE**

In Erigavo district, the most contentious land issue involves two much inter-married and territorially mixed *dia*-paying groups: the Abdi Hamud (Habar Yonis) and Gaheyle (claiming Majerten origin-Sawaqron). Their land which is situated north of Erigavo town, contains irrigated farmlands along the usually narrow, steep valleys that drain the escarpment. Not favourable for fruit and vegetable production due to shortage of water or arable land, the bulk of the mountain terrain occupied by the two groups offers range resources pastured by livestock, while the precipitous mountain chains grow frankincense plants that yield commercial resin. Although free access to pastoral resources found in the frankincense area is observed, incense trees are owned property, and are therefore subject to control rights similar to those over agricultural land. All these resources were exploited, in varying combinations, by the diverse families which belong to the two rival lineages prior to the turmoil.

The Gaheyle were entirely displaced after the termination of the civil war at the beginning of 1991. They have fled to neighbouring Majerten-dominated Bosaso region where they still languish as un-official refugees. No direct negotiation has so far taken place between the Abdi Hamud and dispossessed Gaheyle. This contrasts with the good relations the Warsangeli have had with the dominant Habar Yonis in Erigavo region, and their improving relations with the Dhulbahante- a positive achievement of the sustained bilateral peace discourse.

However, the Gaheyle participated in some of the peace talks that were taken on by non-Habar Yonis clans, most important was the Garadag peace forum. The proclaimed Eastern Alliance that amalgamated the rival Habar Tol jelo and the dispossessed Harti clans appears to have the underlying objective of grouping against the dominant Habar Yonis. Membership of this alliance which was suspected and feared by the Habar Yonis until recently adversely affected the peace opportunity of the Gaheyle. Thus the Gaheyle are accused of playing the Darod card instead of entering into direct negotiations with their counterparts. Rumours of a Gaheyle desire to enter negotiations with the Habar Yonis in the presence of Majerten or alternatively Warsangeli and Dhulbahante, were rampant during the research.

Unfortunately peace prospects for the Gaheyle still remain discouraging, as evidenced by their absence from the current important regional meeting in Erigavo, whose stated grand objective is to settle difficult outstanding issues between major clans. The Warsangeli and Dhulbahante clans participating in the meeting expressed their concern by asking the Habar Yonis what their intention was towards the

Gaheyle. The Habar Yonis expressed its opinion, which favours direct negotiation between the concerned parties. They claim that negotiations with the Gaheyle should follow the process other negotiations had gone through- gradual and face-to-face.

At the beginning of August, the Habar Yonis selected a fifteen member committee dominated by Abdi Hamud lineage to start negotiations with the Gaheyle at Yubbe. A Warsangeli emissary was sent to convey the move to Gaheyle who responded that they are not prepared to accept the proposal.

Gaheyle solidarity with the rival Darod and its support to the suspected Eastern Alliance, certainly account as secondary factors discouraging the pace of the peace dialogue between this lineage and Abdi Hamud. The former is accused of having committed vicious atrocities against the Abdi Hamud in particular, and the Habar Yonis in general during the civil war. Their devoted support for the defeated Darod dominated military regime was said to have been unparalleled. As local residents, they knew the area very well and therefore provided the government forces with strategic information that was used against the Habar Yonis.

Although the Gaheyle had an Akil and therefore functioned as an independent *dia*-paying group, in effect their small number reduced them to a lowly status among the dominant Abdi Hamud in Habar Yonis controlled homeland. To improve their status and attain total independence, they supported the government forces which were dominated by the Darod with whom they claim common descent.

The Jibrail lineage represent the second important minority group in Erigavo district. They claim Ogaden descent, but unlike the Gaheyle did not offer support to the military government in the civil war. Therefore, they now live in harmony in their homelands with Habar Yonis. In common with the displaced Gaheyle, they have an Akil and enjoy independent status in spite of the fact that they occupy a lowly status as a result of their small number.

The "occupational" groups that were dispersed among the Habar Yonis clans are now largely absent from their home areas. They are in a similar position to the Gaheyle because of their past alliance with the military forces. Like the Gaheyle, the acceptance of their return to original areas may have to wait until the last, presumably after other disputes between the major clans are resolved.

The Abdi Hamud and the Habar Yonis in general do not deny the land rights of the displaced Gaheyle and other minority groups. Indeed the Gaheyle and Jibrail, among others, are considered as the original settlers in Erigavo region. Their limited strength reduces their capacity to act as a potential threat to the dominant group and explains the absence of any peace progress so far. Therefore, the more powerful groups have a better chance to see their grievances attended to, as the Dhulbahante and Warsangeli peace developments relating to the dominant Habar Yonis illustrate.

#### **4.2.3. GRAZING RESERVES**

During the 1970s, an uncontrolled tendency to transform traditional pastoral lands to range reserves developed in Erigavo district. The socialist policy of the military regime favoured collectivization and

expansion of agriculture to usually marginal areas that are suitable for animal husbandry. This bias towards sedentarization was exacerbated by the corrupt practice in the distribution of land which had been declared state property. People who were related to government officials, or had the means to pay inordinate bribes, received ownership rights in pastoral areas controlled by nomadic groups.

According to knowledgeable sources, about twentytwo large grazing reserves, mostly owned by bogus cooperatives, but actually owned by wealthy or well-connected families, were established in Erigavo district after the 1970s. The Dhulbahante and the Warsangeli are said to have formed considerable range reserves in areas traditionally controlled by the Habar Yonis. The dispossessed Habar Yonis lineage groups opposed the trend, even though some of their wealthy kinsmen participated in the process.

The collapse of the Darod dominated military government precipitated the flight of the related Harti groups from the range reserves and other areas in the district. The previously dispossessed Habar Yonis lineages regained the vacated grazing reserves, and distributed them among their members.

The allocation of lineage territories to outsiders who had political influence and wealth, was provocative in the first place. However, the affected Habar Yonis lineages made matters complex by distributing the regained range reserves among their kinsmen. To open the grazing reserves for pastoral exploitation would have been the least controversial alternative. The Habar Yonis lineages apportioned the reserves, partly because most of the traditional pastoral land in the district is privately owned. Nevertheless, the dislodged Harti owners find difficulty in accepting the replacement of their ownership rights with those of their rivals.

Investments made in the range reserves (water-holding structures, buildings, etc) make them valuable and more difficult to resolve disputes. The investments originated from different sources: private, government and NGOs. The latter sources of investment are viewed by the Habar Yonis as public property. In contrast, the Harti holding groups claim the reserves are private property which were legally acquired. Hence, they should be returned to them.

To declare the range reserves as public pastoral resources appears a neutral solution. Although the affected Habar Yonis groups may dislike this option, the opinion of the wider kinsmen which favours reconciliation may enforce the alternative. Government and NGO investments, can be declared public property, and therefore placed under the domain of the respective government authority. The central authority which takes over the reserves should compensate private investments. The resolution of the contentious range reserves is on the agenda of the on-going regional reconciliation conference in Erigavo region.

#### **4.2.4. LAND DISPUTE IN THE AGRICULTURAL NORTHWEST, BORAMA AND GABILEY DISTRICTS: RER NUR AND JIBRIL ABOKOR GROUPS**

Before settlement and cultivation which was introduced in Borama and Gabiley agricultural districts at the turn of this century, the Gadabursi lineages (Rer Nur and Baha Samaron) and their affines (Jibril Abokor-Isaq) had a traditional pastoral military alliance known as Gol Warabe. "Indeed Gol Warabe



functioned as an organized pastoral military organization based upon collective interest over cattle and whose solidarity transcended clan loyalty. These economic and organizational features distinguished it from the overwhelming prevailing social formation in the north, which was founded upon agnation and collective interest over camel herds. That members of this social amalgamation organized collective raids or rescue rallies to recover plundered herds against surrounding hostile camel groups, Gadabursi, Isaq and Isa, quintessentially show the point." (Farah, AY. 1992, "From traditional nomadic context to contemporary sedentarisation: past relations between the Isaq and Gadabursi clans in northern Somalia". The Proceedings of the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Congress of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa, Institute of Ethiopian Studies)

However, relations started to go awry, following the adoption of settlement and cultivation by traditionally pastoral groups: Writing on the consequences of settlement the same author in the same source wrote: "The distribution of traditional pastoral land among disparate holders which belong to different social groups, Gadabursi and Isaq, as a result of settlement and cultivation in this region, provided a basis for competition and subsequent hostility."

Land conflicts between the Rer Nur and Jibril Abokor groups revolve around two areas. The first area is locally known as Banka, an open land between Kalabeydh and Tog Wajala villages. This area constitutes part of the Qodow zone which traditionally used to be collectively exploited. The extensively cultivated Qadow area which covers the plains on the Somali side of the border, and the contiguous Madar region in Ethiopia, was largely developed by the Jibril Abokor. Rer Nur petitions that were found in a file inherited from a previous Rer Nur elder, indicate the land dispute between the Rer Nur and the Jibril Abokor in the Tog wajale plains (For literal versions see note 6)

The second area of dispute between the Rer Nur and Jibril Abokor is the Eil Bardale project. A recently deceased Jibril Abokor religious man, Sheikh Mohamed Rage, established a farm in the late 1950s in this area, and gradually expanded to the Rer Nur traditional territory by introducing an Islamic socialist cooperative.

After the Borama conference in May-June 1993, two wars occurred between the Rer Nur and Jibril Abokor at Buqdhada which is located in the project area. This led to a prompt reconciliation effort from the Guurti of "Somaliland". The 7-member arbitration Guurti formulated the following resolutions that were endorsed by the two parties.

### **Republic of Somaliland**

18.06.93

### **The Guurti of Somaliland, Gabiley**

To:

The Guurti of Dila Community

The Guurti of Gabiley community

CC: The Minister of the Interior, Republic of Somaliland Har.

CC: The Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, Rep. Of So. Har.

CC: The Central Guurti of Somaliland Har.

After having considered the arguments advanced by the conflicting parties, after having observed the disputed area, the committee selected by the Central Guurti of "Somaliland" to arbitrate the case concluded the following:

1. Every citizen in "Somaliland" has inalienable right on his permanent private property (agricultural land, building, man-made underground water tank, private well, etc).
2. Corporate wells, naturally occurring water, pasturage and roads, are communal properties. Therefore, people and livestock shall have free access to these resources or facilities.
3. The opposing militias of the two parties that are present in the disputed area, should be disengaged immediately, and returned to safe bases in their respective areas, with in a period of seven days.
4. Those occupying other peoples' fixed assets should vacate, so that right owners can repossess them, with in a period of one month.

The resolutions are based upon the Sharia and the Peace Charter formulated by the Borama National Conference. Of the cooperative's extensive land, areas developed for agricultural purposes are the property of the original owners, but the reserved pastoral areas are decreed as public property.

The party which violates the resolutions will pay a fine of five hundred million Somali Shilling.

Considering the fact that both parties pledged to support the resolutions of the arbitrating committee, it was thought sufficient that eleven representative elders from each group commit a binding oath to this agreement.

|   | <b>Names of the Arbitrating Guurti</b> |          |
|---|--|----------|
| 1 | Sheikh Ahmed Sheikh Nuh                | Chairman |
| 2 | Abdi Ismail Kabile                     | Member   |
| 3 | Mohamed Omer Farah                     | ditto    |
| 4 | Heibe Sheikh Husein                    | ditto    |
| 5 | Abdi Ahmed Nur                         | ditto    |
| 6 | Sheikh Mohamoud Abdillahi              | ditto    |
| 7 | Barkhad Kahie Igal                     | ditto    |

*“Guul allaa leh”* -Ultimate success belongs to Allah.

#### **4.2.5. THE ISSUE OF THE DISPLACED BAHAMAMARON**

Bahamaron is composed of Baha which means amalgamated groups, and Maron which corresponds to the clan name of the Gadabursi people in the north-west. Although the etymology of the word Gadabursi is uncertain, Maron is the name of the ancestor of the Gadabursi clan whose tomb is located at Gudma Biyaas in Erigavo. Thus, the Bahamaron alliance is constituted of lineages descended from the major Gadabursi sub-clans. They are:

Bahabar Aden and Bahabar Abokor lineages (both are Mahad Ase sub-clan), Bahabar Abdalla (Makahil sub-clan) and Dhagaweyne (Habar Afan sub-clan).

The Bahamaron groups whose settled villages and agricultural fields lie in the Jibril Abokor-dominated Gabiley district, are greatly effected compared to the Rer Nur whose homeland is situated in both Gabiley and adjacent Borama districts. This makes the Bahamaron an entirely displaced Gadabursi group.

Before the 1950s the Bahamaron had a joint Akil, and functioned as a *dia*-paying group. At present, mainly because of the demographic growth of the different lineages of the alliance, as well as a tendency to assert independence, each group has an independent Akil. However, the essential unity of the Bahamaron, which mainly derives from opposition to the dominant Jibril Abokor, is currently reinforced by a common Sultan.

The Bahamaron and Jibril Abokor had a peace conference in Borama. This resulted an agreement which is presented at the end of the study (See note 7).

#### **4.2.6. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE AGREEMENTS BETWEEN SETTLED GROUPS**

The strained relations between the Rer Nur and Jibril Abokor, is aggravated by competition for control of traditionally pastoral land which is mainly located in the border areas between Borama and Gabiley districts. The Rer Nur refugees in Teferiber refugee camps of Ethiopia and the Jibril Abokor started negotiations early in 1991. This was precipitated by the cease-fire agreement between the Isaq and Gadabursi that took place at Borama in March 1991. This early discourse in fact produced results, eg exchange of looted stocks and stray animals between the Rer Nur and Gadabursi in particular.

These early peace forums, which took place at Rer Nur territory inside "Somaliland", foundered mainly because the Jibril Abokor elders failed to deliver the livestock raided by their armed kinsmen. The difficulty to retrieve seized stock from their freelance armed militias, embarrassed the Jibril Abokor elders and finally led to the disruption of the reconciliation effort.

The Rer Nur elders were at Hargeisa at the time of the survey. They brought a petition to the authorities in Hargeisa, accusing the Jibril Abokor of having violated the peace agreement brokered by the "Somaliland" *Guurti* after the Borama conference.

To: Chairman of the Reconciliation Guurti for Dila and Gabiley Communities. Hargeisa

To: Minister of the Interior, Hargeisa

To: The President of Somaliland, Hargeisa

Subject: Violation of an Agreement:

Refer to the Buqdhada resolutions of 18.6.1993 relating to the enhancement of peace, co-operation and co-existence between the Rer Nur and Jibril Abokor.

We would like to inform you that the Jibril Abokor violated this latest agreement by failing to disengage their armed forces from the site of the conflict. They also started an organized cultivation of the Rer Nur fields in the Tug Wajale plains, using tractors supported by trucks mounted with machine guns – the dreaded *tikniko*. Initiated on 20.6. 1993, this flagrant act of land appropriation is still continuing un-abated.

This deliberate aggression is part of a sinister destabilizing policy on the part of Jibril Abokor, which intends to undermine the comprehensive peace agreements endorsed by the clans in "Somaliland" at Borama conference. It also aims to sabotage the establishment of the newly elected government of the "Republic of Somaliland". This is corroborated by a provocative statement recently made by a distinctive Jibril Abokor political leader: "The two year rule of the previous president (Tuur) was wasted on an ill-fated attempt to establish control over Berbera, his successor (Igal) will also exhaust his two year tenure on Buqdhada and Tug Wajale plains".

Substantial revenue earned by the Jibril Abokor from their disliked occupation of Zeila port in Awdal region and *khat* taxes collected at Nabadid, are used by this clan to hire armoured vehicles in order to seize land from the rival Rer Nur. The Jibril Abokor seem to like to grab as much land as possible before the anticipated demobilization, and centralized state control of public sources of revenue.

The Rer Nur in Dila firmly believe that disputes between local groups should be settled through peaceful discourse, but it is quite clear that the other party is not prepared for this widely accepted approach. The Jibril Abokor failed to put into effect past bilateral resolutions (July 1992, June 1993 and the Peace Charter of the Borama conference). This indicates their lack of commitment to peace and stability in the conflict area.

In order to prevent an outbreak of war, we, therefore, strongly ask the Central Guurti assigned to arbitrate this conflict to visit the disputed areas, as early as possible, so that they can observe the violations made by the Jibril Abokor.

“*Allaa mahad leh*” - gratitude and indebtedness to Allah.

Signed:

1. Haji Dayib Sheikh Muhumad

Somalia: The Roots of Reconciliation

2. Abdillahi Ali Huesin
3. Haji Nur Ahmed
4. Sheikh Omer Barkhad
5. Saleban Ali Kahie
6. Nur Rayale kheyre
7. Nurie Rabile

In general, settled communities in the north-west maintain stability and peace better than the comparatively turbulent northern nomadic groups. This is because of the extended collective interests brought by sedentarization. Members of a permanent community collaborate in the maintenance and construction of water points, and there is reciprocal co-operation in agricultural activities. Furthermore, possession of plots of agricultural land by individual cultivators in the land controlled by their corporate units, acts as a sanction against the violation of community customary contracts. A recalcitrant kinsman cannot move his field to a different community. A nomad who disagrees with his group can drive his stocks to join a different group. This change of residence and attachment to different social unit is not a desirable option for a rebellious cultivator, since land is scarce in agricultural areas. These features of the cultivating economy appear to enhance the authority of the elders of the farming settlements, who possess sanctions and authority lacked by their pastoral counterparts (IM Lewis 1961 233-239)

Thus cultivating groups, including Rer Nur and Jibril Abokor, value peace more than the turbulent dominant northern nomadic groups. They do not readily plunge into war, but once they engage in a conflict, they are said to be slow in restoring peace. In contrast, nomads promptly engage in a war, but also rapidly make peace. In addition, cultivating men are generally more reserved and reticent than the usually outspoken and greatly communicative nomads. The profuse oral discourse which is replete with sarcasm and jokes, is used as a means to incite incessant pastoral feuds and also as an instrument of essential reconciliation.

The slow progress of the return of peace to Borama and Gabiley agricultural districts, in a sense, is extended to the inhabitants of the Western part of "Somaliland". Areas that lie west of Hargeisa town, where agriculture is relatively well established, are less stable than the eastern part of "Somaliland" which is predominantly a pastoral region.

Two major grievances are held by the Gadabursi against the Isaq. The first, is the entire destruction of Dila town that was occupied by SNM forces from February until April 1991. The second, is the existing occupation of Zeila port by Jibril Abokor militias, which is regarded as a humiliation and economic hegemony. Although combined SNM forces captured Zeila in February 1991, other clan militias left Zeila and returned to their home areas, but the Jibril Abokor stayed behind, in spite of frequent requests by the Gadabursi and "Somaliland" authorities.

Indeed, the Gadabursi Awdal region was the only clan territory that was overrun by SNM forces at the end of the civil strife in February 1991. This was partly because of Gadabursi division and lack of solidarity compared to the Harti clans who were better armed and better organized in their opposition

to the clan based SNM forces.

Their apparent lack of commitment to peace is said to be primarily the military and economic advantage enjoyed by the Jibril Abokor. On their part, the Jibril Abokor claim that the occupation of Zeila is essential for the flow of trade traffic between Djibouti and Hargeisa, an economic activity which is dominated by the Jibril Abokor and other segments of the Sa'ad Musa clan. To prevent banditry, armed militias of Jibril Abokor and others escort, when need arises, their trading trucks that frequent this busy route. Moreover, they also claim that the presence of Jibril Abokor forces at Zeila is essential to preserve the security of this border area which lies adjacent to the Republic of Djibouti. In spite of loss of revenue, the presence of rival militias at Zeila and Lughaya coastal villages, contributes to the security problems that affect the Gadabursi people in Awdal region. For instance, 40 armed incidents which involved mainly Jibril Abokor and Gadabursi militias, reportedly took place in Awdal region during the last three months of 1992. And despite agreement on the return of Baha Samaron groups to their home areas in Gabiley, few of the displaced Baha Samaron actually returned.

### **4.3. POLITICALLY INSTIGATED CONFLICTS**

#### **4.3.1. BURAO CONFLICT**

From February until September 1991, the euphoria precipitated by the downfall of Siad Barre's despotic military rule that particularly oppressed the Isaq, led to a short period of tranquillity in "Somaliland". The change was thought to bring quick advantages, in which the largest isaq were placed to benefit most. Non-Isaq clans were anxious as to what the triumphant and stronger Isaq may do to them. Some clans feared reprisals because of their support for the defeated Darod dominated government and open clan conflicts with Isaq groups.

The established SNM interim administration disappointed Isaq, and other clans which thought they were not fairly represented. This undermined support for the administration by the other clans. The limited external assistance and a share of newly printed currency obtained from Mogadishu, were received by the SNM soon after the formation of the interim administration. However, such limited resources were not invested in urgent tasks, like disarmament and demobilization, or the creation of basic security apparatus. Unfortunately acquired resources were appropriated by the corrupt civilian and military officials of the administration.

Competition for political dominance and access to limited and mostly external resources, instigated hostility between the Isaq clans. This intensified the power struggle between the civilian and military factions of the SNM administration, a long-standing division that existed throughout the struggle of the organization. The new SNM administration was portrayed as being dominated by the president's clan (Habar Yonis) and related Iidagale. The association of the SNM interim administration with Habar Yonis, led the rival Habar jelo to become the major Isaq clan that pioneered opposition to the fragmented interim administration.

The traditional rivalry between the Habar Yonis and Habar jelo, which was contained during the civil war by a common Isaq cause to overthrow the military government, surfaced after the initial euphoria of liberation. In January 1991, deep suspicion between the clan militias in the mixed Burao town

degenerated into open conflict. This hasty war continued for a few days, but displaced the returnee population in the town that was striving to reconstruct disrupted lives. However, the strife did not affect clansmen in the interior, but was actually fought by the militias of the two sides in Burao.

The ability of the Isaq Guurti to effectively resolve internal disputes was greatly undermined by the strife, which polarized the Isaq clans in their relations with the interim administration. The Gadabursi Guurti in particular, played a significant role in the wider collective settlement of this conflict and subsequent Isaq turmoil. The neutral status of the Gadabursi and the embarrassment of the Isaq's failure to resolve its internal disputes, facilitated a successful reconciliation.

#### **4.3.2. BERBERA CONFLICT**

Competition for political dominance and access to resources which instigated conflict in Burao, also led to more serious internal strife between Habar Yonis and Iisa Musa clans. This started at Berbera in March 1992. Initiatives by the president's faction to centralize power and authority were suspected by the antagonistic military faction in the administration, and Isaq clans other than the loyal Habar Yonis. In particular, this concerned an effort undertaken by the administration to place Berbera regional port (Iisa Musa strong hold) under the control of the administration

Thus, the government organized a combined force to establish government institutions at Berbera, which generated revenue until then managed by the Iisa Musa and local Habar Yonis section. The Isa Musa there disliked the move, which they saw as an attempt by the Gar Hajis (Habar Yonis and Iidagale clans) dominated government to appropriate power and the tax revenue of their port facility.

As soon as the loose collective campaign to establish government rule in Berbera started, the constituent clan militias, other than the loyal Habar Yonis, withdrew their collaboration and left the joint force. This led to a clan war between the loyal Habar Yonis clan, which supported the president and his civilian faction, and the local Isa Musa. In contrast to the limited urban upheaval in Burao, this strife involved a wider range of kinsmen of the two rival clans. Accordingly, it caused extensive property and human loss, not only because of its comprehensive nature but also because of its prolonged nature, March to October 1992.

The sacking of five opposing ministers by the president in 1992 escalated the power struggle between the civilian and military factions. Many disenchanted members of the administration left the country. This aggravated the security situation in Isaq areas of "Somaliland". The raging civil war and the security crisis which engulfed the "Republic", shattered the expectation, particularly the much needed and elusive international recognition.

Public disgust and elder's relentless endeavour to restore peace led to a conference held in Djibouti between the political factions in the administration. This was followed by a return to Hargeisa where they formed a reconciliation committee. This consisted of 31 members, comprised of sixteen representatives of the dominant civilian faction and fifteen to the rival military faction. This joint peace committee was chaired by the venerated religious elder and peace activist, Sheikh Ibrahim Sh. Yusuf Sheikh Madar.

The joint peace committee utterly failed to cease hostilities between the warring Habar Yonis and Isa Musa clans, let alone tackle the urgent security crisis in Hargeisa and other areas. Worse still, opposed political and military leaders indeed undermined the sustained reconciliation effort of the Isaq Guurti. The traditional Isaq Guurti visited Berbera six times during the conflict. On each occasion, the peace settlement arranged by the elders between the warring groups faltered, mainly as a result of sinister manipulation on the part of the hostile political and military factions in the administration.

The withdrawal of support by the other clans from the government orchestrated bungled attempt to control the vital port of Berbera, was considered by the Habar Yonis as a betrayal. The ensuing disenchantment was further aggravated by the chequered fortunes of the strife. The initial combined assault led to the capture of the town, but this short-lived victory was later reversed by a counter attack that established control of the town by a regrouped Isa Musa force.

On their part, the Isa Musa regarded their opponent's aggression as a deliberate attempt disguised in a government orchestrated campaign. Their formal response to arbitration and settlement proposals of the government formulated peace committee, was presented in the following letter. It explicitly rejects the control of Berbera by the Habar Yonis or the Garhajis-dominated administration.

28.8.1992

**Berbera**

To: Somaliland Guurti

To: The Isaq Central Guurti of Somaliland

To: Members of the Peace Committee Presently Staying in Berbera

Subject: Isa Musa Proclamation:

On behalf of the citizens of the littoral region Saaxil (Isa Musa), the local Guurti and military officials would like you to accept greetings that are as extensive as the text of the Holy Koran.

After consideration of the messages offered to us by the peace delegations, we pass on to you the relevant opinion of the Isa Musa community:

1. The Isa Musa community is ready to observe the agreed cease-fire.
2. The Isa Musa welcomes the establishment of a comprehensive peace brokered by the Guurti of Somaliland, but wishes judgement on the group responsible for the tragic war.
3. Berbera is one of the districts of the Republic of Somaliland and is therefore subject to its rules and regulations.
4. The littoral community will never accept a special military force and rule designed for



Berbera alone.

5. We are ready to participate in a genuine national economy, national force and national law and order structure.
6. To salvage the public from the ravages of war and instability, we suggest the conduct of a national reconciliation forum participated by the Guurti of the local clans.
7. We are eagerly waiting for appropriate action to be taken against the blatant aggression subjected to our people.

Thank You.

1. Muse Hersi Abokor, Chairman of the Isa Musa Guurti
2. Ibrahim Abdillahi Husein
3. Abdi Ibrahim Husein
4. Abdillahi Ibrahim Karshe

Once more, Isaq peace groups, the traditional Guurti and the government instituted peace committee, failed to successfully resolve the internal strife at Berbera. The Iisa Musa clan rejected an article in the cease-fire proposal devised by the Isaq peace groups. This relates to the control of Berbera port by the administration accused of being dominated by the Garhajis. Point number four of the Isa Musa letter illustrates this contentious matter.

#### **4.3.3. SIGNIFICANCE OF SHEIKH PEACE-CONFERENCE**

Sheikh conference (For the complete agreement see note 8) is significant for the local peace-making endeavour which spontaneously unfolded in northern Somalia after the downfall of the military government. Following the Burao reconciliation effort, it stands as the second collective and successful inter-clan reconciliation initiative. Of the forty man arbitration group selected among the large representative clan Guurtis, thirty six members came from the clans living in the following administrative regions: Awdal (Gadabursi-nine members), Sool (Dhulbahante-nine members), Burao (Isaq\_nine members) and Hargeisa (Isaq-nine members). The remaining four members were distinguished as religious men. In effect, the collective service of the Guurti in "Somaliland", was mobilized to arbitrate this relatively serious internal Isaq upheaval, whose settlement evaded the ability of the Isaq elders. The Warsangeli Guurti was absent from this event because of involvement in important internal matters at the time.

Of particular interest is the decisive role the Gadabursi Guurti played in the reconciliation of Habar Yonis and Iisa Musa clans. Concerned about the wider implications of this internal strife, the Gadabursi Guurti voluntarily launched two peace-making missions to the embattled clans. Embarrassed by this move, the Isaq reconciling groups politely rejected the service at first. However, the second mission was given the opportunity to reconcile the warring clans. The neutral status of the Gadabursi and their role in the Burao reconciliation process, paved the way for the final acceptance of their services.

Isaq reconciling groups failed to break the deadlock over the control of Berbera. The Iisa Musa clan refused to sign a cease-fire treaty formulated by the Isaq peace-making groups because it contained a clause which surrendered the control of Berbera to the central authority. The Gadabursi Guurti solved this deadlock by replacing the disliked clause relating to the control of Berbera with another acceptable clause. A comparison between the relevant sections of the cease-fire texts prepared by the Isaq and Gadabursi reconciliation groups, illustrates the point.

Public facilities and state properties that are found in Berbera, like the port, fuel depots, airport, government factories, roads, etc. are public properties and their access should not be denied to the people of "Somaliland". Their management and control is the responsibility of the central authority.

The Gadabursi Guurti replaced Berbera with "Somaliland". Thus, the implication of widening the ruling to cover not only the public facilities in Berbera but throughout "Somaliland", allayed the Iisa Musa fear of being singled out.

The large size of the Guurti and the inclusion of religious men, who are seen as ideal and neutral arbitrators with an allegiance to universal Islamic values that transcends clan ties, certainly indicate the seriousness of this dispute and latent fear of failure. Nevertheless, the role of religious men in the Guurti driven peace-making process illustrates a holistic approach in which the services of different social leaders are harnessed in the process. For example, Borama and Dararweyne peace conferences, were inaugurated with serious peace promoting poems that were composed and narrated by distinguished national poets.

Apart from the remarkable achievement regarding the successful reconciliation of the most serious clan conflict after the downfall of the military regime in this region, Sheikh conference exemplifies the turning point of the elders peace-making effort. In addition to the establishment of a wider framework for the conduct of a required national conference in Borama, a national peace charter that regulated the urgent law and order provisions was formulated.

## **5. TECHNIQUES OF PEACE-MAKING**

### **5.1. WOMEN'S ROLE IN PEACE-MAKING:**

One of the conundrums of Somalia's civil strife, is the fact that the protagonists are usually neighbouring clans who are affinally related. In spite of the Sharia which condemns fighting between neighbouring brethren groups, kinship morality also proscribes fighting between affines. Thus, the Somalis practice warfare, which is denounced by strongly adhered to Muslim belief and important principles of social formation.

Traditionally and to a significant degree still among the pastoralists, the need for access to basic resources at times of distress, controlled by rival groups, led corporate groups to marry outsiders. However, this preferred alliance seeking marriage does not transfer women's birth rights from their natal groups to those of the husbands. After marriage, a woman retains her kinship ties and property rights with her father's group. The latter are often denied due to Sharia inheritance bias towards men

and also because of patrilineal ideology which mystifies primary community properties as lineage wealth (camels and agricultural land).

As members of patrilineal corporate descent groups and as mothers of affinally related foes, women were most distressed by Somalia's tragic social upheaval. Because of their dual kinship role, they were the only means of communication between belligerent clans at the height of the civil war. Material assistance and information between belligerent affinal groups, were carried out by women, who were allowed to cross clan borders. In "Somaliland", this function led them to be labelled "clan ambassadors". This labelling appears to have been strengthened by the alleged "secret agent" role they are said to have carried out for their natal groups. They were frequently accused of passing military secrets obtained from their husband's groups to their father's groups.

Reconciling elders certainly made effective use in appealing to unifying cultural forces, eg affinal relations and Islam, so as to soften and exhort antagonistic groups to make peace. For instance, to break a deadlock in a peace process, eg the case of one group refusing to participate in a peace forum, distinguished elders who had affinal ties with the stalling group, were usually sent to win their support. For twenty four days, the Dhulbahante Guurti failed to appear at the site in the first major peace forum with the Habar Yonis at Dararweyne. This led Habar Yonis to send a delegation comprised of kinsmen born by Dhulbahante women. They succeeded in persuading suspicious maternal relatives to come and participate in the forum.

Traditionally to seal a peace treaty between two parties, women were sometimes exchanged. This was done in some of the major peace agreements in "Somaliland". Thus, the reconciling parties, Habar Yonis and Isa Musa, agreed to exchange fifty wives equally representing the two groups at Sheikh meeting. The practice has symbolic significance for it illustrates a commitment to the matter at hand. You give a daughter to somebody you trust, honour and wish to maintain mutual interaction with. And particularly where blood has been shed, Somalis regard the offer of a marriageable partner as a customary mechanism for alleviating the loss of life. Accordingly, a Somali proverb says "*meeshii xinjiri ku daadato xab baa lagu bururiyaa*" - "the stains of blood should be cleansed with a fertile virgin lady". As well as the reproductive service of wives, which may be said to compensate for the lives of the lost kinsmen, the symbolic significance of the practice as a gesture of reconciliation is significant.

Customary contracts are usually honoured by the Somali clans. This is partly because they are not rigid legal dogmas. On the contrary, they can be rescinded, amended or abrogated, as the situation arises. Nevertheless, deliberate violation of a *xeer* without formal declaration of intent to rescind, is considered by a Somali a treacherous act.

In July 1992, when Habar Tol Jelo and Dhulbahante were making peace, ten armed militias of the latter were found out to have surreptitiously set out to raid stock from the former. At the time, it was still not safe for men to cross clan borders. Accordingly, the Dhulbahante took two of their wives of Habar Tol Jelo origin with a military vehicle and transported them to the border area. The women were sent to warn their kinsmen of the anticipated raid.

The Dhulbahante raiding party seized camels and killed a Habar Tol jelo man in the process. However, the seized stock were retrieved because the timely information passed on by the Habar Tol jelo women to their kinsmen put both groups on the alert. This flagrant breach of peace was immediately corrected by the Dhulbahante paying 110 camels of homicide compensation and a wife. The additional 10 camels (standard homicide compensation is generally 100 camels for a male and half of this amount for a female) and a wife, acted as a public acknowledgment and appeasement strategy to expedite and restore relations threatened by the brazen aggression.

In spite of above mentioned peace-making contributions that mainly derive from the dual kinship role of women, they did not take a direct role in the successive reconciliation conferences in "Somaliland". Although in the high-profile Borama conference and in publicized southern conferences organized by the UN, women delegations participated as separate entities, local "Somaliland" peace forums remain largely male activities. Nevertheless, northern women enthusiastically support local forums, and most importantly provide traditional domestic services. Accordingly, they prepare food for the assembled peace delegates, and attend to the hygienic and cleaning tasks of the meeting and accommodation facilities.

## **5.2. INFORMAL AND HOLISTIC APPROACH**

The grassroots peace-making endeavour in "Somaliland", can be described as a collective business. Certainly, the arbitrating clan councils assume a central role, but they make effective use of the services of the other traditional leaders, most important of whom are religious men and poets. Other than the central Guurti, participating elders, ex-professionals, politicians and military officials, religious figures, poets, are described as distinguished guests. They may offer advice and opinion in open bilateral peace talks, but authorization of the agreements is carried out by the Guurti. To supplement the moral authority of the elders with religious sanction, many of the contracts also bear the signatures of religious elders.

To avoid futile and protracted opposing litigation, arbitrating Guurti strive to encourage direct negotiation between the disputing parties. Given lack of instituted authority of the Guurti, which undermines its ability to enforce agreed resolutions, it is also practical to encourage disputing groups to reach bilateral agreements. This is important since the reconciling groups are ultimately responsible for the implementation of the agreements they have reached through consensus.

The rallied national Guurti, which comprised delegates representing the major clans in "Somaliland", offered its reconciliation services to the serious Habar Yonis and Isa Musa conflict at Berbera. The latter group claimed that they were the victims of brazen aggression and accordingly asked for judgement over the actual culprit. However, the national Guurti repeatedly entreated the two parties to resolve their differences through direct negotiation. To the delight of the general Guurti, this was finally accepted at the third day of the conference. However, the general Guurti also selected a special arbitration committee that was assigned to arbitrate any issues the two sides failed to solve. Fortunately all issues were resolved through direct negotiation. However, the general Guurti assumed the supervisory role of assessing the satisfactory completion of the compact and formulating penalties for the violation of the accord. And to give weight and legitimacy to the agreement they added their signature to the bilateral contract.

Sympathetic attention is given to opposing grievances of the reconciling parties. Mutual interest and areas of consensus are dwelled on, in order to build trust and a wholesome atmosphere that can facilitate agreement on contentious issues. Judicious consideration is given not to perturb one party or the other, and the difficult side must be diplomatically handled. In effect, an informal and reconciliatory tone is preferred to the investigatory and examination procedures that place blame upon one party.

Traditional elders possess extensive endurance and patience that is required to tackle delicate, unpredictable and tardy peace business. The Habar Yonis Guurti anxiously waited twenty four days for their Dhulbahante counterparts to attend the first joint meeting at Dararweyne. The opening meeting at Eil Qoxle pastoral area between Habar Jelo and Warsangeli, started with a prolonged, under the tree, elder's discourse that continued for about a month. The participants in this delicate initiative, in a situation tense with hostility and deep suspicion, have had to continue exploring a breakthrough for such a long time in order to seek an opportunity that could give hope to mistrustful groups that cherish peace. A belief in a positive outcome which finally materialized, certainly diminished hostilities and induced trust and cooperation.

If an irreconcilable point arises in the course of a peace session, the proceedings are discreetly suspended until such time as a consensus is arrived at informally. Thus, conventional peace conferences appear to act as no more than a rubber stamp for an informal consensus agreed between the reconciling parties outside the meeting venue.

If a contentious issue is found difficult to be resolved in a particular forum, it is usually deferred so as to prevent disruption of the peace process. Given the scope of the matters adjudicated by the elders and their lack of instituted authority, absence of effective governmental law and order machinery, it is usually the case that outstanding issues between the groups (property issues in particular) fail to be resolved at the time specified in the accords. However, this does not lead to disruption of the buoyant peace effort. Therefore, the next scheduled forum is not cancelled due to a failure, of one party or the other, to resolve outstanding issues that were agreed to be settled in the preceding conference. Current forums rearrange the settlement of usually accumulated outstanding issues.

### **5.3. INTRODUCTION OF HARSH PENALTIES**

From the very beginning, local clans in northern Somalia, made a significant concession that led to the unfolding of the peace process. In a spirit of reconciliation, embattled clans agreed to bury the past and concentrate on the present and future affairs of mutual interest- the restoration of peace and stability. This was achieved by a common agreement which annulled events that took place in the past. Otherwise this would have led to massive and futile litigation and recrimination, notwithstanding the practical difficulties in the actual computation of the considerable human and property loss sustained by the different groups during the protracted and intricate civil war which implicated clans and a military regime.

Faced with the immense security task in an explosive situation, the Guurti discerningly introduced harsh provisions that are thought to contain cyclic plunder of property. To dissuade armed militias

from seizing herds of opposing groups, the elders decreed that the responsibility of paying damages inflicted by armed groups should be shouldered by the immediate families of the perpetual offenders (the family of the offender, his father, brothers and uncles). This presumably unprecedented ruling that placed the responsibility for acts of violence upon the family and the immediate kin of the villain, undoubtedly discouraged the practice of blatant and opportunistic raiding of property. Instances of habitual looters killed by their immediate kin, who could not bear any more the burden of their violent acts, are cited by many clans in the region. The Warsangeli and the Dhulbahante clans further decreed that injuries and death in traffic accidents should remain the responsibility of the drivers who might be assisted by their close agnatic kinsmen. A Dhulbahante informant explained this decision as primarily due to an increase in reckless driving by the *khat* trucks that frequent the area.

In addition, the introduction of capital punishment appears to be gaining currency in northern Somalia as an effective instrument to curtail homicide. The Habar Tol Jelo and Habar Yonis sections in Burao, the Iidagale and the Warsangeli, all practice this punishment. In early 1992, the internal homicide rate alarmingly reached thirtysix people in one month alone. This led the Iidagale to impose capital punishment which reduced murder to nil.

## **6. CONSTRAINTS ON EFFECTIVE PEACE-MAKING**

### **6.1. LIMITED AND DIFFUSE AUTHORITY OF THE ELDERS**

Institutionalized political institutions of the highly democratic and segmentary social formation of northern Somali society, are invested with remarkably limited authority. Despite this, traditional political leaders at the various levels of grouping often managed, as they presently do, to establish precarious law and order in the pastoral world and in recently sedentarized areas. In the absence of effective law and order governmental organs, northern elders braced themselves to attend to an increased peace-keeping work that covers both rural and urban security requirements.

A widespread desire for peace and stability among the northern clans, which mainly resulted from war-weariness, enhanced the peace effort of the elders. This dispensation and appeal for fairness and justice in which the elders are thought to deliver because of disillusion with past and contemporary modern political leaders, appears to have facilitated the peace effort of the elders. This helped the Guurti to effect contractual legal accords between opposed clans. The practical application of the contents of the extensive treaties proved a daunting task for the elders.

The present case illustrates the difficulty encountered by clan elders of enforcing unpopular decisions upon their kinsmen. The arbitrating Guurti of "Somaliland" decided to witness the exchange of prisoners between the successfully reconciled Habar Yonis and Isa Musa clans at Sheikh. The exchange was agreed to take place at Burao town. The Habar Yonis failed to deliver on time the eight prisoners they held. Its captives were held by a Habar Yonis man at Gorgor near the border with Ethiopia. He seized the prisoners because his private truck was lost in the clan war.

It took the Habar Yonis nine days to deliver the prisoners. The delay was caused by the holding kinsman, who demanded compensation for his truck and extensive expenditure on his captives, who were held for a period of five months. The Habar Yonis elders finally convinced their kinsman to

Somalia: The Roots of Reconciliation

accept the captivity expenditure only. Since a lot of property was lost in the civil war, compensation for the truck was rejected. To do so would encourage similar demands that could not be settled due to the scale of destruction of property and human loss in the civil strife. Finally, after prolonged anticipation, the Habar Yonis delivered their prisoners, who were exchanged, under the supervision of the "Somaliland" Guurti, for the thirty prisoners held by the other side at Berbera.

The traditional system of governance that relies primarily upon the moral authority of lineage leaders and the good will of their kinsmen, has limited power to prevent the occurrence of crime and violence. Thus, northern elders aptly described the significance of their law and order functions as *dab damin*, which literally means "extinguishing fire" here, restricting the explosion of social upheaval.

Both the colonial and successive independent Somali governments reasonably employed the traditional system of rule to maintain law and order in the rural areas. In the past, political leaders, most importantly the Akils-"Local Authorities", were supplemented by modern security forces and institutions, to enhance their peace-keeping duties. Indeed, during the British colonial administration, written contractual agreements between the native clans in the Protectorate, were acknowledged as a source of law. Thus, copies of clan treaties, were kept at the offices of the district commissioner for use in settling relevant disputes.

## **6.2. FREELANCE MILITIAS: THE DEYDEY**

"The remaining Somali elite now fear the armed *mooryaan* thugs who terrorize southern Somali cities. Named after a nasty intestinal worm, the *mooryaan* lack farming, herding or bureaucratic skills. They disdain formal education and covet any property, public or private. Their hatred of economic success and prejudice against the work habits of achievers reflects the profound crisis of Somali institutions. With their nihilistic destruction of property and precious infrastructure, the *mooryaan* have become the Somali equivalent of the Visigoths who wrought havoc after the fall of Rome".

The Somali word *deydey* literally means a thorough and avaricious search for something. Nevertheless, in its present context, it refers to the ransacking the *deydey* usually carry out after an opportunistic plunder of property. As some local authorities suggest, the word appears to have been borrowed from a Daalaley poem composed by one of Somalia's distinguished artists, Hadarawi. This poem depicts the freelance plunder and relentless terror launched against the public by some regular soldiers of the military regime, which became habitual in the final stages of its existence.

Like the *mooryaan* in the south, the *deydey*, in northern Somalia, are portrayed as prototype miscreants and villains. Isaq informants are quick to retort that most ordinary SNM militias relinquished military service, after the liberation of the north from the military regime. This implies that the active armed militias, who are dwindling in size in the north, largely consist of an unskilled residue left behind by the voluntarily dispersed SNM forces.

Mostly composed of teenage boys and unmarried adult men with limited or no urban and rural livestock wealth, the *deydey* dislike the elder generation in general and the *Guurti* in particular. They label elders *koofiyad bacle*, a derogative term which literally means "those wearing plastic hats".

Traditionally, Somali elders wear hats as a symbol of moral authority. The negative implication appears to derive from the fact that urban Somalis carry cash in plastic bags. Therefore, the elders are allusively accused of being corrupt by making money from their positions of authority which is symbolized by the hats they wear.

To disarm and demobilize the clan-based and heavily armed militias is the expressed wish of every person in "Somaliland". Without the restoration of peace, it is realized, that the so far elusive international recognition of "Somaliland" as a sovereign state, will remain wishful thinking or an elusive dream. This makes urgent the demobilization and disarmament of the militias who pose the biggest threat to peace and stability. Yet, despite improved relations between clans which reduced the risk of warfare, inter-clan suspicion still lingers. Therefore, each clan would like to see its rival first disarmed, and most probably would prefer to be last one to disarm. Assistance from neutral friendly countries to the lineage leaders and the ineffective administration in disarming militias, would be appreciated by the people in "Somaliland".

The United States led United Nations intervention force operating in southern Somalia, is deeply suspected because of its stated opposition to secession and the failure of the UN intervention, so far, to restore meaningful peace in the south. Hence, without the approval and cooperation of the political leaders in the north, unwarranted UN intervention, would certainly undermine the fragile peace that obtains in this region.

The armed militias commonly operate in the areas controlled by their clans. At the time of the survey, fourteen militia-manned checkpoints were found to exist along the Hargeisa-Borama road, and twentysix along Burao-Laasanood route. The following table indicates the Hargeisa-Borama checkpoints, and the clan origin of the controlling militias.

Table 8:

|    | <b>Name of the check point</b> | <b>Lineage of the controlling militias</b> |
|----|--------------------------------|--|
| 1  | Hargeisa                       | Husein Abokor                              |
| 2  | Maqahida Inanta                | Husein Abokor                              |
| 3  | Ararso                         | Husein Abokor                              |
| 4  | Ararso                         | Baha Sa'ad (Abdalla Abokor)                |
| 5  | Aabidla                        | Abdalla Abokor                             |
| 6  | Arabsio                        | Jibril Abokor                              |
| 7  | Gabiley                        | Jibril Abokor                              |
| 8  | Kalabeydh                      | Jibril Abokor                              |
| 9  | Dila                           | Rer Nur                                    |
| 10 | Tulli                          | Rer Nur                                    |
| 11 | Eegi                           | Rer Nur                                    |



|    |            |                    |
|----|------------|--------------------|
| 12 | Goroyo Awl | Rer Nur and others |
| 13 | Goroyo Awl | Rer Nur and others |
| 14 | Borama     | Mixed Gadabursi    |

Acts of banditry that are perpetrated by opportunistic freelance armed militias, present a ceaseless threat to peace and stability in both urban and rural areas of the north. Organized plunder of trade goods, private property and nomadic stock, which appear to be decreasing in this region, are not only committed by militias that are loosely recognized as the army of the clans, but occasionally also by armed kinsmen operating in the areas controlled by their lineages. In a sense, armed militias look after the general interest of their own groups. For example, if a member or members of a particular clan seize property a different clan, armed kinsmen of the victim launch a counter raid. This often leads to a cycle violence.

Check points manned by clan militias, are apparently concentrated along trade routes frequented by *khat* trucks (Nabadid-Hargeisa, Burao-Laasanood, etc). Driven at a frighteningly fast speed, *khat* trucks held the past record of reckless driving, and epitomized the madness associated with drug operations in the West. Militia gun-mounted trucks *tiknika*, replaced the dreaded chat traffic in terms of reckless driving. The trigger-happy militias that ride the dreaded *tiknika*, troubles the dauntless *khat* traffic and the public at large.

Different clan militia squadrons that are scattered along the major roads, extort mainly cash from passing private trade trucks and a levy in kind from *khat* trucks. Since, the check points run through different lineage territories that are controlled by different militias, traders are forced to pay each and every unit of militia in exchange for safe passage. Thus, Berbera *khat* dealers found more economical the use of light aircraft to transport this stimulant from Nebedid to Berbera town, in an attempt to avoid militia extortion on land traffic. However, the bulk of the *khat* trade is transported over land, which led to an arrangement between the dealers and the militias at the checkpoint. Militia armed trucks are recruited as escorts that protect chat vehicles.

Militias refer to the imposed levy on trade as legitimate taxation and a compensation for their unpaid services. Sometimes, unruly militias fight over the spoils, particularly over the distribution of *khat*. In June, the administration of president Igal succeeded in its first step to centralize important sources of revenue, by placing Berbera town under the control of the state. This measure needs to be expanded throughout the country as early as possible to terminate established system of extortion and replace it with a credible form of taxation. Thus, militias constitute a major obstacle to the establishment of legitimate national security forces. Moreover, sometimes they get away with mindless killing they commit collectively, although if one of them is killed it can lead to a demand of compensation by his group.

### **6.3. SIZE, TIME, PROTOCOL AND OTHER CONSTRAINTS**

The strength of the relatively successful peace effort of the traditional leaders in the north lies in the fact that it is anchored in the fundamental social segmentary order. Hence, representation in the inter-clan peace forums is based upon the actual lineages of the concerned clans. In addition, the

organization and conduct of Peace conferences mainly depend on resources and facilities provided by the local groups. Given the absence of external resources that can allow planned and effective functioning of the peace conferences, they are run the way the traditional *shir* is administered- tardy and timeless, unwieldy and massive, in effect difficult to organize and manage their conduct.

Despite prior agreement among the peace-making parties, on the size of the essential delegations, peace conferences often develop into a large congregation by the attendance of uninvited kinsmen who belong to the reconciling groups. One hundred and fifty Guurti representing all the clans in the north, and one hundred observers, were planned to participate in the Borama national conference. The actual number of participants who regularly feasted and largely sheltered at the venue of the meeting, Sheikh Ali Jawhar secondary school, was estimated at slightly less than seven hundred persons. The participants of the Garadag and Dararweyne local conferences were equally very large, seven hundred twenty and five hundred respectively. Modelled on the traditional ad hoc council of elders, where all adult elders of the concerned groups had the right to participate, many adults who are included in the acknowledged Guurti of the reconciling parties participate in the present peace of conferences. The duration and starting dates of the peace conferences often defy fixed schedules. The need to attend to important matters that affect the interest of one party or the other, or failure to complete the necessary preparations, etc., hinder timely initiation of conferences and cause delays. Once started, a conference continues, rather slowly, until a satisfactory consensus is reached by the parties. The Borama conference was set to start in January, but was delayed to February. To discredit the government which was against it, the elders declared it open on twenty four of February with virtually no preparation. Its opening lasted seven days with the Koran being recited to give time to effect the arrangements. The actual business started on the third of March. The regional Erigavo meeting was scheduled to start on the tenth of April. However, it did not start during the survey period in June and July. This disappointed the researcher, who was interested to observe the event, and anticipated that it would take place sometime during the field survey.

Disagreement between the Habar Yonis and Warsangeli over the chairmanship of the conference stalled the initiation of the Jiideli peace conference. Since the other clan assumed this position in the preceding Yubbe conference, Habar Yonis insisted that it was their turn. The Warsangeli argued that their present Sultan was the only available clan leader. This was said to automatically qualify him for the chairmanship. Agreement to lower the level of the conference from high-profile clan level to *dia*-paying group level broke the status deadlock. Thus, after eight days of discord over the status issue, the conference finally started under the chairmanship of an Eastern Habar Yonis Akil.

We have seen that the Habar Yonis Guurti anxiously waited for twentyfour days for their Dhulbahante counterparts to attend the first conference at Dararweyne. The stalling Dhulbahante, did not like the site of the conference, which is located just across Erigavo regional border in Sool. This selection of the site was considered a cynical tactic devised by the Habar Yonis to deny them land rights in Erigavo region, which is dominated by the Habar Yonis but also populated by the Naaleeye Ahmed Group of the Dhulbahante.

## 7. ACHIEVEMENTS

The constraints on the traditional peace-making process that spontaneously unfolded in "Somaliland" certainly render difficult the establishment of a comprehensive peace there. These pressures also hinder

Somalia: The Roots of Reconciliation 66

the practical implementation of many useful items that are formally agreed by the reconciling parties at different levels of grouping. Nevertheless and quite surprisingly, these formidable constraints have so far, failed to derail the impetus for reconciliation and peaceful co-existence between the local communities.

Driven by a nationalistic endeavour to salvage the self-proclaimed state of "Somaliland" from unprecedented and senseless ruinous turmoil, and to escape from the shame and disgrace that ensues from failure of a cause supported by the public at large; traditional elders strive, under considerable pressure and against arduous difficulties, to maintain peace. This grassroots local level approach to peace, started with a series of inter-clan reconciliation conferences as early as 1991. Then it gradually progressed to district, regional and national levels in which the collective service of the Guurti of the major clans reconciled particularly difficult cases that failed to be resolved by the concerned parties. The Sheikh reconciliation conference represents the turning point of the elders' peace effort, which reached its height at Borama conference. In the latter, a national peace charter that incorporated the provisions of the series of compacts between the local clans was formulated. Because of realization that their peace functions cannot effectively succeed without effective support of a modern administration, the elders expanded their natural peace functions to tackle the complex task of building an executive interim government and a national charter – an unprecedented event in modern Somali history. Considering these laudable achievements, it is no wonder that the elders installed themselves in the structure of the interim government, which consists of three councils: the council of elders, constituent assembly (elected council) and council of ministers.

The sustained effort of lineage and clan leaders, firmly established an encouraging tendency, in which peaceful dialogue is favoured as a means to settle legitimate grievances in lieu of the use of force. Individual acts of violence are constrained not only by the legal ruling which places responsibility upon the offender, but also by the predictable condemnation of agnatic kinsmen and opposition of implicated social units. Legal contracts promulgated by a series of peace conferences, define political and socio-economic relations between local clans in contemporary northern Somalia.

The following summarizes the general achievements of the peace-making process. The particular achievements of the peace endeavour in the nomadic areas were presented early in the text.

1. The exchange of stray animals.
2. The exchange of looted stock, trucks and trade goods.
3. Gradual return to harmonious relations between clans. This reduced the traumatic pressures of the warfare situation such as vigilant preparedness to defend livestock and human lives in conflict.
4. Effective exploitation of scarce and widely distributed pasturage and water. This enhanced, though still constrained, free migration and mobility.
5. Dispersion of herds and herdsmen which can reduce the spread of communicable animal and human diseases that troubled compacted nomadic encampments during the course of the civil war.
6. Increased trade and social interaction across clan boundaries.

7. Coordination of the prevention of acts of violence through exchange of information relating to the activities of freelance banditry, with the use, in some areas, of local radios.

## 8. CONCLUSIONS

Using I.M. Lewis's "A Pastoral Democracy" (1961) as a point of departure, A.Y. Farah has conducted a brief field survey of current political processes and local level peace-making in Somaliland (North-west Somalia). During the period of Scientific Socialism in Somalia, the military government claimed that it had abolished clanship and similar claims have been rather wistfully made by various Marxist writers on Somalia. Others have asserted that the traditional clan system and the system of lineage governance analyzed in 1961 by I.M. Lewis no longer exists. Our findings are entirely contrary. Lineage elders are alive and well and positions of lineage leadership, far from disappearing, have actually proliferated over the last thirty years.

In the wake of the overthrow of Siyad's regime in the north, in the absence of any effective centralized successor government, the lineage elders have been propelled to the centre of the political stage. Although they are often based in towns, the elders (in principle all married men) are deeply involved in the rural, predominantly pastoral society and typically own livestock. Today, as in the past, they deliberate policy and take decisions for these groups at extremely democratic meetings in which now, as before, oratory and poetry play important political roles.

In inter-group peace-making, which was our central concern, wives are regularly employed as intermediaries and ambassadors since intermarriage between clans is a general feature. As in the past, we found that in a number of cases the collective exchange of women in marriage was employed to seal peace treaties between previously hostile clans and lineages. This was over and above the solemn oaths which were sworn by the signatories in the presence of the traditional men of religion (*wadaads*) who opened and closed the peace-conferences with their blessings and readings from the Qoran. The terms of peace-agreements were set out formally as traditional contracts or treaties (*xeer*), and included the usual Somali provisions of compensation for death and injury in subsequent breaches of peace.

The supreme achievement and symbol of the vigour of these traditional grassroots political processes is demonstrated in the appointment by the peace elders of the new Somaliland government. This is a remarkable climax of these local-level peace-initiatives and proof of the vitality of the "pastoral democracy" which has, in effect, replaced "modern" political activity as our findings testify. On the continuing strength of traditional political processes, two developments are important to note. The first is the concentration of collective responsibility within the close family of the miscreant who persistently breaks the peace and attacks the property or persons of others without the authorization of his kin group. In some cases persistent offenders have been executed by their own kin. This is a very significant innovation aimed at countering the unauthorized violence of freelance bandits (the "*deydey*"). Of similar importance in peace negotiation, is the use of local radios to communicate with estranged or hostile groups and persuade them of the good intentions of the negotiators.

When we contrast the effective, low profile, locally based, inexpensive northern Somali peace process with the expensive, externally directed and less successful peace initiatives in the south, a number of factors seem to be involved. There is first the general genuinely popularly rooted desire for peace in the

Somalia: The Roots of Reconciliation

north, associated with the ultimate goal of international recognition. Although both north and south are plagued by "freelance" bandits, there are no significant power hungry war-lords in the north vying for power on the scale characteristic of southern Somalia. Although three different families of clans are represented in "Somaliland" they are not locked in a desperate power struggle with ramifying implications for other communities. The relative success of northern peace-making highlights how the presence of such bellicose figures impedes peace and reconstruction. It is also evident that the concentration of aid resources in one place (Berbera in the north, Mogadishu in the south) is a potent stimulus to conflict.

In summary, our short study shows clearly how the "bottom-up" road to peace and reconstruction works in Somalia. The government formed by the SNM guerilla movement which liberated the north-west in 1990 could not achieve popular support and withered away. It was left to the local clan elders to weave a web of peace and inter-clan relations from the grassroots. This is a slow process- but two years after its commencement has been crowned with success. Peace in Somalia, of course, is a relative matter in this essentially warrior society of pastoral nomads. It is unrealistic and ethnocentric to expect a complete absence of conflict and raiding in Somali society. The most that can be hoped for is that institutions capable of resolving conflict should be in place and functioning. This is the situation today in the north, and it will obviously be improved further as the demobilisation of armed bands proceeds. We also emphasize the importance of effective communications between clans- the persuasive power of peace poetry and the use of radios in negotiations as a preliminary to actual meetings between groups. Finally, it is very striking how the over-concentration of relief supplies in one area, in the absence of a generally agreed plan for inter-clan distribution, fuels competition and conflict.

This modest success story largely despite, rather than because of UN or other foreign intervention, highlights the effectiveness of low-level, grassroots peace negotiation. It needs to be replicated in the north-east region which has similarly, by its own efforts, achieved a comparable degree of harmony. The situation in the south, obviously, also urgently needs to be examined. Although the UN appears to have facilitated some local peace initiatives outside Mogadishu and is currently promoting the formation of local and district councils, we do not know to what extent these are genuinely representative of local clan interests and thus how effectively they can form part of a wider, popularly supported, governmental organization.

## NOTES

- 1) "Echoes of a slightly more developed institution than that typical today occur in the traditions of the Gadabursi and Iisa. When a new Ugaas was appointed amongst the Gadabursi, a hundred elders, representative of all the lineages of the clan, assembled to form a parliament to promulgate new *xeer* agreements, and to decide what legislation they wished to retain from the reign of the previous Ugaas. The compensation rates for delicts committed within the clan were revised if necessary, and a corpus of Gadabursi law, as it were, placed on the statutes for the duration of the new Ugaas's rule. This was called "the law of the Sultan and 100 men" (*xeerka boqolka iyo boqolka nin*). This council formed a central legal court (*guddi*) to which all disputes which could not otherwise be settled should be taken. The Ugaas and his court toured the country, moving amongst the various segments of the clan settling disputes, and receiving gifts of tribute and hospitality. There is said to have been no standing army or specialized functionaries to enforce decisions of the Sultan's court other than the Midgans attached to the

royal lineage who acted as emissaries. The Iisa had traditionally a similar arrangement with a permanent court of forty-four men attached to their Ugaas. But in both cases the Sultans were leaders on the egalitarian Somali pattern, settlers of disputes and arbitrators vaguely responsible for the prosperity and fortune of their clans, not heads of a Muslim state". (I.M. Lewis, 1961, *A Pastoral Deomacracy*, p207-208)

2) "The informal council (*shir*) summoned as need arises, at every order of segmentation, and attended by all the adult men, or their representatives chosen at smaller lineage-groups *shirs*, is the fundamental institution of government. It has no formal constitution except that of membership of the lineage concerned, no regular place or time of meeting, and there are no official positions on it. All men are councillors, and all men politicians. Agreements are reached by majority decisions following the direction taken by the consensus of feeling at a meeting. Usually the participants sit in a rough circle in the shade of a tree, in the central clearing of a nomadic hamlet, or they may meet in a "coffee-shop" in a village or town. Where a large lineage with a male strength of several thousand is concerned, delegates may be chosen to represent each of the component lineages and sent to a central meeting-place. Sometimes, however, all those concerned, even if they number several thousand, attend the council and form a large loose ring. Representatives may then be appointed for the smaller units and sent into the middle of the circle to thrash the matter out while their kinsmen sit listening in the outer-ring. Men sit or squat on the ground at a *shir* and when they wish to speak often rise to their feet. Although there may be a great deal of argument and wrangling, all those present are expected to behave courteously and breaches of good manners may be punished. Thus at a large Habar Awal *shir* which had met to discuss the rights of cultivators and pastoralists in the west of the Protectorate members of two of the lineages represented assaulted the elders of other groups present. The offenders were directed by the Sultan to pay insult compensation (*xaal*) to the affronted elders". (Ibid, p198-199).

3) "In the Protectorate, the Local Authorities Ordinance does empower certain Akils to assist the Administration in maintaining law and order, in enforcing when possible Government orders and regulations, and in bringing persons guilty of crimes to justice. But the vesting of these powers in one person is largely untraditional and runs counter to the bonds of contractual solidarity which bind the members of a *dia*-paying group together and unite them against other political units. There is further difficulty, in that although Somali make use of the principle of delegation in their traditional political organization (as in delegated representation at *shirs*, for example), they are mistrustful of anything but direct, face-to-face relations. It is then not surprising that as a whole Akils are severely handicapped in discharging their duties satisfactorily. It is also surprising indeed that they succeed at all." (Ibid, p200).

4) *Wadaads*, because they are not warriors (*waranleh*) and owe allegiance to the ideals of Muslim brotherhood as opposed to the sectional values of clanship, are theoretically ideal mediators. Today, as in the case of prominent elders and Sultans, they are encouraged to play this role by the Administrations.

Many *sheikhs* and *wadaads* take their duties as peace-makers seriously. But they do not themselves settle disputes, or judge between disputants, for this is the work of elders in council, and of informal counts of arbitration. Their task is to incline rival parties to make peace. The

terms of settlement are for the groups concerned to decide and the rights and wrongs of an issue judged by a panel of arbitrators. Through appeal to the brotherhood of Muslims enemies can be exhorted and enjoined to stop fighting, but other than binding the disputants by putting them on oath, sheikhs have generally no ritual sanctions at their disposal to enforce a peaceful conclusion. Oaths of peace, moreover, may be overridden by the need to maintain access to pasture and water by force of arms." (Ibid, p ?)

#### 5) Peace Conference Between Habar Yonis East and Warsangeli at Jiideli:

I now document the formal agreements Eastern Habar Yonis enacted with the neighbouring Warsangeli and Dhulbahante clans. The Sultan of the former clan has a copy of the original Somali text, the legal record of the relevant meeting (See table 1). I translate the entire agreement except the brief general introduction.

About four hundred delegates representing the two clans participated in the peace conference (*shir*) between Habar Yonis and Warsangeli. The agenda of this bilateral conference, which took place at Jiideli on 5-9 November 1992, was:

1. Enhancing the general security of the two communities.
2. Arbitration of unresolved issues pending from the last meeting held at Yubbe on 6-9 October 1992.

The two parties agreed on the following:

1. The general stabilization of security and establishment of law and order throughout Erigavo region will be completed in the coming regional Erigavo meeting.
2. Each clan will be responsible for maintaining law and order in its own territory. The boundary which divides the lands of the two clans that runs between Geel Weyto and Damal Hagare, will remain the same as was agreed in the preceding meetings at Yubbe (Ist and IInd).
3. If more rain falls in the land of one clan, the guest group will be responsible for the protection of the lives and stocks of the host group that is attracted by the rains.
4. The formation of a joint local committee *guddiga turxaanbixinta* which is responsible for settling normal delicts that can affect inter-clan relations *guddiga turxaan bixinta*, has been agreed upon. It will comprise 30 members equally representing the two clans and stationed at the two buffer-zones, Jiideli (21 members) and Eil Qohle (9 members).
5. Jiideli and Eil Qohle border areas that come under the jurisdiction of the local joint committees, were acknowledged as formal centres of trade and exchange of goods.

The Authority and Terms of Reference that Regulate the Functions of the joint local committees are:

1. They have the authority to effect exchange of livestock missing from both sides, as was agreed on in the preceding meetings, and subsequently endorsed by the current conference.

| Livestock owed to Habar Yonis |        | Livestock owed to Warsangeli |        |
|-------------------------------|--------|------------------------------|--------|
| Species                       | Number | Species                      | Number |
| Camels                        | 89     | Camels                       | 179    |
| Cattle                        | 10     | Cattle                       | 49     |
| Sheep and goats               | 11     | Sheep and Goats              | 0      |

2. The joint local committees were given the mandate to adjudicate disputed cases, regarding both homicide and livestock.
3. The committees were given the responsibility to return claimed stray livestock of the Warsangeli (21 camels) and any other subsequent stray beasts between the parties.
4. Each local committee has the authority to use, in maintaining law and order and while engaged in other affairs that are of mutual interest, its own armed militias.
5. Each local committee shall establish adequate peace and order in the grazing region temporarily encamped by the two pastoral communities.
6. Any member of the two communities who commits a crime against the two parties, or against a third party that has a treaty of peace and protection with one of them, shall be prosecuted by the local committee which also must notify the matter to the higher Guurti.
7. Any member of the local committee who deliberately impedes the functions of the committee, shall be referred to the joint Guurti for adjudication.
8. If one group launches an organized raid against the another, the raiding party is solely responsible for all the consequences. Any damages sustained in an act of aggression are null and void, while damages inflicted upon the victim group shall be compensated.
9. The arbitration of disputed issues that were not settled at the preceding Yubbe meeting (6-9 October 1992), were postponed to the forthcoming regional meeting at Erigavo town.
10. The two communities agreed to trade with one another, however, trading activities shall take place at the strategic centres of Jiideli and Eil Qohle where law and order institutions are established.
  - a. Any merchant who trades outside the specified centres, is entirely responsible for the involved risks, and therefore any damage to himself or his property is not subject to compensation.
  - b. All trading interactions shall be carried out at the two centres.
11. To raise a common fund, goods brought for sale at the two market centres shall be charged a levy
  - a. The levy shall be collected by the joint local committee.
  - b. Livestock, food and other goods traded in the centres shall be charged a levy which is fixed by the local committee.

### **Proclamation:**

In line with the Jiideli peace conference, Eastern Habar Yonis and Warsangeli clans jointly call for



peaceful and harmonious co-existence between all the clans inhabiting Sanag region. The present mutual peace agreement, doesn't aim to create an alliance that can threaten the interests of other parties in the region. In contrast, it prohibits the formation of alliance of more than one clan against a party.

### **Oath**

This contract *xeer* has been sealed by a binding oath, undertaken by thirty *Guurti* from each clan.

The Peace Conference Between Eastern Habar Yonis (Muse Ismail, Muse Arre and Sa'ad Yonis lineages) and Eastern Dhulbahante (Mohamud Gerad).

Held at Dararweyne which is strategically located at the juncture separating the pastoral homelands of the Isaq and Harti clans that live together in Erigavo region, five hundred members participated in this important conference. This table indicates the breakdown of the social groups who took part in the conference.

### Social Groups Who Participated at Dararweyne Peace Conference:

| <b>Social Category</b>                   | <b>Size</b> |
|--|-------------|
| Sultan/Gerad                             | 3           |
| Guurti of "Somaliland"                   | 9           |
| Ministers and other government officials | 20          |
| Guurti of the two reconciling clans      | 300         |
| Intellectuals and professionals          | 40          |
| Religious leaders                        | 28          |
| Military officials                       | 100         |
| <b>Total</b>                             | <b>500</b>  |

The agenda of the conference was:

1. Enhancing and strengthening general law and order
2. Urban property in Erigavo town and reserved range lands in the district
3. Reckoning and resolving issues outstanding between the parties

### Agenda Number One:

1. The two clans have agreed to observe unconditional and long-lasting peaceful co-existence, that is based on equality, matrilineal ties and brotherhood.
  - a. To comply with and strengthen the endorsed peace, each clan shall effectively keep law and order among its kinsmen.
2. To dispatch joint peace dissemination delegates to the territories (both rural and urban settings) settled by the two clans.
3. A local joint committee *guddiga turxaan bixinta*, that is responsible for disseminating peace and arbitrating delicts, shall be established in any grazing region resided by lineages which belong to the two clans. The following regulations explain the specific duties of this committee:
  - a. Exchange of stray stock between the two parties.
  - b. Each local committee has the authority to employ its armed kinsmen in governing its area of influence.
  - c. It shall establish effective law and order in mixed grazing localities.
  - d. It shall take appropriate measures against any crime committed by a member of the two reconciled parties, or against a member of a different clan which has a contractual treaty with either of the two clans. Grievous violations which can not be handled by the local committee shall be referred to the *Guurti*.
  - e. If one party launches an organized attack against the other, or against a third party,

the raiding party is entirely responsible for the damages it inflicts. Any damage sustained in the process is declared null and void and therefore not subject to compensation.

- f. Any member who deliberately impedes the functioning of the local committee, should be jointly passed over to the *Guurti* of the two clans for adjudication.
  - g. Any person or group found guilty of deliberately killing someone shall be executed.
- 4. The two parties agreed to form a joint *Guurti* comprised of 11 members. This body will co-ordinate the activities of the joint local committees- dissemination of peace and consolidation of law and order, implementation of the agreements reached in this meeting and facilitation of factors which could enhance peaceful coexistence between two parties.
  - 5. Each clan must regulate the movement of its armed militia, which shall be confined to the area controlled by its group. Clan militias shall not trespass the territory of another clan with out permission.

#### Agenda Number Two:

- 1. The previous pattern of settlement shall be restored. Each displaced person has undeniable rights over his fixed property (agricultural land, building, under ground water tank- *barkad*, etc)
- 2. The arbitration of grazing reserves established during the previous government is postponed. This would be tackled in the coming regional Erigavo meeting. Until then, the grazing reserves are declared free for access to grazing. This point which has wider implications is applicable to all the clans in Erigavo region.

#### Agenda Number Three:

Concerned about the fact that prompt agreement on contentious points may derail the fragile and sensitive peace process in a situation of deep suspicion, the participating groups: Sultans and Gerads as well as their assisting members, the *Guurti* of "Somaliland" representing indigenous clans, decreed the following:

- 1. The two parties shall come to an understanding on the extensive outstanding compensations (human, livestock and property) prior to the signing of this agreement, 5.2.1993. Each clan shall take time to reach a reliable count on the actual losses it incurred during the civil war.
- 2. Article one will not affect the unconditionally endorsed peace resolution.

#### Number of Representatives who Undertook a Binding Oath:

This agreement was sealed with a binding oath undertaken by a total of sixty delegates equally representing the two reconciling clans, and also ten militia leaders from each side.

#### Schedule for the Coming Regional Meeting at Erigavo:

If Allah wishes, the Erigavo regional multi-clan meeting will be held on 10.04.1993. Until then the local reconciliation and peace committees, in collaboration with the higher *Guurti*, should work together to sort out existing hindrances and obstacles *turxaan*. Each clan shall also rectify its' own

human mistakes.

#### Penalty Code for Violation of the Treaty:

1. Each party is responsible for violent aggression and criminal offenses that take place in its area of influence, regardless of whether the culprit is an outsider or comes from its ranks. It is the duty of the political leaders of the local group, the *Akils* and *Guurti*, to comprehend the offender and extract appropriate compensation from bandits that plunder property from ordinary people.
2. This bilateral contract can be rendered null and void by an organized attack launched by one party against the other.
  - a. Any party that violates an article of this agreement will be subjected to the following penalty:
    - i. A fine amounting to five hundred million Somali Shillings.
    - ii. Compensation of inflicted damages (human and property losses).
    - iii. Apprehension and incarceration of notorious criminals that are known to threaten harmonious relations endorsed by the parties.
    - iv. The party that violates this contract will face the combined moral and military might of all the other clans in "Somaliland."

#### Responsibilities for Implementation of the Compact and Application of Penalties:

1. Established collective local peace committees and the clan *Guurtis* of the two sides are responsible to put into effect the contents of this accord between Eastern Habar Yonis and Eastern Dhulbahante.
2. The application of the corresponding penalty code is reserved for the *Guurti* of "Somaliland", in the case whereby one party violates an article of the treaty.

#### Signing of the Treaty:

1 A *Guurti* of sixty members and 20 clan military officers, equally representing the two sides, have signed this bilateral agreement.

2 As honourable witnesses to this essentially bilateral treaty, the leaders of the reconciling clans (two Habar Yonis Sultans, a Dhulbahante *Gerad*, who were strengthened by assigned eminent assistants), and the supreme *Guurti* of "Somaliland", gave additional weight to the treaty by incorporating their signatures.

The parties to this compact call for the other clans in Erigavo region to live together in harmony support and encourage the facilitation of economic cooperation and social interaction. They also solicit local clans absent from the present conference, to participate and make necessary preparations for the important regional meeting that is scheduled to take place at Erigavo town on the above mentioned date.

## **Shimbirale Peace Conference Between the Eastern Habar Tol jelo and Warsangeli Clans:**

Of the series of contracts that were produced by the mainly bilateral peace conferences in "Somaliland", the Shimbirale conference treaty is the only legal document known to the author which was translated to English. I reproduce here a xeroxed copy of the English translation that had been obtained from ACTIONAID's headquarters at London. This copy was not properly photocopied and therefore some information is missing at the margins of some pages. It is not possible to fill up the missing parts, since the original Somali text was not obtained.

The Habar Tol jelo started a dialogue with the Harti clans long before the dominant Habar Yonis started to follow the reconciliation process. Allegedly, the Habar Tol jelo did so in order to build an alliance against the rival Eastern Habar Yonis clan which dominates Erigavo district. The participating clans of the Garadag meeting adopted the title "Eastern Alliance" to signify their solidarity against the Habar Yonis. This led to a suspicion between the Habar Yonis and the other clans in Erigavo region which is still latent although very much reduced by the sustained reconciliation and peace conferences between the major clans in Erigavo region.

Table shows the Chronological Order of the Peace Conferences Between Habar Tol jelo and Harti Clans in Erigavo Region :

| <b>Reconciling Clans</b>                | <b>Date of the Conference</b> | <b>Place</b> |
|---|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Habar Tol jelo/Dhulbahante/SNM          | Feb.1991                      | Oog          |
| Habar Tol Jelo/ Jama Siad (Dhulbahante) | March or April 1991           | Yagori       |
| Habar Tol jelo/ Dhulbahante             | Early June 1992               | Eil Qohle    |
| Habar Tol jelo/Dhulbahante              | ?                             | Huddun       |
| Habar Tol jelo/ Warsangeli              | 8.08.1992-18.08.1992          | Shimbirale   |
| Habar Tol Jelo/ Dhulbahante/Gaheyle     | 23.11.1992-01.12. 1992        | Garadag      |

**"In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate"**

### **Shimbirale Peace Conference**

18.8.1992

Translated from Somali

The Shimbirale peace conference between the Warsangeli and Eastern Habar Jelo clans started in 8.11.1992 and ended on 18.11.1992 at the village of Shimbirale.

After the armed struggle to overthrow the regime of Mohamed Siad Bare has successfully ended, and the "Republic of Somaliland" was created, the new administration called for peace and stability for all  
**Somalia: The Roots of Reconciliation**

Somaliland clans and tribes, who were in the past at war with one another.

The Shimbirale conference which was participated in by the Sultans, chiefs (*Akils*), elders, religious leaders, military leaders, politicians and intellectuals of these two clans, was the finishing stage for a series of conferences held earlier in Berbera, Burao, and Eil Qohle, 1991-1992.

The seven day conference was marked by eagerness and a quest for peace, yearning for each other and mutual understanding. The difficult situation and hostile atmosphere prevailing in Somaliland in general and in the Sanag region in particular, the strong cultural relationship among the clans of the region; their interdependence on one another; and other ethnic factors formed major elements shared by both groups and cemented a strong base for the conference. As a result a call for Eastern Regional Alliance (*Danwadaag Bari*) emerged from the conference.

The parties discussed the agenda items which were as follows:

1. Peace formulations.
2. The politics of Somaliland.
3. Decisions on outstanding issues.

#### Resolutions of the Conference:

##### 1. Peace Formulations:

- a) The two parties, Warsangeli and Eastern Habar Tol jelo agreed and swore to conclude their long-standing conflict which cost unlimited human and material resources.
- b) To establish a joint standing committee on peace, and peace forces to assist the committee; a coordination committee at the political level, and trade representatives and trade centres among themselves.
- c) The two parties agreed to conduct trade and other transactions peacefully and to put no restrictions on the movement of supplies and goods between the two tribes.

##### 2. Grazing Rights:

The two sides agreed to have open grazing without any territorial restrictions. An area which has received better rains can be grazed by anyone from the two sides. No one .....

The security of the integrating households or communities is under the responsibility of the community resident in that particular area.

##### 3. The Sanag Region:

- a) The two sides agreed to jointly revive the co-existence and communal living in the region.
- b) The two sides agreed that all former citizens of the town of Erigavo should have the right to return back to their homes and to get back his/her individual rights in the region.

- c) The two sides agreed that no administration can be set up in Erigavo without the consent of all those that traditionally inhabited the town.
- d) Warsangeli and Eastern Habar Tol jelo do not recognize the existing administration in Erigavo which is not approved by all the parties in the region.
- e) If above conditions regarding the region and Erigavo are not met on peaceful means, the two sides agreed to undertake any other steps deemed necessary.

#### 4. Defence:

Taking into consideration the political turmoil throughout the country and the accompanying security problems, the two sides agreed to the following:

- a) To establish joint defense system which cooperates on any issues which threaten the security of any of the two parties .....? or embark on military operations on their respective territories that threaten the security of the other party.

#### 5. The politics of Somaliland:

- a) The two sides, Warsangeli and Eastern Habar Tol jelo, jointly endorsed the existence of the Republic of Somaliland and will do everything needed for the defense of its sovereignty.
- b) The two sides agreed to jointly promote democratic values and principles and to defend individual and national rights. The two sides are against anyone who opposes these principles.
- c) The two sides agreed to have permanent consultations on political issues in the country and to share common views on the politics of the country.

#### 6. Outstanding Issues:

In the war period the two sides inflicted losses on one another including human and material casualties. The conference therefore made the following resolutions:

- a) Any losses suffered by either of the two sides .....? with the exception of camels, cattle, and vehicles are exempted and written off (be it human or material losses).
- b) Camels, cattle and vehicles which were previously looted and remain with one of the two sides, but are not destroyed or killed, should be returned to its rightful owners with effect from 16.08.1992.
- c) The two sides decided to establish a joint committee which will arrange for the return of these properties to their owners and which will follow up on any matters relating to these issues.

#### 7. Special Rules and Regulations Adopted by the Conference:

- a) With effect from 18.08.1992, any property stolen or looted from one party by the other should be returned immediately.
- b) Any human casualties including death and injury is payable.
- c) Anybody who suffers injury cannot make revenge on the tribe of the criminal but will seek payment from the responsible individual or from the immediate sub-clan of the criminal.
- d) Those who suffer casualties should not take any steps but inform the standing committee on peace. If they take favourable steps such as revenge, they will be treated as bandits.

- e) The standing committee on peace will use the services of the peace forces when needed.
- f) Anybody killed or injured while involved in acts of banditry will be treated as a dead donkey! (*dameer bakhtiyey*) and should not have any rights.
- g) Any sub-clan which engages in acts of banditry which cause death or material losses, should pay whatever damages they have caused. In addition they will pay a bond of one hundred female camels. This bond will be handed to the common administration of the two sides, for common uses.

#### Appendices:

- Higher Political Committee of Eastern Habar Tol jelo:
  - Ten listed members.
- Higher Political Committee of the Warsangeli:
  - Ten listed members
- Trade Coordination Committee of the Eastern Habar Tol jelo:
  - Three listed members
- Trade Coordination Committee of the Warsangeli:
  - Three listed members
- Shimbirale Conference Secretariat:
  - Seven listed members

The End

- Signature of the Higher Committee of Shimbirale Conference:
  - Three listed signatures
- List of People from the Warsangeli who were Sworn at Shimbirale Conference:
  - Forty listed signatures, of whom the first six were classified as chiefs, the remaining as peace makers.
- List of People from the Eastern Habar Tol jelo who were Sworn at the Shimbirale Conference:
  - Forty listed signatures, of whom the first six were classified as chiefs while the remaining as peacemakers.
- Shimbirale Coordinating Committee:
  - Ten listed members.
- Conflict Resolution committee, Eastern Habar Tol jelo:
  - Twelve listed members.
- Conflict Resolution Committee, Warsangeli:
  - Same as above.



6) Tog Wajaleh

Reg:B/2/vol/II

Minutes of Shir held at Tog Wajaleh on the cultivation of land in dispute between Gadabursi Rer Nur and H.A. Jibril Abokor

24.7.61 and 25.7.61

District Commissioners present:

Mr. Ismail Dualeh Warsama

Mohamed Ahmed Abdilahi

Abdurahman Salah

The following Local Authorities were present:

|   | <b>Gadabursi Rer Nur</b> | <b>Local Authority</b>    |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | Ali Kahiye               | Assistant Local Authority |
| 2 | Abdi Badeh               | -do-                      |
| 3 | Omer Kahin               | -do-                      |

|   | <b>H.A. Jibril Abokor</b> | <b>Local Authority</b>    |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | Mohamed Boqorreh          | Assistant Local Authority |
| 2 | Deria Nur                 | -do-                      |
| 3 | Aw Yusf Magan             | -do-                      |
| 4 | Mohamed Husein Book       | -do-                      |
| 5 | Mohamed Ibrahim           | -do-                      |
| 6 | Ismail Osman              | -do-                      |
| 7 | Aden Utteh                | -do-                      |
| 8 | Abdi Gadid                | -do-                      |

24.7.1961.

The elders of both sides were, advised by the D.Cs. to discuss the problem among themselves and try and settle the matter amicably. They were told to report their conclusions on the morning of 25.7.1961.

On 25.7.61 both parties stated that they could not reach settlement and that it was up to Government to give a decision. In their discussion the Gadabursi Rer Nur insisted that the Tug Wajale plain belonged to them and the Jibril Abokor and that they were at liberty to cultivate wherever they wanted. They further stated that past distribution was not fairly made and that they wanted their fair share now.

The Jibril Abokor on the other hand maintained that the area was divided by the late regime and that this division was there to stay. They added that they had once offered the Rer Nur 100 farms but this was turned down.

The District Commissioners stated that they were confident that the two sides would be able to reach settlement and would live in peace together and they regretted that the elders could not solve the problem without Government intervention. The D.Cs. told them they would discuss the matter and inform them of their decision.

#### Decision:

1. That the present demarcation made in 1955 should remain as it is.
2. That the Jibril Abokor should give to the Rer Nur the 100 farms offered sometime in the past and that these farms should be in the area adjacent to the demarcation line which was not originally distributed.
3. That no water ballehs be allowed in the plain except on a plot of land the ownership of which has been established.
4. An individual Rer Nur tribesman who lawfully owns a farm in the Hargeisa District side of the demarcation line should be allowed right of ownership but anyone who acquired land not by lawful means, such as those who secretly cultivate land in Hargeisa District without prior authorization should be ejected and given an alternative plot if their cases proved to be genuine. Such ejection should take place after the harvest of the present crops.
5. That no Rer Nur tribesmen should be allowed to cultivate land within the Hargeisa side of the line except the 100 gardens allowed under Section 2 above and those gardens the ownership of which have been established.
6. That if necessary individual trouble makers from both sides be deported to places far from their places of residence and kept there for a period not less than 6 months.
7. That both tribes be bonded for a period of 2 years for the sum of So. 20, 000 to be forfeited to Government on breach of the peace. This bond should be signed by 10 members from each side.
8. The above decision will take effect from today depending confirmation by Government.

Signed: M.A. Dualeh, A. Salah, I.D. Warsama

The formation of Gabiley District in 1963, which is dominated by the Jibril Abokor, caused the Rer Nur further loss of traditionally common pastoral land.

The following Rer Nur petition indicates the point.

Hargeisa

16th Marsh 1966

*Literal version with slightly odd English.*

His Excel. The Governor (West)

Hargeisa

Sir,

With due respect I with the undersigned, beg to lay the following few lines under your kind consideration.

That a dispute on land at Tug Wajale between Rer Mohamud Nur and Jibril Abokor, caused a problem which remained unresolved for a long time. It has been temporarily solved by the Ex. British Government by prohibiting cultivation at a distance of 3 miles between Tug Wajale and Garbahadley; where our people of Rer Mohamoud Nur are situated. We built there about 800 houses and 100 dams for storing water. This prohibition was also adopted by our Republic after independence. Further this problem remained unsolved completely, and therefore we wrote so many petitions about it to our government, which are revisable whenever required in most of the Government offices, and the respective copies there of are in and shall be put before your excellency if we meet your Excellency personally about this problem. However, we would like your excellency to revise those applications we refer in order to comprehend the roots of the problem vividly.

Peace in that area was disturbed by the previous D.C. Mr. Abdullahi Wallenwal, the previous D.C. Gabiley, where he issued permits to five rich men allocating them five gardens in the area; that is when he became to know that he will be transferred, and these permits were issued in his last days at Gabiley. Thus it is needless to mention that the Ex. D.C. Mr. Mohamed Abdullahi, while keeping in mind that cultivation is prohibited in that very area; yet allocating gardens for some rich men shows, that he intensionally disturbed the peace and privilege rights of Rer Mohamoud Nur; besides overlooking the Republic's regulations; and disturbed the problem which remains unresolved, though calm for a long time. In reply to our question Mr. Mohamoud Abdullahi, stated that he exercised his power and permitted cultivation in that area without consulting the higher authorities, and we consider his action void of common sense rather than based on regulations, and criminal by creating a dispute between peaceful two Somali tribes; irresponsible and an intrusive action to the poor people who suffered badly from the last boundary dispute between Som./Ethiopia. For your information we have also contacted the present D.C., and he promised us to take the necessary actions accordingly in view of the law, that is in due course, of which actions we pre-thank him.

In the meantime we suggest your excellency to investigate this case deeply and take the necessary steps

for the precaution of further dispute, and to avoid this problem to become more critical, and in order to let the previous regulations reinforced. Of which action of benevolence and justice we shall ever remain thanking your excellence, and remain.

Your obedient servants.

1. Husein Magan
2. Nur Ahmed
3. Husein Hersi
4. Sh. Abdurahman Sh Mohamed

#### 7) Baha Samaron and Jibril Abokor Conference at Borama:

Agenda of the Conference:

1. Strengthening and consolidation of peace.
2. Trucks and vehicles that are in a working condition but outstanding between the two parties.
3. Establishing good relations between the Jibril Abokor militias based at the coastal towns and the Gadabursi people in Awadal region.
4. Enhancement of cooperation between the Baha Samaron and Jibril Abokor.

#### Resolutions Relating to Agenda Number One:

a) Displaced individuals have the right to regain their vacated fixed rural properties in their homelands-agricultural land, cement lined reservoir, etc., or urban properties, house, etc. So far the Jibril Abokor were not able to enforce this ruling.

b) Considering the difficult security situation, which may impede the implementation of the this ruling, the meeting has decreed:

- a) Creation of a 17 member joint committee, equally representing the two parties.
- b) This meeting should hold its first session within a period of fifteen days.
- c) The first session will be held at Kalabeydh on 03.09.1993.
- d) The two sides will exchange the names of the members selected for the joint committee before the holding of the first session.

#### Agenda Number Two:

Having heard reports on past events concerning looted vehicles between the two sides, in collaboration with the militia officials the Jibril Abokor Guurti, promised that they will do everything possible to return working vehicles of the Baha Samaron held by them.

### Agenda Number Three:

On the basis of knowledgeable reports presented at the meeting, the two parties agreed that combined members of the Guurtis shall pay a visit, in collaboration with the chief of staff in "Somaliland", to the Jibril Abokor militia centres in Awdal region. This will be undertaken at a convenient time agreed on by the two parties so as to minimize or prevent any possible conflicts.

### Agenda Number Four:

The meeting realized the need for co-operation in promoting peace in general, and in particular active co-operation on combatting the usually opportunistic highway banditry which hinders free movement of goods and people.

### Joint Proclamation:

At last the two parties called for:

- Prompt cessation of war and hostility between clans in other areas where confrontation is still continuing (Berbera). We ask the warring clans, Habar Yonis and Iisa Musa, to respect the cease-fire arrangement and respect the resolutions formulated by the peace groups.
- We are ready to participate in reconciling warring parties, and wish that Allah will terminate current turmoil immediately.

Seventeen delegates of the Western Isaq (Jibril Abokor) signed the agreement.

Sixteen delegates of the Eastern Samaron (Baha Samaron) signed the treaty.

### 8) Reconciliation Between the Habar Yonis and Iisa Musa Clans at Sheikh Conference: First Phase

Republic of Somaliland

The Central Guurtis of the Habar Yonis and Iisa Musa Clans

Sheikh

03.11.1992

### Contract between the Habar Yonis and Iisa Musa Communities:

- After direct negotiation between the two councils of Guurti representing the estranged groups, Habar Yonis and Iisa Musa;
- After three days of thorough discussion on the discord over the actual causes and resulting grievances of the strife;
- After final realization of the need to replace peace with hostility, for the benefit of the two communities that are bound together by mutual interests of contiguity, affinal relations and

common culture;

- Observing the Hargeisa cease-fire agreement that went into effect on 07.10.1992;
- The Guurti council of the two clans agreed on the following resolutions that are thought to establish a comprehensive peace.

### Components of the Accord:

1. The two parties agreed on an unconditional peace.
2. Each party shall enforce the agreed peace among its group.
3. To send local joint committees to mixed rural and urban areas settled by the two communities in order to propagate peace.
4. With effect from the signing of the agreement, the two communities are allowed to freely intermingle in both rural and urban settings.
5. To exchange war prisoners held by the two sides as early as possible.
6. To disengage the opposing militia forces of the two parties and reorganize them into a peaceful order.
7. The residential pattern shall remain as it had been in the past. Law and order shall be maintained by the elders of the local territorial groups.
8. Excluding permanent property (agricultural fields, buildings, man-made sources of water *barkado* and wells, etc.), human and material losses sustained by both sides during the civil war, 27.03-07.10.1992, are declared null and void. However, outstanding issues prior to and after this date, are subject to compensation, and should be justly resolved.
9. An individual or a group convicted of deliberate murder shall face capital punishment.
10. Any member of the two parties convicted of freelance banditry or highway robbery, shall be killed.
11. A joint arbitration committee which settles normal delicts and propagates peace, shall be established in any rural or urban area that is settled by a mixed population.
12. The two parties have agreed to exchange fifty wives, twentyfive coming from each group.
13. The application of the binding oath and the formulation of the rules for violation of this accord was made the prerogative of the arbitration council selected by the Guurti of "Somaliland".

N.B. Attached are the signatures of the Guurti of the two clans, the special arbitration Guurti selected from the large "Somaliland" Guurti that participated in the conference.

## Republic of Somaliland

### Arbitration Guurti

#### Resolutions:

After meticulous examination by the arbitration Guurti on the accord reached by the reconciling parties, and consideration of any missing points that can undermine or enhance the accord;

1. The arbitration Guurti declares that the compact between Habar Yonis and Iisa Musa is comprehensive, free from apparent pitfalls, and therefore fully endorses it;
2. The authorization of the contract was followed by discussion of the arbitration Guurti on the number of the Guurti representing the two parties who shall undertake a sealing oath and a penalty code for violation.

#### Penalties Code:

The compact between the two sides can be breached by:

- An organized attack launched by one group against the other.
- The party which violates a component of this accord, most importantly disturbance of peace, shall face the following punishment:
- A fine of five hundred million Somali Shillings.
- Compensation of material and human loss inflicted by the raiding party.
- Incarceration of persons who are thought to threaten the peace accord.
- Communities in "Somaliland" will all rally against the party which violates the treaty.
- The application of punishment for violations is the prerogative of the arbitration Guurti.
- With effect from the day this accord is signed, the rules for violations will be valid for a period of two years.

#### Oath:

The arbitration Guurti decreed:

- Forty Guurti representing each side, shall undertake an oath.
- Five militia officials from each side, who are jointly identified by the two groups, shall undertake an oath.
- The oath specifically relates to the current peace accord. Therefore those members who made an oath in the Hargeisa cease-fire agreement on 05.10.1992, shall also undertake an oath.
- Finally, the arbitration Guurti would like to ask the two parties to effect the agreed exchange of prisoners in the presence of the Guurti of "Somaliland" at Sheikh.

- As explicit in this bilateral contract, no compensations are subject to events which took place during the civil war (27.03.1992-07.10.1992), however, outstanding compensations after the civil war, should be duly paid by both parties.

N.B. Attached are the signatures of the arbitration Guurti of Somaliland that participated in the Sheikh peace conference.

Sheikh, 05.11.1992.

## Second Phase of Sheikh Reconciliation Conference (Tawfiq):

28.10.1992-08.11.1992.

After the completion of the celebrated reconciliation between estranged Habar Yonis and Iisa Musa clans, which was carried out in the first phase of the conference; the Guurti of the clans of "Somaliland" proceeded to the second phase of the conference which deliberated on two major issues:

1. A general framework for peace (law and order) in "Somaliland".
2. Thoughtful consideration of the future destiny of "Somaliland".

Following a comprehensive and prolonged discussion on the first issue, the "Somaliland" Guurti endorsed the following provisions. The Guurti of the local clans are required to apply the endorsed peace provisions harmoniously throughout the region.

1. To establish a hierarchical law and order mechanism, each local community shall establish its particular peace committee. Its mandate is to attend to the security affairs in its domain. However, the local peace committee works under the auspices of the general and constitutional Guurti of "Somaliland".
2. The local peace committees shall carry out their routine tasks independently.
3. Each community bears the responsibility for acts of aggression that take place in its sphere of influence. Thus, other groups have the right to exact compensation for homicide and other delicts that result in its area. It is the duty of the local Sultans and Akils to apprehend and exact compensation from members of their group that commit grievous offenses.
4. Each community should keep its militias away from major towns, roads and public facilities.
5. Each community shall demolish the check points manned by its militias in the area it controls.
6. Each community shall establish regular security guards that look after the public facilities found in its area.
7. Any property that is looted from another group by local freelance bandits, shall be seized by the local community and returned to the owning group. Applying its local law and order regulations, appropriate measures shall be taken against such opportunistic bandits.
8. Local groups have a legitimate right to establish particular legal law and order codes. Accordingly, they shall construct basic security apparatus, such as prison and police



establishments as well as magistrate courts.

9. Each community shall guarantee safe passage to trade merchandise, relief and assistance goods, or any other property that is being transported across the boundaries controlled by different groups.
10. Unusual events that are found difficult to be effectively resolved by the local peace committee and Guurti of the lineage, shall be resolved with the collaboration of the higher clan Guurti. The latter can also seek the support to the supreme Guurti of "Somaliland" as need arises.
11. Each militia shall remain in the area controlled by its group, which must regulate and constrain its movements. Without permission from the concerned local peace committee it must not trespass the boundary of a different group, regardless of intension.
12. The local peace committee shall preserve the security of the lives and property of foreign workers operating in its area. It shall also assist and oversee their activities.
13. Clan militias are proscribed to visit towns carrying weapons. Established security forces that are controlled by the local peace committees, are the only organ of security permitted to stay in the towns and carry guns as need arises.
14. Check points are restricted to the entry and exit points of the major towns. These shall be controlled by security forces established by the local people.
15. Local groups have a right to enter bilateral or comprehensive legal treaties.
16. No group is allowed to launch an attack against another. Human and property losses sustained by one group as any of its own aggression is null and void, though the damages it inflicts upon a different party are liable to compensation.
17. The conference formed a special committee to arbitrate the contentious disputes that still affect some areas. Unresolved land conflicts in Erigavo and Gabiley districts which yet prevent harmonious relations and peaceful co-existence between local groups exemplify lingering sources of trouble.
18. If a district or a region in "Somaliland" is attacked by an outside force, other local communities are obliged to support the attacked group.
19. Every citizen of "Somaliland" has inalienable rights to his permanent private property, no matter which locality it is located.

#### Penalties for Violation:

1. Whether committed directly by its members or others, the group that controls the territory in which acts of aggression have taken place, is responsible for the consequences and therefore liable to pay compensation for inflicted damages.
2. The group which fails to effect this accord, or breaches any of its articles, shall be subjected to:
  - a. A fine of five hundred million Somali Shillings.
  - b. Compensation of the inflicted damage regarding both human and material losses.
  - c. Incarceration of a person or persons that are known to pose a threat to this compact.
  - d. Collective opposition of the major groups against the guilty party which violates the contract.

- e. The application of penalties remains the reserved prerogative of the Guurti of "Somaliland".
  - f. The penalties are valid for a period of two years, with effect from the date the accord is signed.
3. The practical implementation of this general peace accord, is the responsibility of the local elders of the groups concerned.
  4. The central Guurti of the different clans, shall monitor and oversee the implementation of the accord among the local groups, but the overall supervision and monitoring shall be carried out by the supreme Guurti of "Somaliland".

#### Thoughtful Consideration of the Future Destiny of "Somaliland":

The conference agreed upon the conduct of a further national conference, and adopted its title as "The Grand Conference of the Communities of Somaliland. Then the conference formed a fifteen member technical committee assigned to establish details for the required preparation. The technical committee proposed the following arrangement, which was endorsed by the Guurti.

- a) Date;
  - b) Type and size of participants;
  - c) Place and source of expenditure.
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- a) 09.01.1993 was scheduled as the starting date.
  - b) The Guurti of "Somaliland" was accepted as the accredited participants.
  - c) One hundred and fifty Guurti representing all the clans we agreed to run the conference.
  - d) The conference was agreed to be held at Borama town.
  - e) A special committee was established to devise details relating to expenditure, and explore potential sources.

Finally, the conference stressed the need for consolidation of peace in general; highlighted the significant peace-keeping responsibilities of the corporate local groups, concerned citizens and social groups.

Moreover, the conference appeals to Al-itixad fundamentalists to lay down their weapons and concentrate on religious teaching; since the last thing the public want is to be drawn into another conflict of a religious nature.