**Tittle: Ethiopia Access to the Red Sea Ports: Challenges and Opportunities.**

***Authors****:Wondwosen Asfaw(MA),Birhanu Tobe(MA) ,Bijiga Emiru(Ass.Prof)*

*Foreign Policy and Diplomacy, Governance, Developments Studies*

***Email:****wasfaw2014@gmail.com,hatabirhanumittu@gmail.com,bijigaemiru23@gmail.com*

*Mattu University*

*Colleague of Social Science and Humanities*

*Department of Civics and Ethical Studies*

*Abstract*

*In the world 22% countries are land locked or they could not access to the sea simultaneously 51 % of them are poor and pay billions for the transit countries. Among these countries Ethiopia is one of the country loose accesses to the sea throughout the history. Now a day there is an attempt to access to the red sea. This has own challenges and opportunities. Therefore, this study looks into the possible advantages and difficulties Ethiopia may face in getting access to the Red Sea, as well as how the nation can best use this access to support economic development, strengthen regional cooperation, and guarantee long-term stability. This study aims to provide a thorough overview of the implications through a combination of qualitative research methods, such as interviews with important stakeholders and analysis of the literature already in existence. The purpose of this study is to give Ethiopia a thorough understanding of the consequences of Red Sea access. The findings of this study reveal that access to the Red Sea could present new prospects for trade, investment, and economic growth for Ethiopia, as a landlocked nation. The Red Sea has long been a vital waterway and trading route; however there are also possible difficulties, like managing the region's geopolitical tensions and making sure the maritime environment is managed sustainably. In addition to this the results of the study highlight the advantages and disadvantages of this access and offer suggestions for how Ethiopia might optimize the advantages while averting possible difficulties. This study intends to support stakeholders' and policymakers' informed decision-making by providing insight into the possible effects of Red Sea access on Ethiopia's development trajectory, ultimately promoting the stability and prosperity of the nation over the long run.*

***Key Terms****: Landlocked, Access to the sea, challenges, opportunities*

* 1. **Introduction**

Ethiopia is a landlocked country whose strategic objective has long been to get access to the Red Sea, which would greatly increase its economic potential and regional influence. According to academic Paulos Tesfagiorgis, for successive Ethiopian governments, Ethiopia's access to the sea has been a matter of life and death (Mekonnen, D. R., & Tesfagiorgis, P. ,2011). In addition to strengthening Ethiopia's position in the Horn of Africa and addressing security problems in the area, this access would lessen Ethiopia's reliance on the Port of Djibouti.

One of the main challenges hindering Ethiopia's access to the Red Sea is the unresolved border disputes and historical tensions with neighboring countries, particularly Eritrea and Sudan. As highlighted by researcher Jason Mosley, "Ethiopia's lack of direct access to the sea is largely due to disputes over borders and historical conflicts with Eritrea and Sudan" (Mosley, 2017). Additionally, political tensions and regional rivalries in the Horn of Africa pose a further obstacle to Ethiopia's quest for Red Sea access. The complex geopolitical dynamics in the region make negotiations and agreements on sea access challenging and require careful diplomacy and strategic planning.

In order for Ethiopia to have access to the Red Sea and fully reap the benefits—both strategic and economic-it is imperative that it address these issues and resolve the long-standing mistrust and tensions with its neighbors (Kahsay, A. T. ,2007). At one point in time, Ethiopia made an attempt to enter the Red Sea following Ethiopia's breakup with Eritrea over the border disputes of *"Badime*" and "*Shiraro.*" *Berbera* Sea Port in Somaliland was one of the possible ports Ethiopia attempted to enter. The "Bilateral Agreement between the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) and the Government of Somaliland (GoS) for the Utilization of Port of Berbera and Services to Cargoes" was signed in the interim following multiple rounds of discussions.

Furthermore, a number of players have recently expressed interest in the memorandum of understanding between Ethiopia and Somaliland. Thus, this article's goal is to examine the potential and problems Ethiopia faces as it attempts to get access to the Red Sea. The article seeks to shed light on the difficulties of Ethiopia's sea access quest by analyzing the historical, political, and geopolitical elements at play. It also suggests possible avenues for resolving the issues rose. Hence, the article aims to underscore the importance of Red Sea access for Ethiopia's economic growth and regional integration, stressing the possible advantages that could be attained by effectively navigating the forthcoming hurdles. The ultimate objective is to advance knowledge of the strategic significance of sea access for landlocked nations like Ethiopia and to provide suggestions for decision-makers and interested parties tasked with establishing the nation's future maritime strategy.

the challenges and limitations faced by Ethiopia in accessing the Red Sea, as well as competition from other countries in the region and the potential opportunities for Ethiopia to enhance its access to the Red Sea, are the research topic that guides this article. In order to better understand the unique difficulties Ethiopia have gaining sea access, this research question was look at the political and historical aspects that make things more difficult. The research aims to provide insights that could guide strategic decision-making and policy development in this crucial area by examining how these unresolved issues impede Ethiopia's maritime aspirations and investigating the wider implications for the nation's economic growth and regional relationships.

* 1. **Objectives of the study***.*
* *Identify the challenges and limitations faced by Ethiopia in accessing the Red Sea, such as political and geographic obstacles, as well as competition from other countries in the region.*
* *Explore the potential opportunities for Ethiopia to enhance its access to the Red Sea, including the development of new trade agreements, infrastructure projects, and partnerships with neighboring countries.* 
  1. **Research questions**

*1. What are the challenges and limitations faced by Ethiopia in accessing the Red Sea, such as political and geographic obstacles, as well as competition from other countries in the region.*

*2. What are the potential opportunities for Ethiopia to enhance its access to the Red Sea, including the development of new trade agreements, infrastructure projects, and partnerships with neighboring countries?*

* 1. **Significance of the study**

This study is important because it has the ability to offer insightful analysis and helpful suggestions for the country's strategic and economic advancement. Ethiopia's place in the region and its potential for progress and prosperity can be better understood by looking into how the country now accesses and uses the Red Sea, as well as the opportunities and problems that come with it. Also this study generates the knowledge with regarding to the challenges and opportunities of Ethiopia access to the red sea. Additional it helps the stakeholders and policy makers as information concerning to Ethiopia ambition to access to the red sea. Moreover, it helps as a reference the interested researcher to study on the area of the red sea.

* 1. **Review of Related Literature** 
     1. **An overview of Land Locked Countries**

Landlocked nations are usually encircled by nations with coastlines and do not have direct access to the ocean or sea. 48 landlocked countries, or 22%–25% of the world's total, are listed by the (, World Bank, 2022).These nations frequently depend on their neighbours for trade and transportation, which raises the price of goods and services. There are 14 landlocked countries in Europe, 16 in Africa, and 12 in Asia. Certain landlocked nation-referred to as doubly-landlocked nations-are encircled by other nations entirely (Matt, 2020). Landlocked nations face a number of difficulties, such as limited access to international trade agreements, increased transportation costs, trouble luring in foreign investment, and trouble reaching international markets. Dependence on nearby nations can also lead to vulnerabilities in the case of disturbances or conflicts competitiveness (World Bank, 2017, (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 2020, World Trade Organization, 2017 European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 2018).

* + 1. **Strategic Importance and Competition on Red Sea**

A cursory glance at the Middle East map demonstrates the Red Sea's enormous strategic significance. It is located between the continents of Asia and Africa, dividing both Europe and Asia and the Middle East from the Far East. It is, to put it briefly, the center of the region and the bridge connecting two worlds. Additionally, the Red Sea offers a route of connection between the North Atlantic and the Mediterranean and the Far East (Narbone, L., & Widdershoven, C. ,2021).  The Sea was significant as an international waterway even before the Suez Canal was established. Acting as a link between the wealthiest regions of Europe and the Far East, it. The Red Sea's geopolitical location is very significant. It is an essential route for the transfer of oil from Bab el-Mandeb in the south to the Suez Canal in the north because it forms a natural border between the eastern coast of Africa and the western coast of the Arabian Peninsula. The Red Sea gained significance as a result of its new role. Its ports might be utilized to deliver Gulf oil to end users. This increased significance will last as long as oil is the dominant energy source (Yohannes, E. ,2018)

The world's most strategically positioned region is home to the Red Sea. For both regional powers and superpowers, the Red Sea region has grown significantly in importance both strategically and commercially. Due to strategic considerations, the Red Sea region has served as a battlefield for several nations from the Horn of Africa, the Middle East, and Europe since the Middle Ages. Moreover, Even if the strategic location of the region is very significant, there is no any region in the world that hosts such concentration of foreign military powers (Gashaw and Zelalem ,2016). Some have gone as far as describing Djibouti as a “military Garrison”. The country has become the only place in the world where US, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Chinese and Japanese military forces are stationed simultaneously and Saudi Arabia being the latest candidate (Sun and Zoubir,2016).

* + 1. **Ethiopia Historical Loose and Access to the Sea**

The historical and political divisions created during this time would have a long-lasting effect on relations between the center and the periphery, even though Ethiopia would eventually reintegrate these areas into a federated state following independence. *Zeila*, an ancient port in the *Awdal* district of Somaliland, was an important trading route for Ethiopia's eastern region during the middle Ages. Since the 1998 start of the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea, Ethiopia has been landlocked and has looked to Djibouti's ports as a possible exit. Nowadays, Djibouti handles around 95% of Ethiopia's international trade, which costs Ethiopia about $2 billion a year (Tezera Tazebew, 2010). Even though Ethiopia lost its ports due to historical events, there are various ways Ethiopia can get back access to the sea.

As an illustration, per (Kahsay, Abebe,2007). Eritrea may have committed more infractions during the Ethiopian-Eritrean War than Ethiopia, yet Ethiopia cannot be made up for these actions. Additionally, in line with (Paula Casal & Nicole Selamé ,2015)Eritrea could allow Ethiopia to use *Assab* again, which is just 60 km away from Ethiopia. And since Eritrea has 2234 km of coast and more harbors than it needs, it could exchange the short stretch of coast that goes from *Assab* to the Djibouti border for a larger territory elsewhere. Mutual resentment, however, is again standing in the way of a mutually beneficial solution.

The above literatures show that Ethiopia Access to the sea face massive challenges to do so. Even though there are challenges due its strategic importance for economy and military accessing to the sea ports has potential opportunities discussed below.

* 1. **Methods and Methodologies**

Following a thorough research study, the following methodologies were employed to address the opportunities and challenges Ethiopia faces in its pursuit of access to the Red Sea.Undertaking a thorough literature review about the historical, geopolitical, economic, and security dimensions of Ethiopia's endeavor to gain entry into the Red Sea might yield significant perspectives and contextual details. In addition, conducting interviews with key stakeholders such as experts and government officials provide first-hand perspectives on the challenges and opportunities facing Ethiopia in its pursuit of access to the Red Sea. By using a combination of these methods and methodologies, researchers gain a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing Ethiopia in its pursuit of access to the Red Sea and develop informed recommendations for policymakers and stakeholders.

* 1. **Result and Discussion**

Ethiopia Access to sea was historical quest and remains the big question for different researchers and scholars. In different regime in Ethiopian History kings protecting the interest of Ethiopia access to the sea port was the political agenda. After Historical lost, there was a different attempt to regain the access to the sea specially the red sea. Frequently the signature of Ethio-Smaliland agreement to access to Port of *Berbera* has been ineffective. With only 60 kilometers separating the two countries, Eritrea could permit Ethiopia to use *Assab* once more. Additionally, with 2234 km of coast and more harbors than it needs, Eritrea could trade the small portion of coast that runs from *Assab* to the border with Djibouti for a larger territory elsewhere. Nevertheless, mutual animosity is once again impeding a mutually beneficial solution, so Ethiopia will be made whole by having access to *Asseb* port, which is under Eritrean control.

* + 1. **The Challenges of Access to the Sea**

One of the most important and strategically important places in the world that superpowers are calculating is the Red Sea. This region became a hunting ground for several countries involved in the rebirth. Getting to the Red Sea is not an easy or quick procedure, thus there will be several obstacles along the way. The following are Ethiopia's main obstacles to entering the Red Sea-a historically significant but now lost location based on the data that is currently available.

* + - 1. **Geopolitical Tensions**

The Red Sea's geopolitical location is very significant. Because it forms a natural border between the Arabian Peninsula's western and eastern coasts, Bab el-Mandeb in the south and the Suez Canal in the north serve as important oil transportation routes (Al-Anazi, T, 2001). Ethiopia's neighbors, including Sudan, Djibouti, and Eritrea, frequently dispute Ethiopia's access to the Red Sea, causing geopolitical tensions and possible hostilities. Furthermore, the calculation of the UAE's move coincides with Turkey's efforts to set up a base in Somalia. Egypt requested a base at *Berbera* for the Egyptian Navy to use in what appears to be a proxy war, keeping a close eye on Ethiopia's actions on the Nile. In the signature of memorandum of understanding Egypt reacted as Ethiopia breaking the sovereignty of Somalia by considering Somaliland is the sovereign Territory of Somalia. A Somaliland diplomat has also claimed that Egypt wants to surround landlocked Ethiopia and make easy the infiltration of anti-government fighters through the Somaliland borderlands (Tezera Tazebew,2023).



Map:1. Geopolitical Location of the Red Sea

The other new tension is that Gulf States are asserting themselves in the Horn of Africa as never before. This unprecedented surge in political, economic, and strategic engagement across the Red Sea is challenging old assumptions and erasing old boundaries. As the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Turkey seek to expand their spheres of influence including through commercial ports and military outposts on Africa’s Red Sea coast fierce Middle Eastern rivalries are playing out on a larger chessboard. Also the Interest from great powers has further complicated the changing geopolitical landscape as China’s arrival in Djibouti brings the number of foreign militaries in the tiny port nation to five. China, France, Italy, Japan, and the United States are all now stationed at.

India and Saudi Arabia have also expressed interest in setting up bases in Djibouti, and Russia has hinted at a strategic presence in the Horn of Africa. Russia has also been offered the opportunity to build a military base in both Sudan and Somaliland. These developments bring the world's rival powers together in one region: the Horn of Africa. For the weak African states along the western shores of the Red Sea, new engagement from outside powers presents both opportunities and challenges (Zach Vertin, 2019). Since the two governments' founding, the Nile waters have been a significant and ongoing cause of friction between Egypt and Ethiopia. But these problems have gotten much worse once Ethiopia decided to build the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, which will drastically alter administration and use of the river. Ethiopia's ambition to gain access to the sea will undoubtedly have a significant impact on relations between these two powerful nations in the region. This ambition affects not only the interests of countries in northeastern Africa but also the larger Arab world, whose power projection over the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea has only grown in recent years (Mohammed Farah, 2023). Ethiopia will therefore have a difficult time getting access.

* + - 1. **Infrastructure Constraints**

Ethiopia can't efficiently reach the Red Sea or conduct international trade since it doesn't have enough ports, roads, or railroads. The absence of well-developed infrastructure in Ethiopia is one of the primary obstacles to its access to the Red Sea( Takele, T. B., & Tolcha, T. D. ,2021). For access to the sea, the nation today depends significantly on its neighbors, including Djibouti and Eritrea. However, the insufficient and undeveloped roads and railroads that now connect Ethiopia to these ports impede the effective movement of goods and services. A further difficulty is Ethiopia's own lack of a well-established port infrastructure. Businesses find it challenging to import and export goods effectively due to the countries restricted access to ports and harbors along the coast of the Red Sea. Ethiopia’s economy is expanding at a faster rate than Ethiopia's infrastructure, according to a report by the African Development Bank. This has caused inefficiencies and bottlenecks in the transportation and logistics industry. Ethiopia is a landlocked nation, thus expanding its infrastructure to reach the Red Sea is essential to boosting trade and the country's overall economic growth.

Ethiopia has been investing in a number of infrastructure projects, including building new highways, railroads, and ports in addition to enhancing the quality of its current infrastructure in cooperation with its neighbors, in order to address these issues. To be completely realized, these initiatives will need a significant amount of capital and time, and they may encounter logistical and political challenges

Overall, Ethiopia's inadequate infrastructure makes it difficult for the country to reach the Red Sea; nevertheless, efforts are being undertaken to overcome these obstacles and improve connectivity with the global market. The African Development Bank's "Ethiopia Country Profile"

* + - 1. **Security Concerns**

One important hub for the trafficking of firearms is the Red Sea region. For the region, this poses a cyclical issue (USA Peace and Security Report,2020). Different respondents (2024) claim that Ethiopia's quest for access to the Red Sea is threatened by the unstable security conditions in the area, which include terrorism and piracy. Piracy has grown in these marine areas off the coast of Somalia and in the regions south of the Horn of Africa, assaulting ships even far from the shore ( Al-Anazi, T. (2001). Ethiopia's access to the Red Sea is seriously hampered by security worries about terrorism in the nation. Ethiopia may be subject to a range of terrorist threats and assaults, including those carried out by organizations like the *Ogaden* National Liberation Front (ONLF) and *al-Shabaab*. The roads, railroads, and ports that are essential to Ethiopia's access to the Red Sea have been attacked by these groups. Transportation routes can be disrupted and the security of products and services being moved to and from the Red Sea ports is put at risk by terrorist actions occurring in the area. Ethiopia's efforts to expand its access to the Red Sea may be further hampered by this insecurity, which may further discourage foreign investment in the country's infrastructure development initiatives.

Ethiopia's access to the Red Sea is more vulnerable to security risks due to terrorist groups' presence in neighboring countries like Djibouti, Eritrea, and Somalia than it is to direct attacks. Terrorist groups are able to operate in these nations due to their porous borders and lax government, endangering regional stability. Furthermore, the fact that those terrorist organizations may receive funding from hostile nations facilitates the actor's ability to conceal Ethiopia's access to the sea. The government of Somalia itself is anticipated to present the other significant obstacle. Because Somalia saw Somaliland as its sovereign territory, the agreement between the governments of Somaliland and Ethiopia was intended to weaken diplomatic ties between the two countries. Ethiopia's desire to enter the Red Sea would not be easy, as seen by the various protests that occurred in Somalia following the agreement. Furthermore, violence in the disputed on borders has worsened relations between Somaliland and Somalia, and Eritrea and Djibouti are currently locked in a territorial conflict that began in 2008. Furthermore, competition over the Red Sea has rekindled Ethiopia's desire to control the Somali-dominated coastline, further dividing relations with various Somali populations who have endured forty years of territorial dispute (Mohammed Farah, 2023).

Ethiopia has been collaborating extensively with international partners and neighboring nations to strengthen border security, share intelligence more effectively, and combat terrorist activity in the area in order to address these security challenges. These initiatives seek to guarantee safe access to the Red Sea and to establish a secure atmosphere for the development of infrastructure.

All things considered, Ethiopia's security issues with regard to terrorism pose a difficult barrier to its entry into the Red Sea. For Ethiopia to maintain its strategic position in the area and reduce these threats, collaboration and investment in security measures must continue.

* + - 1. **Legal Disputes**

Ethiopia's attempts to enter the Red Sea are made more difficult by legal conflicts it has with its neighbors over maritime limits and access rights. There aren't any specific legal disputes pertaining to Ethiopia's Red Sea access as of my most recent report. However, it is well known that Ethiopia has historically faced difficulties entering the Red Sea as a result of its landlocked location and disagreements with its neighbors over marine boundaries and port access.

Djibouti, the only country to benefit from Ethiopia's landlocked status, would fight any negotiations that would provide Ethiopia access to the sea and would try to use its influence over Somaliland to block them. Djibouti and Somaliland, especially the current government in power, have a long history together. Ethiopia’s access to the port of Djibouti, which has been essential to the nation's imports and exports, is one noteworthy ongoing concern. To maintain access to this vital port, Ethiopia has had to negotiate diplomatic ties and agreements with Djibouti.

* + 1. **The Opportunities to Access to the** Sea

**1.7.2.1. Economic growth**

Ethiopia's commerce and economic growth would be bolstered by having access to worldwide markets through the Red Sea. Improved trade facilitation and connectivity are two major economic growth prospects that Ethiopia stands to reap from its entry into the Red Sea. Having access to a seaport would greatly reduce the cost of transportation for Ethiopian goods and increase the efficiency with which the nation could import and export items. Increased trade volumes, foreign investment, and economic expansion can result from this.

Access to ports in Djibouti and other Red Sea nations can give Ethiopia strategic benefits in terms of strengthening its position as a regional economic hub, according to a World Bank Group paper titled *"Leveraging Ethiopia's Eurasian Location to Build a Regional Hub."* Furthermore, in order to address transportation and trade issues, spur economic growth, and advance regional integration, landlocked nations like Ethiopia must have improved sea access, according to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA).

* + - 1. **Regional Cooperation**

Ethiopia has the chance to address disputes and enhance access to the Red Sea through regional collaboration and diplomacy. The African Development Bank (AfDB) emphasizes that for landlocked African nations to improve connectivity, encourage commerce, and spur economic growth, regional integration and collaboration are critical. To increase competitiveness and promote economic development, the AfDB highlights the necessity of infrastructural development, trade facilitation policies, and tighter cooperation with surrounding nations. In order to overcome infrastructural obstacles, improve trade relations, and fortify economic ties with coastal states, landlocked countries must work together regionally, according to the United States Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). In order to fully realize the advantages of geographic connectedness and advance sustainable development, UNECA places a strong emphasis on the significance of building partnerships and collaboration.

The World Bank is aware of the potential advantages of regional integration and collaboration in helping landlocked nations take advantage of maritime routes for investment, trade, and economic growth. In order to increase connectivity and foster regional economic cooperation, the World Bank places a strong emphasis on the roles that infrastructure investments, cross-border collaboration, and policy coordination play. According to some respondents (2024), Ethiopia has several chances for regional collaboration with the Red Sea, which can be advantageous to the nation in many ways. Among the principal opportunities are: Ethiopia can forge closer trade and economic ties with neighboring countries thanks to its access to the Red Sea, which makes it easier to reach regional markets and makes it easier for goods and services to move between them, all of which foster economic cooperation and integration; in order to improve communication between Ethiopia and its neighbors, access to the Red Sea may also lead to a rise in investment in infrastructure projects including ports, railroads, and roadways. This has the potential to improve regional trade and collaboration; Ethiopia may work with neighboring nations on energy-related projects, including renewable energy and hydropower programs. This might encourage technical exchange, advance energy security, and support regional sustainable development. Having access to the Red Sea can lead to chances for collaboration and security in fields including border control, counterterrorism, and maritime security. Forging closer security alliances with surrounding nations can aid in tackling shared issues and advancing regional stability. Greater connectivity made possible by Red Sea access can increase travel and cultural exchange opportunities between Ethiopia and neighboring nations. This can encourage interpersonal relationships and understanding as well as help the tourism sector expands.

All things considered, Ethiopia has the opportunity to strengthen regional collaboration, promote mutual advantages, and support peace and stability in the region with its access to the Red Sea. Following a protracted period of mutual mistrust and instability, Ethiopia has recently created favorable possibilities that show promise for regional collaboration. Though it is too soon to tell whether such politics are permanently on the decline, it is crucial to recognize the significance of the politics of "the enemy of my enemy is my friend" unraveling (2020).

* + - 1. **Infrastructure Development**

Ethiopia's access to the Red Sea may be enhanced by investments in infrastructure projects, such as the expansion of ports and transportation systems. Improved Trade connectedness is one benefit of this infrastructure, as having access to the Red Sea can greatly increase Ethiopia's trade connectedness with international markets. Building ports, highways, and railroads can make it easier to transfer goods into and out of Ethiopia, lowering transportation costs and increasing trade volumes. By drawing in foreign capital, encouraging industrialization, and generating jobs in industries like trade, logistics, and transportation, the improved infrastructure connected to the Red Sea can help Ethiopia expand economically. Similarly the data from respondents insight that infrastructure supports regional integration, which improves regional integration and fortifies Ethiopia's relations with its neighbors. Ethiopia can broaden its economic cooperation and engagement with other nations in the region by creating cross-border infrastructure projects and taking part in trade agreements.

* + - 1. **Strategic Partnerships**

Establishing strategic alliances with other nations and international bodies may be able to assist Ethiopia in overcoming the obstacles in its quest for Red Sea access. The following are possible strategic alliances that Ethiopia might benefit from having access to the Red Sea: One Marine Transport Partnerships allows Ethiopia to form strategic alliances with shipping lines, port operators, and maritime transport enterprises. Working together with these organizations could improve Ethiopia's capacity for import and export, optimize logistics, and advance effective trade connections. Additionally, it can be beneficial to the creation of regional economic alliances with nations bordering the Red Sea, like Sudan, Djibouti, and Eritrea. Building stronger ties with these nearby nations might promote trade cooperation, infrastructure development, and regional economic integration.

The other opportunity from this angle is Security and Defense partnerships: Ethiopia may be inspired to establish strategic partnerships with neighboring Red Sea countries in these areas. Ethiopia's interests in the vital waterway might be safeguarded and regional stability could be improved by working together on defense cooperation, counter piracy efforts, and maritime security.

All things considered, even though Ethiopia confronts many difficulties in its quest for Red Sea access, there are also chances for economic expansion, regional collaboration, the development of infrastructure, and strategic alliances that may aid in overcoming these difficulties. Through tackling these obstacles and capitalizing on these chances, Ethiopia can improve its entry to the Red Sea and propel advancement and growth throughout the area.

* 1. **Conclusion and Recommendations** 
     1. **Conclusion**

Being landlocked is a difficult political situation that nations have when trying to find seaports or other outlets for importing and exporting products and services. Certain nations experience a loss of historical political clout, while others experience partial losses due to state political creation. Ethiopia, one of the nations that historically had political sway over the sea, became landlocked following the loss of *Asseb* and *Massaw* during the start of the Ethiopian-Ertrian War. Following the loss of this strategically important position, Ethiopia moved to the port of Djibouti, which currently handles 95% of Ethiopia's export and import of products and services. Even though Ethiopia has wanted its own sea port since the end of the last administration, this interest has not yet been preserved. The present Ethiopian administration has stated that it is in favor of alternate sea port access, particularly to the *Berbera* Sea Port. Ethiopia faces possibilities as well as problems in its drive for sea access. Ethiopia is heavily dependent on its neighbors as a result of its inability to conduct international trade effectively due to its lack of direct access to a sea port. Ethiopia must overcome political, military, and economic obstacles in order to get access to the sea. These obstacles include Somalia's resistance and the presence of other regional and international forces in the area. The quest for sea access offers Ethiopia options despite these obstacles amplify its impact in the region and economic prosperity. Ethiopia might be able to lessen its need on its neighbors for trade routes and create new avenues for economic growth by gaining access to a sea port. Ethiopia's pursuit of sea access may be further aided by the engagement of other nations in the area, which may present chances for strategic alliances and collaborations. Ethiopia's search for sea access is a complicated matter with potential advantages and disadvantages. Ethiopia's potential for economic growth and its reputation in the area might be greatly impacted by effectively navigating through these obstacles and grasping possibilities.

* + 1. **Recommendations**

Drawing on the potential and obstacles presented in the quest for Red Sea access, the following suggestions can be offered to assist Ethiopia in navigating this intricate matter.

* It is recommended that Ethiopia give top priority to diplomatic relations with neighboring countries, including Eritrea, Djibouti, and Sudan, in order to settle disputes regarding peaceful means of accessing the Red Sea. A favorable atmosphere for talks and agreements can be produced by establishing collaboration and confidence.
* To enhance Ethiopia's physical link to the Red Sea, infrastructure development, including ports, highways, and trains, is needed. Funding and expertise for infrastructure projects can be secured through cooperation with foreign organizations and partners.
* To jointly address shared problems and opportunities in reaching the Red Sea, Ethiopia should work to expand regional cooperation and partnerships with other East African nations. Trade agreements and cooperative infrastructure projects are two examples of initiatives that might strengthen economic growth and regional integration.
* Coordinated actions with regional and international partners are necessary to address security challenges including piracy and terrorism, improve marine security, and guarantee safe transit through the Red Sea. For the purpose of defending its interests in the area, Ethiopia ought to think about taking part in multilateral security initiatives.
* Establishing precise maritime borders and settling legal issues via global forums, like the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), can offer Ethiopia a clear framework for Red Sea access while also averting future hostilities.
* It is imperative to enhance the ability of governmental establishments, commercial industry partners, and civil society associations to participate in the endeavor of gaining entry to the Red Sea. Initiatives for information sharing, workshops, and training can enable participants to speak up for Ethiopia's interests in the area.

**References**

Al-Anazi, T. (2001). *Strategic Importance of the Red Sea* (p. 0031). Carlisle, PA: US Army War College.

Bayeh, E. (2015). The rights of Land-locked States in the International law: The Role of bilateral/multilateral agreements. *Social Sciences*, *4*(2), 27-30.

Gashaw A. and Zelalem M. (2016). The Advent of Competing Foreign Powers in the Geostrategic Horn of Africa: Analysis of Opportunity and Security Risk for Ethiopia *International Relations and Diplomacy*, December 2016, Vol. 4, No. 12, 787-800

Hirad, A., & Hussein, A. A. (2023, ). The Horn of Africa at a Crossroads: Ethiopia’s Quest for Sea Access, Somalia’s Resistance, and Involvement of Other Powers. Journal of African Security Studies.

International Air Transport Association. (2019). The impact of landlocked countries on global trade.

Kahsay, A. T. (2007). Ethiopia's sovereign Right of Access to the sea Under International Law.

Kahsay, Abebe T., "Ethiopia's Sovereign Right of Access to the Sea under International Law" (2007). LLM

Mahamed Faraha (2023 ).Ethiopia Quest For Access to Red see and Gulf Aden. Historic Precedent and Contemporary Implication. Academy of Peace and Development.

Mekonnen, D. R., & Tesfagiorgis, P. (2011). 3 The causes and con-sequences of the Eritrean-Ethiopian border conflict. *Regional Security in the post-Cold War Horn of Africa*, 65.

Mosley, J. (2020). Ethiopia’s transition: Implications for the horn of Africa and Red Sea region.

Narbone, L., & Widdershoven, C. (2021). *The Red Sea link: geo-economic projections, shifting alliances, and the threats to maritime trade flows*. European University Institute.

Paula Casal & Nicole Selamé (2015) Sea for the landlocked: a sustainable development goal?, Journal of Global Ethics, 11:3, 270-279, DOI: 10.1080/17449626.2015.1099560

Styan, D. (2013). Djibouti: changing influence in the Horn's strategic hub.

Sun, D. and Zoubir, Y. (2016). The Eagle‟s Nest in the Horn of Africa: US Military Strategic Deployment in Djibouti. *Africa Spectrum* 1/2016: 111–124

Takele, T. B., & Tolcha, T. D. (2021). Optimal transit corridors for Ethiopia.

Tazebew, T. (2023). Ethiopia’s Quest for Utilizing the Port of Berbera, Somaliland, since 2010: Drivers, Processes, and Challenges. *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, *56*(1), 1-28.

United State Institutes of Peace (2020). Final Report and Recommendation. Peace and Security in the Red Sea Arena.

Vertin, Z. (2019). Red Sea rivalries: The Gulf, the Horn, and the new geopolitics of the Red Sea.

Vertin, Z. (2019). *Toward a Red Sea forum: The Gulf, the Horn of Africa, & architecture for a new regional order*. Brookings Institution.

World Bank. (2017). Landlocked countries: A study of the challenges and opportunities. Yohannes, E. (2018). The Expansion of Military Bases in the Horn of Africa: Analysis of its Challenges and Opportunities to Ethiopia’s Policy in the Region. [Unpublished master’s thesis]. Addis Ababa University.

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. (2020). World investment report 2020.

World Trade Organization. (2017). Trade facilitation agreement.

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. (2018). landlocked countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia: A study of the challenges and opportunities.