College attack in 2015 and the attack on a corporate campus in Nairobi in January 2019. Although al-Shabaab has had several military setbacks since 2012. Al Shabaab has had close ties to Al Qaeda and other external extremism groups and has sought to frame the Somali struggle as part of a global jihadist movement. The group has engaged in bombings, suicide attacks, and armed assaults, especially against Somali government targets, private civilians, Christians, diplomats, foreign troops, and nongovernmental organization or aid workers .

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National security of Somalia and it's challenges

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Abstract

Ongoing armed conflict, insecurity, lack of state protection, and recurring humanitarian crises exposed Somali civilians to serious abuse. There are an estimated 2.6 million internally displaced people (IDPs), many living unassisted and vulnerable to abuse.

Somalia's history of conflict reveals an intriguing paradox--namely, many of the factors that drive armed conflict have also played a role in managing, ending, or preventing war.

Key words: Clan conflicts, Armed groups, Scarce resources, regional conflicts , External influences and Rising extremism.

Introduction

Ongoing armed conflict, insecurity, lack of state protection, and recurring humanitarian crises exposed Somali civilians to serious abuse. There are an estimated 2.6 million internally displaced people (IDPs), many living unassisted and vulnerable to abuse.

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) recorded a total of 1,154 civilian casualties by mid-November. Sixty-seven percent of this figure is due to indiscriminate and targeted attacks, the majority improvised explosive devices (IEDs) attacks, by the Islamist armed group Al-Shabab. Inter-clan and intra-security force violence, often over control of land and revenge killings, led to civilian deaths, injuries, and displacement, as did sporadic military operations, including airstrikes, against Al-Shabab by Somali government forces, African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) troops, and other foreign forces.

Federal and regional authorities, particularly in Somaliland, continued to restrict free expression and media freedoms, including by harassing and arbitrarily detaining journalists and perceived critics, and temporarily shutting down media outlets.

Relations between the federal government and the federal member states deteriorated, diverting attention from needed reforms and on occasion resulting in abuses.[1]

The security situation remained volatile during the reporting period [from 5 May to 4 August 2019]. Al-Shabaab continued to perpetrate violence, including carrying out attacks targeting government facilities and personnel, security forces, international partners and public places such as hotels and restaurants. A total of 228 incidents occurred during Ramadan, from 5 May to 3 June; higher than in Ramadan in 2017 and 2018. Some 35 per cent of violent incidents occurred in the Banaadir region, with southern Somalia accounting for 34 per cent, indicating that Al-Shabaab's operational focus did not change during the reporting period. Overall, security incidents declined significantly in June and July. There was, however, an increase in incidents involving improvised explosive devices in July, when there were several high-profile terrorist attacks.[2]

U.S-backed security forces continued offensives against Al-Shabaab: notably, unclaimed airstrikes 11 July reportedly killed dozens of Al-Shabaab militants in Jilib, Middle Juba. In north, unidentified gunmen opened fire on vehicle in Galkayo, Puntland 11 July killing at least five civilians. U.S. airstrike 27 July killed one member of Islamic State (ISIS)-Somalia.[3]

Also in Sanaag, Somaliland forces clashed with those loyal to Colonel Arre, who defected from Somaliland to Puntland in 2018, near Dhoob 10 July leaving three Somaliland soldiers and one of Arre's soldiers dead. After Arre's forces 26 July took Karin village, clashes broke out there next day between them and Somaliland troops, reportedly leaving two Somaliland soldiers dead.[4]

In south, security forces killed five Al-Shabaab fighters in Gedo region 3-9 June; Al-Shabaab ambush of Kenyan soldiers in African Union mission (AMISOM) in Burgavo, Lower Juba 24 June left nine militants dead; clashes between security forces and Al-Shabaab near Bur Eyle, Bay region 22 June left eleven soldiers and five militants dead; Al-Shabaab attack on military base in Bulo Marer, Lower Shabelle 27 June left three militants and two soldiers dead; clashes between security forces and Al-Shabaab 27 June left at least eight militants dead in Jamame, Lower Juba; three Al-Shabaab militants surrendered to security forces in Bay and Gedo regions 2-11 June. In north, Al-Shabaab fighters 8 June captured military base in Af-Urur in Puntland only for Puntland forces to retake it 11 June without a fight; [...] Puntland and Somaliland forces 14 June reportedly clashed in Badhan town in

Sanaag region, which both administrations claim, no casualties. U.S. claimed its airstrikes killed six Islamic State (ISIS) militants and four Al-Shabaab fighters 4-25 June.[5]

The security situation remained volatile during the reporting period [from 14 December 2018 to 4 May 2019]. Al-Shabaab continued to be the main perpetrator of attacks against government facilities, government officials and security forces, as well as popular restaurants and hotels. March and April witnessed a significant increase of attacks in Mogadishu, where incidents involving improvised explosive devices occurred almost every day. Incidents involving suicide vehicle-borne, under-vehicle and remote-controlled improvised explosive devices, as well as mortar attacks and targeted assassinations, continued. In March alone, there were 77 attacks using improvised explosive devices across the country. That was the highest number in any single month since 2016. The majority of incidents were reported in Mogadishu and in the Shabelle Hoose, Juba Hoose and Gedo regions. In Mogadishu, there were 28 incidents involving improvised explosive devices, including two attacks by suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices, two attacks by other vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices and one complex attack.[6]

Conflict between clans:

Somalia's history of conflict reveals an intriguing paradox--namely, many of the factors that drive armed conflict have also played a role in managing, ending, or preventing war. For instance, clannism and clan cleavages are a source of conflict--used to divide Somalis, fuel endemic clashes over resources and power, used to mobilize militia, and make broad-based reconciliation very difficult to achieve. Most of Somalia's armed clashes since 1991 have been fought in the name of clan, often as a result of political leaders manipulating clannism for their own purposes. Yet traditional clan elders are a primary source of conflict mediation, clan-based customary law serves as the basis for negotiated settlements, and clan-based blood-payment groups serve as a deterrent to armed violence. Likewise, the central state is conventionally viewed as a potential source of rule of law and peaceful allocation of resources, but, at times in Somalia's past, it was a source of violence and predation. Economic interests, too, have had an ambiguous relationship with conflict in Somalia. In some places, war economies have emerged that perpetuate violence and lawlessness, while in other instances business interests have been a driving force for peace, stability, and rule of law. Understanding under what circumstances these and other variables serve as escalators or de-escalators of violence--or both--is the subtle challenge conflict analysis faces in the Somali context. To prepare the ground for providing effective and sensitive reconstruction and development assistance to Somalia that contributes to conflict de-escalation, this analysis examines the key conflict factors at play in the three main regions of the country and recommends avoiding fueling clan-group competition, encouraging and supporting cross-clan or clan-neutral activities and partners, helping to bridge groups, and understanding the role of religion. A number of pertinent recommendations are also made towards fostering sensitive economic development and nonpartisan governance.[7]

Autonomous armed groups:

Autonomous armed groups in Somalia, including Al-Shabaab, clan militias, private security forces (both domestic and foreign), armed criminal groups and government security forces, have proliferated in the context of deteriorating security environments and weak government defence forces. These groups struggle to control territories and interests, and frequently clash with one another.[8]

Competition over scarce resources:

Growing pressure on water and land resources, due in part to agricultural expansion, privatization of water and other natural resources, as well as urban growth, are a key source of communal tension and clashes. Competition to control ports (including in Gaalkacyo), airstrips, checkpoints and access points are key conflict drivers. Commercial interests can exacerbate divisions in an effort to gain advantage.[9]

Governance:

Struggle for control of the state, which brings political and economic power, has been a continuing source of conflict. Absence of good governance, and experience with a repressive state, have made Somalis suspicious of government. Many Somalis see the state as “an instrument of accumulation and domination, enriching and empowering those who control it and exploiting and harassing the rest of the population.”

This view grows from their experience with Barre’s government, which made them inherently distrustful of a strong central state. The military regime of Siyad Barre was primarily dominated by a small elite of the Marehaan subclan of the Darood, who used their subclan identity to control the state and exploit valuable resources.³⁰ Barre’s authoritarian government also systematically manipulated clan identities and politicized clan cleavages by favoring clans that would enable it to maintain authority. These policies have had farreaching effects and have produced sharp fissures and deep suspicion among the clans and subclans that define Somalia today. Barre’s government also followed a meticulous policy of oppression of the Issaq in the northwest section of the country, which sowed the seeds of Issaq secessionism and led to the unilateral declaration of independence by Somaliland after the state collapsed.[10]

Conflicts among Regions in Somalia:

Clans continue to vie for dominance over a region because they see political control of a region as converting into gains for their clan. Regional competition often overlaps with clan competition, producing internal regional conflicts. In South-central Somalia, there are armed conflicts among clan-based militias competing for economic control and political hegemony. This is particularly evident in the Lower Juba region which is the stage for serious hostilities between opposing clan groups attempting to acquire dominance. Given the fluid demarcation between the regions, there are also simmering tensions tempered by a fragile peace in the Mudug region lying on the borders of South-central Somalia and Puntland. Perhaps no conflict threatens the future of Somalia as much as the contest between Puntland and Somaliland over Sool and Eastern Sanaag, claimed by both administrations as integral to their territory.[11]

External influences and Rising extremism:

The involvement of international actors in the Somali context both alleviates and triggers tensions in the country. Ethiopia and Kenya have armed forces supporting AMISOM peacekeepers to help push Al-Shabaab back from its southern Somalia strongholds. They are also involved in cross-border clan-based disputes, and other activities for their own economic and political agendas. International actors from outside the region, including the United States, France, Arab countries and Turkey also are engaged in various operations in Somalia to combat terrorism and piracy. Many other state and non-state actors provide financial and other support to local actors or proxies, which can reinforce divisions and instigate conflict.[12]

The crisis of state failure has increased radical Islamic ideologies and extremism. Conflicts persist over interpretations of Islam, especially as they relate to justice and social and economic opportunities. The rise of fundamentalist or extremist views, embodied in the ideology of Al-Shabaab, is also rooted in grievances that are global in nature. While Al-Shabaab has weakened in popular support, it remains a potent force for radical political and social beliefs, and the underlying sentiments that gave rise to the movement continue to exist.[13]

Social violence and crime:

Social violence and crime are prevalent in all three zones, linked to a culture of impunity as a result of poor accountability structures, weak rule of law, high accessibility to small weapons, black market trade routes and normalized narcotics use. Relying on violent means to settle disputes or gain commercial advantage is commonplace. Kidnapping, assassination and hijacking occur in some areas, as does the use of political terrorism by Al-Shabaab.[14]

Conclusion

Recurrent civil conflict has blocked progress toward improving national security in Somalia. Violent power struggles between political factions followed the breakdown of the government in 1991. according to national security level its extremely dangerous, with violent crime and terror attack at level dangerous in some part of the country.

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