Key actors mapping: Somalia

Rapid literature review
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About this report

This rapid review provides a synthesis of some of the most recent, high quality literature on the topic of power and influence in Somalia. It aims to orient policymakers to the key debates and emerging issues. This report was researched and written in September 2013, before the attack on the Westgate shopping mall in Nairobi that Al-Shabaab said it carried out.

Expert contributors

Suggested citation

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1. Overview

In Somalia, **power is heavily concentrated in individuals** rather than formal institutions (Expert comments). Though Somalia now features a nascent central government as well as regional polities and one secessionist government, **government institutions are not the sole or even primary locus of power.** Most power continues to reside in actors who may operate outside the government, or who may hold a position in the government but act autonomously from it.

After a period from 2006 to 2011 when Islamist movements and other interests partially eroded clan as the main organising principle in Somalia, **clanism has made a vigorous return** and today is the most powerful driver of political calculations and group behaviour (Expert comments). Though clans and sub-clans often have clear interests in certain political outcomes, they do not act as an organic unit. Rather, clans' positions and actions are the result of individual leaders and opinion shapers, and it is for that reason that **individual elites in Somalia should be the principal focus of an actor analysis** (Expert comments). As such, it is not necessarily the person's official position which lends power, but their connections, their ability to mobilise their lineage, and to forge alliances in pursuit of common goals (Expert comments).

Important actors in Somalia are those who possess some form of power or influence to shape political outcomes, mobilise communities, or to block developments they deem undesirable. More than in most settings, Somali actors have limited ability to drive positive outcomes, but ample capacity to exercise 'veto power'. Put another way, **Somalia is rich in potential spoilers**, due to high levels of clan distrust, the ease with which clan alliances can unravel, ready availability of small arms, and extremely weak capacity of governments to make defections costly (Expert comments). This **power to shape or block political initiatives can be derived from multiple sources**, including one's position of respect in a clan, financial resources from private business wealth, shaping public opinion via the media or other outlet, a position of power in government, control over an armed militia, a strong social network, and perceived access to powerful international actors and their resources (Expert comments).

The situation in Somalia has been undergoing rapid change, making it nearly impossible to profile all the power-brokers. By this study's reckoning, **at least twenty actors hold strategic influence** in the country (Expert comments). People on the ground are able to identify current power-brokers more effectively than a literature review (Expert comments).

Most commentators agree that the country needs stronger institutions, but nearly all reports show a **strong desire from Somalis not to be ruled by outsiders**, which they define not only as Western, Ethiopian and AMISOM influence, but also perceived dominance of the diaspora members in governments. Given the prevailing atmosphere of mistrust, citizens are also wary of any government perceived to be dominated by clans other than their own, and are quick to threaten to defect from any such government. State-building which appears to be driven by external aid and agendas or which appears to enshrine the interests of one clan at the expense of others risks mobilising Somali spoilers. Armed rejectionists such as Al-Shabaab exploit this by attracting clans aggrieved at their marginal status.

Several militias, religious groups and clan structures are **as important to engage with as those with formal political power**. Within the fragmented context of Somalia, a region by region approach may be the most appropriate (Expert comments), and in some cases village by village, as different regions feature very distinct and autonomous local actors.

This report reviews some of the current main actors in the region and provides descriptions of their activities and power bases. There is considerable overlap between many groups in Somali society (and thus between sections of this report) as, for example, individuals switch allegiance. The report tries to focus on actors powerful in 2013 and so does not include some of the previously powerful figures from the last decade.

The report starts with a brief overview of the clans and ethnic groups in Somalia to provide some context. It then covers the main internal actors in Somalia, including the various political figures and parties, militias, and civil society actors. The next section looks at piracy in some depth, examining its dynamics and effects on Somalia. Next, a brief review of diaspora contributions is presented, and the final section reviews the international actors involved in Somalia.

1.1 Limited nature of available data

There is a **limited amount of first-hand, empirical research** which has been carried out on Somalia since the collapse of the Siad Barre regime in 1991. This is primarily a consequence of the poor security situation in the country since this time (Bradbury, 2010; Hagmann, 2005: 527). Much existing research on Somalia has therefore been undertaken by UN and Western-commissioned consultants who have substantial security provision and have **rarely been permitted to publish their findings** (Marchal, 2007: 1092). Though several Western academics have undertaken research in the country in recent years – including Ken Menkhaus, Mark Bradbury and Paul Williams – most others have done so from neighbouring states (notably Kenya), Mogadishu airport or the AMISOM military base in Mogadishu, with little scope for sustained contact with local actors (Grunewald, 2012: S114; Marchal, 2007: 1092).

Somalis in-country have also encountered difficulties in researching questions of political organisation and networks. In recent years the Somali conflict has "prevented, or rather delayed, the emergence of a young generation of Somali scholars" (Hagmann, 2005: 527). A number of Somalis in the diaspora have nevertheless become increasingly prominent commentators, and their analyses, many of which are published in blog posts, are drawn upon in parts of this study. Similarly, the **most up-to-date sources are frequently media reports** rather than critical academic literature; where this report uses media sources these are subjectively judged to be credible.

These factors therefore limit the amount of data which can be analysed in piecing together a sociological study of Somalia and its formal and informal power networks. It is clear that a more lengthy and in-depth study of this kind would require fieldwork in Somalia itself.

2. Clans

Somalia is conventionally viewed as ethnically and culturally homogenous, but the ubiquity of clan divisions has rendered it one of the most **violently divided** societies in Africa. Clans believe themselves to have common ancestral origins (Ssereo, 2003) and are broken into four main patrilineal clan families:[1] **Darood, Dir, and Hawiye**, which are of nomadic pastoralist derivation; and **Rahanweyn** (also known as Digil-Mirifle), which historically were associated with sedentary agro-pastoralism (Minority Rights Group, 2010: 7). These large clan families only on rare occasions act as cohesive political units; instead, the many **divisions of clans and sub-clans within them are the locus of most Somali political manoeuvring** (Expert comments). Clan structure is extremely fluid, situational, and ambiguous, with sub-clans continuously dividing into different groups, and **alliances between clans shifting frequently and quickly** (Harper, 2012: 36). Somalis traditionally marry outside of their clan (exogamous marriage), meaning alliances and affiliations can stretch across a number of clan groups (Bradbury, 2008: 13). **Ambiguity and fluidity is the norm** (Little, 2003: 51).

Both scholars and Somalis argue about the importance of the clan: some claim it is central to any analysis while others claim other socio-economic factors are more important in shaping Somalia (Harper, 2012: 38). Little (2003: 46) suggests that the changing nature of Somali sub-clans is a direct result of the presence of external resource-rich groups such as the UN; new clan identities were expressed in order to gain material benefit from aid agencies which expected Somalis to operate under a clan system. For some scholars, growing territorialism and competition over resources may be more important causes of conflict than clanism; this school of thought **argues against reductionist approaches to clans and kinship**, and in favour of encompassing a broader view of the Somali context (Bradbury, 2008: 14). While it is evident that Somalis organise themselves politically around a wide range of interests and identities, **clanism remains a dominant factor** in Somali politics and in its customary law, and cannot be ignored (Harper, 2012: 39).

Over the past 15 years, Somalis – often with external encouragement – have gravitated toward a voting system of **fixed proportional representation by clan** as a means of reducing quarrels over representation and fears of clan hegemony (Expert comments). This was first formalised at the 2000 Arta conference, introducing the so-called '4.5 formula' for allocating seats – **49 seats to each of the four biggest clans** (Dir, Darood, Hawiye and Rahanweyn), and **half this number of seats to the minority groups** (Hoehne, 2010). The 4.5 representation of clans in peace talks and politics has subsequently been criticised by Somalis for institutionalising clanism rather than overcoming it, but it remains a powerful yardstick by which Somalis judge the representativeness of any conference or government (Menkhaus, 2011).

For more details on specific clan groups, see Appendix 1.

2.1 Minority groups

Minority groups are highly discriminated against in Somalia: they experience exclusion from politics, employment and access to justice; prevention of inter-marriage; and hate speech (Minority Rights Group, 2010: 7). The legal framework and recognition of minority rights is, however, slowly increasing (Minority Rights Group, 2010: 7). Although there are no firm data, **minorities might represent up to one-third of**

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[1] For further details on Somali clans in general, see Hinds, R. (2013). *Somali networks: structures of clan and society.* GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 949. Birmingham, UK: GSDRC, University of Birmingham. http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/HDQ949.pdf

the Somali population (Minority Rights Group, 2010). They hold **31 seats (11 per cent) in parliament**, but have not had a strong voice (Minority Rights Group, 2010). The main minority groups are Bantu, occupational groups and religious minorities (Christian and minority Islam). For more details on specific minority groups, see Appendix 1.

3. Internal actors

3.1 Political actors

Due to twenty years of civil conflict, **Somalis do not necessarily see a strong central state as a positive force**; they may see it as a threat and source of conflict (Menkhaus, 2011). Previous Somali leaders have used the power invested in them to attract external funding for state-building which they have used for their own gain, not investing in institutional strengthening (Menkhaus, 2011). Those included in the peace processes have commonly transferred allegiances according to their **personal or patronage interests** (Hoehne, 2010). Some political leaders may therefore regard the 'failed state' situation as profitable for themselves and their clients, with little incentive to change (Menkhaus, 2011).

Formal political representation is characterised by **changing affiliations and frequently shifting alliances across clan and identity lines** (Hoehne, 2010). Key figures tend to move around and change allegiance according to what benefits them most at the time (Expert comments). There has been a lack of political space for the development of strong democratic opposition parties, meaning political groups are either part of a coalition government or an armed militia group (Menkhaus, 2011). There are **no formal political parties** within the federal government structure.[2] However, the government changeover in August 2012 saw around 50 per cent new people joining the parliament, which bodes well for developing a stronger parliamentary system (Hammond, 2013).

Somalia Federal Government (SFG)

The handover from the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) to the Federal Government in August 2012 is generally seen as a **positive development** and an opportunity for this leadership to create credible national institutions in partnership with the international community (African Development Bank Group, 2013). The leadership underwent a notable change at this time; few members of the TFG were elected to new leadership positions, signifying a break with the past (Hammond, 2013). The government is internationally recognised and its instatement heralded an influx of **returnees, new business, and diplomatic relations** (Bryden, 2013). International recognition gives it **legitimacy and access to resources**, although its actual **authority does not extend far outside Mogadishu** (Expert comments). Hammond (2013) suggests that to expand control to rural areas which are currently under Al-Shabaab, the SFG should negotiate individual alliances with local authorities and militias, which seemed to have worked for the TFG (Menkhaus, 2011).

President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud
Hassan was elected as President at the end of the transitional period in August 2012 (African Development Bank Group, 2013). His election was somewhat a surprise, as he was elected through a run-off vote (Hammond, 2013). It is probable that money changed hands, but his election signifies an

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[2] https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/so.html

important shift, in his defeat of a known corrupt, elitist previous government, which was a surprise to all observers (Menkhaus, 2012).

Hassan previously worked as an educator, founded the Somali Institute for Management and Development, and worked for the Centre for Research and Dialogue, a Mogadishu-based think-tank with ties to Interpeace, an international peace-building organisation (Hammond, 2013). Importantly, **he has mostly lived in Somalia since 1991**, which buys goodwill with Somalis (Expert comments), as many politicians are diaspora members parachuted in to take over (Hammond, 2013). He was not backed by any of the major power-brokers, but his **identity as a local peace-builder/civil society activist is likely to play well with citizens** (Hammond, 2013) and can be seen as a victory for civil society (Menkhaus, 2012). The President quickly outlined his priorities as a Six Pillar Plan:[3] 1) create stability in the country; 2) speed up economic recovery; 3) build peace and remove the main drivers of conflicts; 4) improve government capacity by improving service delivery; 5) increase international partnerships and create closer ties with neighbours; 6) unity at home.

In his first 100 days, President Hassan emphasised a new relationship with the international community – the new approach includes the Somali government leading national governance with direct funding from donors, rather than international involvement and administration (Hammond, 2013). He is **adamant about reclaiming sovereignty** and state credibility (Baugh, 2012). He has travelled throughout the country, holding **consultations over Somalia's future with its people,** a gesture which has been warmly received by Somalis (Hammond, 2013).

Hassan has, however, been criticised for insisting that the federal government has a central role in determining leadership of regional states such as Jubaland, with critics claiming he has not applied the same standards to Puntland or Somaliland (Hammond, 2013). His hands-on approach has been criticised by Somali groups for excluding the Prime Minister and controlling government action too closely (Dunida Online, 2012), and for **keeping power within his inner circle** of advisers (Expert comments). There is some suggestion that he was propelled to power by the secretive **Damul Jadiid**, a moderate faction of the Muslim Brotherhood, and that members of this group are now in key positions in the administration (Bryden, 2013). Some locals view the government as **dominated by this narrow set of clan-based interests**, which erodes its legitimacy (Expert comments).

Hassan has said that **security and Al-Shabaab are top priorities** for his government, including the possibility of negotiating with the group to reclaim some of the more moderate members and to weaken the core of the movement (Hammond, 2013; Menkhaus, 2012). The group may be weakened by eradicating the weak style of central government which created the enabling environment for Al-Shabaab to recruit easily (Menkhaus, 2012). So far, the government's approach to Al-Shabaab has been to increase its own armoury and attempt to **claim the monopoly on the legitimate use of force** (Bryden, 2013).

President Hassan is constitutionally bound to protect Somalia's unity, and he has made it clear that **he cannot support Somaliland independence** (Bryden, 2013).

Prime Minister Abdi Farah Shirdon
Shirdon is also a newcomer to the government, having previously worked as a businessman in Nairobi (Hammond, 2013). He comes from Kismayo, but was not deployed there at the start of the Jubaland

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[3] From a speech delivered by the President to the International Organisation for Migration:
http://www.iom.int/files/live/sites/iom/files/About-IOM/governing-bodies/en/council/101/H-E-Hassan-Sh-Mohamud-President-of-the-Somali-Republic.pdf

crisis, which was a confusing oversight (HIPS, 2013a). He was unanimously approved by the parliament, an unusual event of agreement in itself (Hammond, 2013). Shirdon also conducted a **'listening tour'** of Puntland, Galmudug and the central province, which has been received as a positive step (HIPS, 2013a).

Council of Ministers

The Council (cabinet) is largely composed of **professionals and technocrats** rather than tribal leaders and politicians from the previous administration (Bryden, 2013). It is considerably smaller than previously, with only **ten ministers** (Hammond, 2013). Some are concerned this is too small to be effective, but others suggest it promotes a sense of ownership (Hammond, 2013) and enables greater focus on key priorities (Baugh, 2012). The Council was approved by parliament almost unanimously, indicating a clear commitment to a new direction (Baugh, 2012). However, it does not hold as much power as some individuals (Expert comments).

The government has several key individuals. **Fowzia Yusuf Haji Adam**, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, has sparked interest and concern over her **possible bias in leading negotiations with Somaliland**, as this is where she is from and she has previously been considered a Somaliland nationalist (Hammond, 2013; expert comments). Her current position is not yet known (Hammond, 2013), although she is not a supporter of the current Kulmiye government in Somaliland (Egal, 2013). Other powerful individuals are **Farah Abdulkhadir**, the Minister for the President's Office, who has a civil society background and was previously head of the Africa Muslims Agency, a well-connected NGO funded largely by the Arab world; and **Abdikarim Hussein Guled**, Minister of Interior and Security of Somalia (Expert comments). The new speaker of parliament, **Mohamed Abdirahman Jawaari**, is a highly-qualified legal expert and has brought a sense of purpose to the legislative agenda (Bryden, 2013). However, he does not hold much political power (Expert comments).

Somaliland

President Ahmed Mohamoud (Silanyo), of the Kulmiye party, has not yet made any formal agreements with President Hassan, but they have had cordial dialogues through 2012 and agreed to keep communicating (Hammond, 2013). His attendance at the 2012 London Conference on Somalia was significant, as Somaliland has never before been represented at formal international conferences on Somalia (Healy, 2012), although it caused some furore in Somaliland as an apparent breach of the principle of non-engagement with central government Somali politics (Egal, 2013). This meeting recognised that **Somaliland's participation is crucial for stabilisation in Somalia**, and appears to have opened a new diplomatic avenue (Healy, 2012). Silanyo's conference speech focused on bottom-up approaches to stabilisation, drawing on traditional and Islamic conflict resolution methods (Healy, 2012).

Somaliland's current government bodies are all headed by Isaaq, damaging its previously good record on maintaining clan diversity (Bryden, 2013). **Many government members are diaspora**, which creates some tensions with locals (Expert comments). At least one source believes that Silanyo's regime has seen **a return of clan politics**, and that he has created a **small cadre of close familial associates** around him, to the exclusion of other democratic options (Egal, 2013).

The most powerful actor in the Somaliland government is said to be **Hersi** (Expert comments), as Silanyo is in his late 70s and increasingly weak (Expert comments). There is very little literature on Hersi. Similarly, there is little critical assessment of the role and power of the two main opposition parties, **WADANI** and **UCID**, but they are considered influential (Expert comments), and their existence is

encouraging for democracy. All three parties were healthily represented in the 2012 municipal elections, which saw a large turnout (Egal, 2013).

Puntland

The key political actor in Puntland is the President, **Abdirahman Mohamed Mohamud (Farole)** (Expert comments). Puntland is the site of most Somali piracy, and those around Farole are accused of at least turning a blind eye (Expert comments). Al-Shabaab is also increasingly moving to the mountainous Galgala region of Puntland (Saferworld, 2012). Puntland is regarded as difficult to control; it is **unlikely that any party or group has sufficient legitimacy and authority** to control the whole region, with the most likely route to stabilisation being through **voluntary agreements between local leaders** (Expert comments). Puntland supports a unified federal Somalia, and as such, is in **support of the accession of Jubaland to a federal state**, and has recognised the legitimacy of Madobe (Bryden, 2013).

The area between Puntland and Somaliland is often contested. Farole is currently trying to stretch his power westwards (Expert comments). An armed opposition group, **Khatumo**, currently holds power in this region and is hostile to both governments but particularly Somaliland (Expert comments).

Jubaland

The administration of Jubaland is currently a topic under fierce discussion, with various actors vying for control. The Somali 'technical committee' comprised of Jubaland residents abruptly voted in Sheikh Ahmed Mohamed Islam (**Madobe**) as President of Jubaland in May 2013, in the face of opposition from the SFG (Bryden, 2013). At the same time, Barre Aden Shire (**Hiiraale**) also declared himself Jubaland President for the SFG (Bryden, 2013).

Madobe is an ex-Al-Shabaab commander, leading the Ras Kamboni brigade, a mainly Ogaden militia which is supported by Ethiopia (Bryden, 2013) and Kenya (HIPS, 2103b). Ras Kamboni was responsible for freeing Kismayo from Al-Shabaab control in October 2012 (HIPS, 2103b). Madobe's **objective is to rule Kismayo and the three Juba regions**, and Ras Kamboni is currently hardening its stance in defiance of the Somali government, helped by overt support from Kenya (HIPS, 2103b). Hiiraale was supported by his old militia, the Juba Valley Alliance, which had controlled Kismayo from 1999-2006 (Bryden, 2013).

The general mistrust of central government means **many communities in the region wish to limit the role of Mogadishu** and operate as a federal state with local government (HIPS, 2103b). The central government argues that there is no legal basis to form a new state in Jubaland (HIPS, 2103b), and has been seen to block this process (Bryden, 2013).

In June 2013, both sides met in Addis Ababa to reach a resolution (Bryden, 2013), which has currently made a settlement in favour of Madobe, although it is a **delicate peace and violence will likely flare up again** (Expert comments). Hiiraale's failure to win control can be seen as a loss for the Federal Government (Expert comments).

Members of the **Hawiye clan generally oppose Jubaland**, while the **Darood generally back it**, with the exception of the Marehan (Bryden, 2013). The Marehan clan is also powerful in the region, and the failure to include it in power-sharing is seen as problematic (Hammond, 2013). As Madobe left Al-Shabaab, it is also against him, causing an **unlikely tacit alliance between Al-Shabaab and the government** against Madobe (Bryden, 2013). **Puntland is in support of the federal accession of Jubaland**, and has recognised the legitimacy of Madobe (Bryden, 2013). Most commentators agree that

Kenya's activities in Jubaland since 2011 strongly suggest a desire to implement the 'Jubaland project' which would provide a friendly 'buffer zone' state, offering Kenya some distance from Somalia's instability (Anderson, 2012; Halakhe, 2013; McEvoy, 2013).

3.2 Militias

Militia groups are part of the highly fragmented security sector, with rapidly changing structures and allegiances (Expert comments). **They do not necessarily formalise under a title** unless there is an incentive to do so, such as a peace conference which requires groups to be organised (Expert comments). Somalis have criticised warlords involved in the peace processes as having power but no intention of abiding by the agreements, and representing only their own narrow interests (Menkhaus, 2011). In 2012, up to 50 per cent of police and military personnel in Mogadishu were **working for private individuals**, in a vast array of neighbourhood vigilante groups (Saferworld, 2012). These groups are loyal to their leader and do not display any larger organisational structure (Saferworld, 2012).

Al-Shabaab

Al-Shabaab[4] ('the youth' in Arabic) originated as the military wing of the Islamic Courts Union, splitting in 2006 when the ICU disbanded and its moderate members embraced the Djibouti peace agreement (Stanford University Mapping Militant Organizations Project. (Updated 2013)). Al-Shabaab is the largest militia group in **opposition to Somalia's transitional/federal government and foreign intervention**, specifically against the invading Ethiopian forces at the time of establishment (Vidino, Pantucci, & Kohlmann, 2010), and is described as the most powerful group in Somalia (Marchal, 2011). Its **goal is to overturn the government and establish an Islamist Somalia adhering to strict Shariah law** (Stanford University. Updated 2013), a combination of nationalist and religious ideology. It probably has several thousand members, but likely to have a core ideological group of 300-800 (Stanford University. Updated 2013). Its **strength lies mainly in the weakness of its opponents** and the critical economic situation in Somalia (Bryden, 2013; Marchal, 2011). It is currently located in the southern region and increasingly in Puntland (Saferworld, 2012; expert comments).

Al-Shabaab has a central council, but the network is structured loosely so that the loss of senior commanders does not threaten the group's integrity (Stanford University. Updated 2013). There are several key figures[5] with varying degrees of influence and differing personal agendas. The figurehead leader is Ahmed Abdi Godane, known as Abu Zubeyr, who has been in known tension with second-in-command Sheikh Muhktar Robow Ali (Abu Mansoor) (Stanford University. Updated 2013)**. Godane has a global jihadi agenda**, which banned foreign aid, while **Abu Mansoor has a nationalist agenda** and wished to allow access for aid agencies (Stanford University. Updated 2013). Al-Shabaab has focused on religious ideology, and **clan-based politics play little role** in the leadership of the group (Vidino et al., 2010).

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[4] The Council on Foreign Relations provides an interactive timeline of Al-Shabaab, available at: http://www.cfr.org/somalia/al-shabaab/p18650

[5] The Critical Threats Project, from the American Enterprise Institute, provides detailed personal profiles of Al-Shabaab's leaders: Ahmed Abdi Godane (Mukhtar Abu Zubair), leader (emir); Sheikh Mukhtar Robow (Abu Mansur), deputy leader (deputy emir); Ali Mohamed Rage (Ali Dhere), spokesman; Hassan Dahir Aweys, senior member and former leader of Hizbul Islam; Fuad Mohamed Qalaf (Shongole), senior member; Ibrahim Haji Jama Mead (Ibrahim al Afghani), senior member. http://www.criticalthreats.org/somalia/al-shabaab-leadership

In February 2012, Al-Shabaab announced its formal merging with **Al Qaeda**, although it has had strong ongoing links for at least ten years through training, personnel and financing (Vidino et al., 2010). There has been a recent internal power struggle over this issue, including some internal killings, with Godane's faction supporting the merger and others not doing so (Meleagrou-Hitchens, Maher, & Sheehan, 2012). It seems **likely that the majority of Al-Shabaab do not support the merger** and foreign control by Al Qaeda (Stanford University. Updated 2013).

Al-Shabaab's relations with other Islamic groups have been mostly rocky, as it has a more radical global jihadi agenda than most (Marchal, 2011). In January 2010 the southern Kamboni militia joined Al-Shabaab (Vidino et al., 2010), and in 2012 so did the Galgala militia in Puntland, which fights against the Christian government (Stanford University. Updated 2013). Hizbul Islam has been a long-term ally in the fight against the transitional government, but split from Al Shabaab in September 2012, due to differences in tactics and the merger with Al-Qaeda (Stanford University. Updated 2013). A moderate Somali Sufi group, Ahlu Sunna, strongly opposes Al-Shabaab (Stanford University. Updated 2013) (see below).

Funding comes from a variety of sources. Al-Shabaab makes most **money from a protection economy**, but also enforces a reasonable system of taxation, and has been able to pay high regular salaries to members for years (60-200 USD per month; Marchal, 2011). Weapons and training appear to come from a variety of Middle Eastern and African countries, principally Eritrea and Yemen (Stanford University. Updated 2013), with **Eritrea the only state known to have financially supported Al-Shabaab** (Marchal, 2011). Al Qaeda has called on its international followers to support Al-Shabaab, and this affiliation has been important for the development, funding and strengthening of the group (Vidino et al., 2010). Between 2008 and 2012, Al-Shabaab controlled the **lucrative charcoal trade in Kismayo** – the liberation of the town by Kenyan-led forces was a crucial blow against Al-Shabaab, as it economically crippled the group (Masters, 2013). Al-Shabaab's aims resonate with nationalist aims, and some community leaders have donated resources for the cause; it also raided UN and BBC compounds for resources (Stanford University. Updated 2013).

To enhance its legitimacy, it has operated a **judicial system** in areas under its control, **handed out money and food to the poor**, and **built roads** and **organised markets** (Marchal, 2011). It has managed to govern several regions quite effectively, trying to improve health and education services and successfully reducing corruption (Marchal, 2011). **Most Somalis credit Al-Shabaab with bringing some stability, but it is regarded with disapproval and fear,** particularly over the extreme treatment of women, banning entertainment such as cinema (which is too radical for most Somalis), and the enforcement of Shariah law through coercion and intimidation (Abdulkadir, 2012). The group banned food aid in 2011 and denied the famine, which aroused much anger among Somalis and damaged Al-Shabaab's reputation severely (Stanford University. Updated 2013). It also kidnaps children to train as soldiers, a practice which alienates communities (Masters, 2013).

The link between Al-Shabaab and piracy is unclear, as there is no hard evidence to show this, and the media reports suggest a smear campaign (Marchal, 2011) (see Piracy section below).

Al-Shabaab's influence is seen in its ability to recruit foreign volunteers (Vidino et al., 2010). These are **primarily young men of Somali origin** travelling back to the home country, but there is concern that there may also be traffic in the other direction (Vidino et al., 2010). At least twenty US citizens have been recruited, twenty Canadians and several from the UK, Denmark and Sweden (Vidino et al., 2010). The 2006 Ethiopian invasion may have driven a wave of patriotic fervour for defending Somalia, but the following **steady flow of volunteers appears driven by jihadist ideology** rather than patriotism (Vidino et

al., 2010; Shinn, 2009). New volunteers are not all ethnic Somalis; the group contains Arabs, South Asians and others (Vidino et al., 2010). Al-Shabaab has **increasing influence in Kenya**, through infiltration of Somali community mosques by radical preachers and recruiting students with bribes of mobile phones and money, and strong links in Yemen through Al-Qaeda (Stanford University. Updated 2013). New fighters are increasingly from East Africa (Marchal, 2011). Some members are Somali soldiers trained by the USA, who deserted government forces after not receiving their pay (Stanford University. Updated 2013).

Al-Shabaab recruiters are smart and well-educated; they offer **a way of life and a community** rather than just a weapon and a salary, particularly appealing to Somali youth who have few economic prospects and have lived through the failure of formal political processes (Marchal, 2011). **Recruiters are able to frame jihad as a genuine way of transforming society** and a legitimate political option in Somalia (Marchal, 2011). The group is currently tapping into clan-based grievances, including targeting minority clans, which means understanding clan dynamics is important for tackling Al-Shabaab (Expert comments). New recruits are likely to be susceptible to radicalisation due to a combination of factors, but for many, economic deprivation and community isolation play a part, as does war-related trauma (Vidino et al., 2010). **Social networks and the influence of relatives and friends** are likely to be the strongest motivating factors for joining (Vidino et al., 2010).

Al-Shabaab has a **highly sophisticated media strategy** for recruitment and indoctrination, using videos and the internet to communicate with members and the diaspora and to put across its own version of events (Marchal, 2011). It is aimed at the diaspora and infused with the creation of a transnational political Muslim identity (Meleagrou-Hitchens et al., 2012). Al-Shabaab presents news in a way designed to inspire trust and legitimacy – giving analysis of losses as well as victories, and accurate locations and timings for the videos – and reporting in Somali, Arabic and occasionally English (Marchal, 2011). **Abu Mansoor al-Amriki** (real name Omar Hammami; of Syrian-American descent) from Alabama joined in 2007 and has become Al-Shabaab's leading propagandist. He is actively recruiting further Western citizens, drawing on his own experience to reach out to similar leverage points (Meleagrou-Hitchens et al., 2012).

Ahlu-Sunna Wal-Jama (ASWJ)

The second most important armed militia is ASWJ, which is **opposed to Al-Shabaab and fights it in the central region** (Expert comments). ASWJ claim to represent the traditional early Islamic order of the Sufis (Al-Amin & Al-Hadi, 2010). **Its objective is to confront the Salafi and Wahabi ideologies,** particularly where armed groups try to impose this on civilians (Al-Amin & Al-Hadi, 2010). It is considered an integral group in Somalia's political and security situation, as a **mediating force and buffer** (Stanford University Mapping Militant Organizations Project; updated 2012). Prior to 2008, it was a peaceful order, establishing schools and social activities to support the spread of their brand of Islam, when Al-Shabaab provoked a reaction by desecrating the graves of Sufi *Ulama* and increasing restrictions on the regions under their control (Al-Amin & Al-Hadi, 2010). ASWJ drove Al-Shabaab out of their areas with Ethiopian-provided arms (Al-Amin & Al-Hadi, 2010). **Ethiopia appears to exert a strong influence on the group**, supporting it as opponents of Al-Shabaab (Al-Amin & Al-Hadi, 2010), and has provided training and weapons (Stanford University. Updated 2012). The TFG signed a power-sharing agreement with Ethiopia and ASWJ, securing formal position for ASWJ members in the cabinet in exchange for help fighting Al-Shabaab, but there are debates over whether this has actually happened (Stanford University. Updated 2012).

Its organisational structure has a high council of senior scholars, headed currently by Sheikh Ma'allim Mahmud Sheikh Hassan Farah (Ayr clan); a reference council of seven men; an executive council and a legislative council. They are not as media-savvy as Al-Shabaab, and lack video or web content (Al-Amin & Al-Hadi, 2010). They are **funded by locals** in exchange for protection services (Stanford University. Updated 2012), which appears to be a legitimate operation rather than a protection racket.

The fighting arm is led by Farah, while there is also a Mogadishu arm which does not fight, led by Sheikh Sharif Muhidin (Abgal clan) (Al-Amin & Al-Hadi, 2010). This appears to be a **leadership divide** (Al-Amin & Al-Hadi, 2010), with both factions being important (Stanford University. Updated 2012). It is **primarily operational in Galgadud, and has established quite strong control** over the central region, which some see as a threat to the government, while others believe it is operating in national interests (Stanford University. Updated 2012).

3.3 Civil society and non-state actors

Mogadishu has a vibrant and organised civil society (Expert comments) which includes media, clan elders, religious groups, and humanitarian and development organisations. Civil society is heavily engaged in **social and public service delivery in Mogadishu** (Saferworld, 2012). DFID estimates there are more than 2000 local NGOs, think tanks, training institutions and professional associations in Somalia (The EU Somalia Unit and DFID, 2012: 35). Religious organisations and hierarchy have a strong influence in urban centres, while rural areas may draw more on traditional community structures (Hoehne, 2010).There is **no clear legal framework for civil society** in any of Somalia's regions; as independent organisations were banned under Barre, they have emerged in the period of statelessness (The EU Somalia Unit and DFID, 2012: 34). Saferworld (2012) criticises Mogadishu's civil society organisations (CSOs) for representing narrow clan or political interests rather than community interests, their lack of accountability and transparency, and their reliance on state sanction and donor funding.

Most Somali CSOs lack sophisticated websites and remain unevaluated, and there is little critical academic literature on these organisations; **this report therefore only presents a few major groups**.

Non-state actors: platforms

The EC and DFID fund Saferworld to run three non-state actor platforms, in south-central, Somaliland and Puntland,[6] which has produced a series of consultations with civil society and CSO representation to the UN and other international bodies; this has increased the visibility of civil society in policy (Saferworld, 2011a). Saferworld's programme has highlighted that **Somalis feel excluded from decision-making and policy processes**, which are generally run by external actors, and that civil society is a burgeoning forum for real participation (Saferworld, 2011b). The Non-State Actors Platforms provide a structure with which the international community can engage (Saferworld, 2011b). This programme has been modestly effective in increasing CSO capacity, developing coalitions and CSO networks and a common voice, increasing representation of marginalised groups and the emergence of new voices, and increasing legitimacy for local organisations (The EU Somalia Unit and DFID, 2012: 21-23).

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[6] South-central (SOCENSA): http://www.soscensa.org/; Somaliland (SONSAF): http://www.sonsaf.org/; Puntland (PUNSAA): http://www.punsaa.org/.

Council of Islamic Scholars (CIS)

The CIS is a religious organisation which brings together representatives from a variety of Islamist organisations (Saferworld, 2012). It is based in Mogadishu and wields a **moral authority** over the city, with the **capability to mobilise tens of thousands of followers** (Saferworld, 2012). Its **objective is to uphold Islamic values** in Somalia, for instance in the provisional constitution, which it deemed un-Islamic and called for consultation with scholars in the drafting process (Saferworld, 2012).

Harakat Al-Islah Al-Islamiya (Islamic Reform Movement)

The moderate Islamist group Al-Islah was founded in 1978 in Saudi Arabia, but began to really establish itself in Somalia from 1990 onwards (Saggiomo, 2012). Many of the founders had studied abroad in Sudan and Saudi Arabia (Saggiomo, 2012). Its **goal is to establish an Islamic state in Somalia, with Shariah law, and to promote Islamic principles in Somali society** (Al-Amin & Al-Hadi, 2010). It believes this can be achieved through the **Islamisation of the state**, rather than confrontation and hostility, following the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood model; it is the only recognised Muslim Brotherhood group in the Horn of Africa (Al-Amin & Al-Hadi, 2010).

It has a pragmatic approach to the changing Somali context and has **cooperated with many sectors of society**, including warlords (Al-Amin & Al-Hadi, 2010). It has encouraged a **conciliatory approach** among its members, which enabled it to exercise great influence at the Arta peace conference in 2000 (Hoehne, 2010). It has established dozens of schools (Expert comments) and the University of Mogadishu, and encourages **strong social and cultural participation of its membership** (Al-Amin & Al-Hadi, 2010). It has also successfully operated some conflict resolution activities between warring clans (Al-Amin & Al-Hadi, 2010). Members pay a fee, which part-funds the organisation, while the rest comes from charitable donations and grants (Al-Amin & Al-Hadi, 2010).

Al-Islah lost support in 2006, when it showed support for the invading Ethiopian army, against the general mood in Somalia (Al-Amin & Al-Hadi, 2010). This resulted in the total dismissal of the leadership, which refused to step down, creating **two competing leaderships** (Al-Amin & Al-Hadi, 2010). There are still two factions, one led by the group's original founder, Sheikh Mohamed Ahmed Nur (**Garyare**) and the other coalescing in response around the presidential candidate Abdurahman Moallim Abdullahi (**Badiyow**) (Indian Ocean Newsletter, 2013). Garyare's faction has merged with Damul Jadiid, the powerful organisation said to be behind President Hassan (Bryden, 2013). **Several members of the government are thus members of, or affiliated with, Al-Islah and Damul Jadiid**.

Elders

Any adult male in Somalia can be considered an elder with a right to speak in local council; councils themselves are ad hoc gatherings to deal with specific issues (Bradbury, 2008:16). Elders are therefore representatives rather than executive leaders, and tend to act as **peacemakers and arbiters** (Bradbury, 2008: 17). As with other areas of Somalia, the influence any elder has is **dependent on his personal skills, connections, and ability to satisfy his followers' needs** (Hoehne, 2011).

Local people do not necessarily want their elders to get involved in national politics; they may **prefer them to govern the local level** (Hoehne, 2011). Elders have frequently been included in peace processes and negotiations, but this has also been criticised by Somalis as the **elders lack any authority over armed militias** (Menkhaus, 2011). Elders are seen as legitimate, but are also held responsible, along with politicians, the West and AMISOM, for the lack of progress towards stabilisation (Marchal, 2011: 44).

Business community

There are **strong connections between business and politics** in Somalia, and the business community holds a lot of power (Expert comments). Politicians are frequently businesspeople and vice versa, while lucrative government contracts are also awarded to business friends (Saferworld, 2012).

One of the largest business sectors is telecommunications, and, related to this, remittances. The telecommunications revolution facilitated the rise of remittance companies for diaspora members to send money back to family members at home (Menkhaus, 2011). The cash funds can be used for a variety of purposes, but often are invested in socio-economic development (Expert comments), particularly in water and electricity (African Development Bank Group, 2013), health and education, and real estate construction (Menkhaus, 2011).

The business community is **pivotal in moving money around** the country through its networks (Saferworld, 2012), and **can build alliances across clans** to secure movement of goods (Menkhaus, 2011). Business entrepreneurship is largely responsible for the telecommunications and money transfer boom (Menkhaus, 2011) and, on the whole, the business community is highly valued and controls much of Somalia's asset base (Expert comments).

4. Piracy

4.1 Dynamics

The commonest reason for piracy given by Somalis – pirates and non-pirates alike – is the illegal over-fishing of Somali waters by large fishing boats, which 'justified' the development of pirates acting as 'coastguards' and demanding payments for either a license to fish or for 'protection' services (Saferworld, 2011a). This narrative is often cited but is an attempt to decriminalise their activities (Harper, 2012: 149). Pirates' targeting of commercial vessels, not just fishing trawlers, clearly indicates their motivations are profit-focused rather than the defence of fishing waters (Hansen, 2009). Piracy appears to be accepted as a near-legitimate form of work or trade (Dua, 2013).

Almost all experts agree that the **conflict and disorder in Somalia have created the enabling conditions** for piracy, followed by **poverty and lack of alternative employment** and the **lack of effective punitive systems** (Kaunert & Zwolski, 2012). Pirates are almost exclusively young men, largely uneducated, and attracted by the large ransoms paid by hostages in a context of very few legitimate employment options (Saferworld, 2011a). Piracy provides jobs and investments in the local economy, making it a lucrative option (Percy & Shortland, 2013). The literature is very strong and consistent in understanding that the **solution to piracy is not military action but addressing the root causes of conflict and instability** on Somali land (Saferworld, 2011a). Hansen (2009) additionally suggests that piracy is not driven entirely by poverty, and that strong institutions are as vital to controlling piracy as livelihoods strengthening. The causes of piracy are economic, social and political, and the solution must respond to these issues rather than piracy itself (Kaunert & Zwolski, 2012). Where pirates come up against the authorities, they are usually able to buy them off with a bribe (Hansen, 2009). In January 2011, the Somali parliament **refused to pass a bill making piracy illegal**, suggesting that it is tolerated to some degree (Harper, 2013: 150).

Somali pirates hijack commercial ships and hold crew-members to ransom. Pirates use low-technology weapons such as AK-47s and grappling hooks to capture ships (Percy & Shortland, 2013). Hijacked ships are anchored near pirate strongholds while ransom negotiations are made; in Puntland this is often near

Eyl, Hobyo and Gharardeere (Percy & Shortland, 2013). Pirates seek to terrorise crew members to speed up ransom negotiations (International Maritime Bureau and Oceans Beyond Piracy, 2012). The recent use of 'motherships', which provide a base for the smaller skiffs which do the hijacking, means that pirates' operational range has expanded well beyond Somali waters (Harper, 2012).

Piracy operates out of four main areas: Sanaag (between Somaliland and Puntland); Bari (Puntland); Nugal (Puntland) and Mudug, which are not especially poor regions, which Hansen (2009) believes suggests that piracy is driven more by opportunity than poverty. There are no examples of female pirates.

4.2 Pirate groups

Hansen (2009) describes pirate group organisation. Most groups consist of **members from a single clan**, which helps them stay free of clan conflicts within the group, and perhaps offers some protection or defence by their own clan. Ships captured in clan territory waters are usually kept there, not moved across clan border lines; and pirates pay *quaraan* (charity) to members of their own clan. Gangs may contain strategic members of other clans, allowing access to resources or keeping the local peace (Hansen, 2009). **Some groups are organised around a family,** such as a father and sons. A group usually consists of 12 to 35 individuals, working on commission and divided into attack and hold teams.

It is unclear whether piracy should be considered organised crime or the work of opportunistic individuals. Hansen's 2009 interviews with pirates **suggest they are far from advanced organised criminal activity**, with the average pirate group being a "clan-based, low-tech group, consisting of former fishermen" (Hansen, 2009: 41). This is the prevailing view of most authors, who see ransom pirates as thriving in the lawless environment created by state collapse in Somalia (e.g. Samatar, Lindberg, & Mahayni, 2010). However, Percy and Shortland (2013) argue that the resistance of Somali piracy to stabilisation efforts is due to its organised nature. They argue that piracy is an organised activity which thrives on economic stability rather than the lawlessness purported to be a root cause of piracy in Somalia.

Pirates interviewed by Hansen (2009: 35) identified three organisational structures:

- One man owns and funds the whole operation and receives an agreed percentage of the profits. The leader carries the financial risk and pockets the most profit.
- Each man brings his own food and guns and the boat is owned by one person. This is a shareholder structure.
- A fundraiser collects money from investors and funds the pirate mission. This is a shareholder structure with a recruiter.

Analysis of EU NAVFOR, NATO and media reports shows that there is an increase in **violence between pirates** and hijacking of already-hijacked vessels (International Maritime Bureau and Oceans Beyond Piracy, 2012). It is possible there is a **pirate code of conduct**, an idea raised in interviews with naval anti-piracy commanders (Percy & Shortland, 2013). Codes of conduct differ from group to group, but all have sanctions against those who break the rules, including imprisonment and fines (Harper, 2013: 157).

In the sudden increase and geographic expansion of Somali piracy in 2005-7, two new groups operating in the Indian Ocean stand out. The 'Somali Marines' were based in Haradheere, while the 'Somali National Volunteer Coastguard' operated out of Kismayo (Lucas, 2013). These employed the more advanced 'mothership' tactics which demonstrate a new professionalism (Lucas, 2013). A best guess estimates that there are **around ten gangs currently in operation**, of which most are well-established and two or three

are relatively new (Anderson, 2010). The increase in piracy since 2007 is therefore attributed to only two or three new gangs – a small set of inputs has created a large increase in piracy (Anderson, 2010).

The links between piracy and Al-Shabaab are unclear. Some sources say Al-Shabaab considers piracy un-Islamic and therefore does not engage, while others suggest pirates offer large sums of money in exchange for training and weapons from Al-Shabaab (Stanford University. Updated 2013). One documented incident is the Al-Shabaab capture of two Médecins Sans Frontières workers in Dadaab, Kenya; the hostages were subsequently sold to a pirate gang for them to collect a ransom (International Maritime Bureau and Oceans Beyond Piracy, 2012). **Al-Shabaab probably has little means to pressure pirates into paying them protection money**, as they lack military presence in pirate ports, and it is true that Al-Shabaab controlled areas have mostly remained free of hijackings (Hansen, 2009).

4.3 Individuals

Pirates appear to be recruited from the ranks of fishermen, by offering **large salaries** through recruiting agents. One fisherman in Mogadishu said that he is regularly offered 4,000 USD per month to join a pirate crew (Mohamed, 2012). While this is a substantial sum by anyone's measure, it is also compounded by the **restrictions placed on fishing** because of piracy – fishermen operate under a curfew for returning to shore, after which they may be mistaken for pirates and shot at by the coastal soldiers, and while on the sea they may be approached or shot at by international navies assuming they are pirates (Mohamed, 2012). However, interviews with some pirates reveal that they **view piracy as 'just another form of trade'**, rooted in a protection economy which has long historical roots on the Somali coast (Dua, 2013).

There are allegations that pirate leaders are protected by senior political figures. There are **almost definitely links between pirate gangs and corrupt governmental officials** in Puntland (Anderson, 2010). A significant pirate leader, Afweyne, was given a diplomatic passport by President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed as an inducement for Afweyne to dismantle his pirate network, and another leader, Abshir Boyah, was given a short 5-year sentence, in comparison to 20 years for junior pirates (Reuters, 2012). There are no clear current leaders among the pirates (Expert comments).

Piracy appears to be hierarchical – different pirates get different proportions of the ransom money for performing different tasks (Percy & Shortland, 2013). High bonuses go to the first man to board the target ship (Hansen, 2009). Most pirates have **spent their money on houses and cars and distributed it amongst family members** (Hansen, 2009). Local community members may receive around 10 per cent of the profits as donations, the pirates' financier recoups his investment with 20 per cent of the profits, and government officials and local militias will also receive a hefty bribe (Harper, 2013: 153). When the hijacked ships are anchored for negotiations to take place, the **local economy booms** as pirates come ashore to buy provisions (Harper, 2013: 154), but this also has negative effects on locals by pricing them out of the market (Dua, 2013).

5. Diaspora

The Somali diaspora comprises about one million people, residing in the United States, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Pakistan, UK, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, and Germany, among others (Hoehne, Feyissa, & Abdile, 2011).

The diaspora is **heavily involved with civic and economic activity** in Somalia. The main contribution of the large Somali diaspora has been in sending money directly to relatives and is a major source of finance for many Somalis (The EU Somalia Unit and DFID, 2012: 50). The value of remittances may be as high as one billion USD per year (Menkhaus, 2011). The main source of diaspora influence is therefore on Somalia's economy. The diaspora's financial resources are sometimes used to **fund or set up new organisations, or contribute to political or radical movements** (The EU Somalia Unit and DFID, 2012: 50). Diaspora **business investment**, especially in telecommunications and money-transfer businesses, has helped develop Somalia's economy (African Development Bank Group, 2013), and the liquid assets stimulated new businesses to develop, particularly in the service sector, and health and education (Menkhaus, 2011). Diaspora role in funding and joining radical movements is increasingly important (Marchal, 2011), but diaspora remittances can provide a regular flow of income which **keeps people away from crime and violence, and can be used to fund education** (Hoehne et al., 2011).

The diaspora's second role is in the **political and policy sphere**, as many politicians are diaspora, and/or have played central roles in the peace processes (The EU Somalia Unit and DFID, 2012: 50). In 2011, an estimated two-thirds of the TFG cabinet were diaspora members (Menkhaus, 2011). The number is probably lower in the SFG, but there is a still a difficult balancing act in **harnessing the skills of the transnational community without alienating local people** by taking away jobs and opportunities (Hammond, 2013). Similarly, if the diaspora members in power are seen to be out of touch with local priorities and problems, they will likely risk losing support (Hammond, 2013). However, the 'social remittances' brought by diaspora members (skills, ideas, and values) can contribute to peacebuilding (Hoehne et al., 2011). Diaspora members are **expected to promote democratic values**, but there is little evidence that they have had much impact on Somalia's political and civic democracy (Ibrahim, 2010).

Ibrahim (2010) notes that the perception of the diaspora's influence is different in different groups. Members of the Somaliland diaspora view their return as a homecoming, in which local people wanted and desired them to return, while local inhabitants may view them as potential cash cows, and/or people who have lost their Somali culture and need to be rehabilitated. Diaspora members may view themselves as influential because they have money, but to be considered influential by the community, they must also show their commitment to Somalia and to Islam through their behaviour.

6. International actors

International actors and organisations hold considerable influence in contemporary south/central Somalia as providers of development and humanitarian assistance to civilians and political, financial, logistical and military support to the SFG and its nascent security forces.

Contemporary assessments of the impact and role of international actors in Somalia have been largely critical and pessimistic with one academic noting that "more than a dozen attempts to build a new [Somali] government by the international community have failed [since 1991]" (Hammond, 2013: 183). There is a broad consensus among commentators that **Somalis are deeply suspicious of, and hostile**

towards, Ethiopian and Western involvement in the country and many view AMISOM and the TFG/SFG as 'stooges' of Addis Ababa and Washington (Bruton, 2009; Harper, 2013: 162; Marchal, 2009: 4; Sabala, 2011: 108; Williams, 2009: 521-522). **Al-Shabaab has capitalised on these sentiments**, targeting aid agencies and INGOs militarily as an assault on 'Western' interests (Menkhaus, 2007: 365; Mwangi, 2012; Williams, 2009: 521-522). This has forced many INGOs to close their operations in Somalia and some scholars now argue that Western support is seen as a 'liability' by local actors and a gradual disengagement from the country should become a centrepiece of Western strategy (Bradbury, 2010; Bruton, 2009; Hammond, 2013: 184).

International interest and involvement in Somaliland and Puntland has been minimal, with a small number of INGOs constituting the primary non-Somali presence in the territories (Bradbury, 2010: 8). While recent international conferences on Somalia have included a Somaliland 'presence', no scholars have suggested that this situation is likely to change in the near future (Hammond, 2013: 184-185). This section will therefore summarise key external players in Somalia, albeit exploring only those in south/central Somalia.

6.1 Regional actors

Ethiopia and the Ethiopian National Defence Forces (ENDF)

Ethiopia remains a central military and political player in contemporary Somalia; its forces withdrew from the country in 2009 but returned in 2011 to bolster and support AMISOM and the TFG's tenuous hold over Mogadishu (McEvoy, 2013: 4; Williams, 2009: 522; Williams, 2013). Ethiopia's relations with Somalia are primarily related to **Ethiopia's domestic stability** (Barnes & Hassan, 2007: 155-156). For Addis Ababa, the potential spread of political Islam from Somalia represents a threat to stability and the political status quo in Ethiopia, which has a large minority Somali population. Ethiopia has also frequently suggested that Islamist and other groups in Somalia have provided, or hope to provide, support to irredentist rebel groups in Ethiopia, particularly in the Ogaden (Balkonyi, 2013; Barnes & Hassan, 2007: 155-156; Menkhaus, 2007; Williams, 2009: 516-518). **Addis Ababa is therefore opposed to a federal political arrangement in Somalia**, fearing that this would further strengthen supporters of Ogadeni separatism. Ethiopia is in disagreement with Kenya on this issue (Fisher, 2013a).

Ethiopian incursions and interventions in Somalia have therefore largely been aimed at installing or bolstering 'friendly' national or local administrations opposed both to political Islam and to supporting separatist movements across the border (Balkonyi, 2013; Sabala, 2011: 102). **Ethiopia is consequently deeply unpopular among Somalis** and a range of organisations linked to it, including AMISOM and the TFG/SFG, have also become somewhat unpopular by association (Harper, 2013: 162; Marchal, 2009; Menkhaus, 2009; Williams, 2009; Williams, 2013).

A number of scholars have argued, however, that Addis Ababa is aware of the negative reputation it enjoys in Somalia and does not wish to remain militarily engaged (Moller, 2009: 11). The **ENDF high command is reportedly split on the issue of disengagement** at present (Expert comments). The ENDF leadership is clearly the key player in Ethiopia's involvement in Somalia since the death of longtime Ethiopian leader Meles Zenawi in 2012. Where the ENDF has been labelled Meles' 'remote control army' by one scholar, its deference to Meles' successor, Hailemariam Desalegn, is far less clear. It has been suggested that Ethiopian politics is undergoing a transitional phase and that Hailemariam is acting as a 'regent' with limited authority over ENDF operations (Expert comments).

Kenya and the Kenyan Defence Forces (KDF)

Kenyan involvement in Somalia has traditionally been **diplomatic and political in nature.** Nairobi played a prominent role in several rounds of regional mediation and government-formation efforts during the 2000s and hosted the TFG until 2007, along with most Western embassies, UN agencies and INGO offices assigned to Somalia – many of which still remain in Nairobi today (McEvoy, 2013). The unilateral KDF intervention in October 2011 has dramatically altered this dispensation and **Kenya is now a major military as well as political player** in the southern Somali state of Jubaland. The Kenyan intervention responded to a range of attacks and kidnappings of Western tourists in northern Kenya believed to be committed by Al-Shabaab*,* although Nairobi has long seen the combination of insecurity and political Islam in southern Somalia as a threat to Kenya's stability (Fisher, 2013a: 7.) Scholars allege Kenya's government has had plans since at least 2008 to establish **a friendly 'buffer state' in Jubaland** to address this concern (Anderson, 2012; Fisher, 2013a; Hammond, 2013: 190; McEvoy, 2013) (see Jubaland section above). KDF troops in Somalia, numbering around 4000, have been incorporated into AMISOM since 2012 but remain almost entirely based in Kismayo and Jubaland (McEvoy, 2013: 4). It is also suggested that Kenya entered Somalia in order to facilitate a more rapid return of hundreds of thousands of Somali refugees who have fled to Kenya in recent years (Hammond, 2013: 190; McEvoy, 2013: 3).

Analysts have criticised the *realpolitik* nature of Kenya's involvement in Somalia since 2011, although one positive development is the reconciliation agreement between Madobe and the SFG in Addis Ababa in August 2013, which will see administration of Kismayo's sea and airport transferred from the KDF/*Ras Kamboni* to the SFG by 2014 (Reuters, 2013).

Uganda and AMISOM

The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) was dispatched in March 2007 tasked with protecting the TFG in Mogadishu and its institutions (Menkhaus, 2007: 364-386; Williams, 2009: 516-521). With the assistance of the ENDF between 2007 and 2009 and since 2011, **AMISOM has been critical to driving Al-Shabaab out of Mogadishu and securing the TFG/SFG's hold on political authority**. Scholars disagree over the level of local support for the operation, with some suggesting it is seen as an unwelcome and occasionally brutal Ethiopian/Western 'Trojan horse' and others arguing that many Somalis are grateful to AMISOM for stabilising parts of the country (Bruton, 2009: 86; Freear & Coning, 2013; Harper, 2013: 162; Williams, 2009: 520-522). Most agree that **AMISOM enjoys greater local support today than in previous years** owing to the improved security situation in Somalia although its lack of a clear 'exit strategy' remains a concern for many (Freear & Coning, 2013; Harper, 2013: 162).

AMISOM remains **dominated operationally and politically by Uganda**, though joined by Burundian troops in 2007 and a small number of Nigerian, Djiboutian, Sierra Leonean and other West African soldiers since 2012 (Fisher, 2013a). The incorporation of KDF forces into AMISOM since 2012 has had limited effect, with Kenyan troops based in the south and Ugandan troops in command positions in Mogadishu (Fisher, 2013a; Freear and Coning, 2013: 3). Scholars suggest that Uganda's motivations for intervention are more linked to its relations with Western donor governments than to regional security concerns, although a desire in Kampala to give the country's large army 'something to do' is also frequently cited (Fisher, 2012a: 418; Fisher, 2013b; Williams, 2009: 519-520).

Ugandan president Yoweri **Museveni's desire to carve out a role for Uganda** as a regional power-player and deal-broker is also considered an important factor (Fisher, 2012a: 418). Museveni has used Uganda's vital role in AMISOM to leverage political change in Mogadishu in recent years, and Ugandan diplomats attempted to manage the SFG's drawing-up of its security sector transformation plans in the lead-up to

the 2013 Somalia Conference in London, albeit less successfully (Fisher, 2013a). It is also suggested that the Museveni government has become increasingly committed to stabilising Somalia to demonstrate the strength and competence of Uganda's army (Expert comments) at the domestic, regional and international level (Fisher, 2012b). Aside from Museveni himself, a key figure in Uganda's Somalia policy-making arena is **Nathan Mugisha**, AMISOM Commander between 2009 and 2011 and Kampala's deputy envoy to Mogadishu since 2011. AMISOM is wholly dependent on Western funding and logistical support to carry out its mandate, with the **US**, **EU**, **UK** and **France** being key contributors (Franke, 2009; Williams, 2009: 519-520).

Eritrea and Yemen

A range of commentators have cited Eritrea and Yemen as supporters of domestic opponents of Somalia's government, particularly Al-Shabaab (Barnes & Hassan, 2007: 156; Moller, 2009: 23; Sabala, 2011: 101-105). Eritrea and Yemen have, according to some scholars, provided **military and political support to the opponents of the TFG/SFG and AMISOM** in recent years – although little concrete evidence exists to support or discredit these claims either way. Both states are argued to have hosted Union of Islamic Courts officials fleeing Somalia in 2006, while Eritrea is said to have supported Al-Shabaab until recently (Barnes & Hassan, 2007: 156; Moller, 2009: 23; Sabala, 2011: 101-105). This has been interpreted as a continuation of the on-going Eritrean-Ethiopian conflict by proxy, originating in a border war between the two states during 1998-2000 (Connell, 2009). **Eritrea's current involvement and interests in Somalia are little known** and scholars agree that the country's foreign policy is decided in a highly personalised manner by the unpredictable and anti-Western president Isaias Afwerki (Connell, 2009).

Gulf States

Qatar and the United Arab Emirates are also increasingly important political and economic players in Somalia, with Harper noting that the former is rumoured to have assisted Hassan Sheikh Mohamud financially in his successful 2012 campaign for the Somali presidency (Harper, 2013: 163). This reflects a general observation in recent literature that the **SFG is looking beyond traditional Western donors and institutions** in their approach to international relations and securing external support (Grunewald, 2012: S114; Hammond, 2013: 188-191; Harper, 2013: 163; Mosley, 2012: 11).

6.2 Multilateral actors and other governments

United Nations (UN)

The UN and its agencies, particularly the United Nations Development Programme, have played a significant role in **coordinating** humanitarian assistance bodies in Somalia and **funding** the TFG/SFG, AMISOM and several security and governance initiatives recently launched by the Somali government (Bradbury, 2010: 11; Bryden & Brickhill, 2010: 247; Harper, 2013: 164-165; Menkhaus, 2007: 364; Williams, 2009: 519). The organisation is nevertheless **viewed as politically partisan by many Somalis** as a result of its support for the TFG and AMISOM in the later 2000s (Menkhaus, 2007: 364). It has also been **criticised by INGOs and NGOs for attempting to engage them in political processes** in support of the TFG, with the former insisting that a 'clear distinction' should be drawn between "humanitarian aid and political agendas in Somalia" (Bradbury, 2010: 11). The management of the UN operation in Somalia is divided between the UN Office for Somalia in Nairobi and the UN Somalia Team in New York; Harper has

argued that the two often operate at cross-purposes and that both have consequently been manipulated by political groups within Somalia (Harper, 2013: 162).

United States (US)

The US is the **most influential non-African external power in Somalia** and has been crucial in financing and facilitating AMISOM; Washington has also provided crucial intelligence and logistical support to AMISOM troops since 2007 and continues to fund the training of AMISOM and Somali forces (Bruton, 2009; Bryden & Brickhill, 2010: 247-250; Fisher, 2013b: 11-15; Menkhaus, 2007; Williams 2009). Close US security relations with Ethiopia – and, to a lesser extent, Kenya and Uganda – have led many Somalis to be **suspicious of US intentions** in the country, particularly following US air strikes against purported Al-Qaeda targets in Somalia following Ethiopia's 2006 intervention (Menkhaus, 2007: 382; Williams, 2009: 516-519). The US is a central player in the International Contact Group on Somalia and has also played a critical role in supporting regional and international conferences aimed at facilitating political dialogue and government-formation since the mid-2000s. In recent years, the Africa Bureau at the US Department of State has led on Somalia policy in Washington (Menkhaus, 2007: 378).

Many commentators have strongly criticised the **overly simplistic approach** US officials have taken to understanding Somali political dynamics, noting that the division of groups into 'extremists' and 'moderates' has led to pushing **uninformed policies** on governance and piracy, exacerbating political and ethnic tensions in parts of the country (Bruton, 2009: 85; Marchal, 2007; Marchal, 2009; Menkhaus, 2007: 378). The White House's 2010 ban on support by US citizens to terrorist groups in Somalia has also been widely criticised by INGOs and scholars as preventing the transfer of humanitarian aid to areas under Al-Shabaab control (Bradbury, 2010: 12; Maxwell & Fitzpatrick, 2012: 6-9).

European Union (EU) and its member states

As a unit, the EU and its member states are the **largest aid donor** to Somalia, with the European Commission, UK, France and Italy being particularly prominent as providers of development aid, of training to AMISOM and Somali forces, and of anti-piracy mechanisms in the region (Bradbury, 2010: 12; Franke, 2009; Kaunert & Zwolski, 2012; Williams, 2009: 519-520). The EU has been criticised by several AMISOM states – notably Uganda – and some scholars as not providing adequate financial support to the operation since 2007 although these grievances have been less commented upon in recent years (Vines, 2010: 1096-1100). As with the UN and US, European donors are **viewed with suspicion by many Somalis** as overly supportive of the TFG/SFG and Ethiopian interests. The EU has nevertheless been **praised for attempting to implement a more comprehensive approach** to deterring piracy in the Horn of Africa by taking into account the developmental as well as security-related aspects (Kaunert & Zwolski, 2012). The UK has attempted to bring a broader range of Somali actors into political dialogue in the London conferences in 2012 and 2013, while UK ministers have recently sought to work with Barclays Bank following the bank's decision to withdraw banking services to money service businesses, which has a large effect on Somali diaspora remittances (Hammond, 2013:184-185; Taylor, 2013).

Turkey

A range of commentators highlight the **growing importance** of Turkey in Somalia's political economy.

During the 2011 Somali famine Turkish prime minister Recep Erdogan visited Mogadishu with his family, precipitating a large injection of humanitarian donations and assistance from the Turkish population

(Grunewald, 2012: S114; Hammond, 2013: 191; Harper, 2013: 164-165; Maxwell & Fitzpatrick, 2012: 9-10; Mosley, 2012: 11). Ankara is also increasingly involved in humanitarian activities, in training Somali soldiers and in convening diplomatic summits aimed at assisting Somalia's political and economic development (Grunewald, 2012: S114; Hammond, 2013: 191; Harper, 2013: 164-165; Maxwell & Fitzpatrick, 2012: 9-10; Mosley, 2012: 11). Somalis are reportedly **far more favourably inclined towards Turkey than Western states** for a range of reasons including its focus on humanitarian rather than security issues, the willingness of Turks in Mogadishu to live and work amongst the Somali population as opposed to in heavily-protected 'secure zones', and direct delivery of aid to recipients (Harper, 2013: 164; ICG, 2012: 9). A 2012 assessment of Turkey's role in Somalia by International Crisis Group nevertheless criticised Ankara's involvement as overly unilateral and *ad hoc* (ICG, 2012).

6.3 International NGOs and aid agencies

In recent years, most Western International NGOs (INGOs) have been **forced to withdraw** from south/central Somalia for logistical, legal and security reasons – the number of INGOs in the country has reduced from around 40 to 15 between 1995-2010 (Bradbury, 2010: 8). CARE left south/central Somalia in 2008 for security reasons, as did the World Food Programme (WFP) in 2010, the International Committee of the Red Cross and Save the Children in 2012 and *Medecins Sans Frontieres* (MSF) in 2013; these organisations have been increasingly forced to operate from Nairobi and to **rely on local NGOs to deliver humanitarian aid** by 'remote management' (Bradbury, 2010: 10; Maxwell & Fitzpatrick, 2012: 9). The effect of these withdrawals on the Somali population has been varied but commentators agree that WFP's departure was particularly devastating during the 2011 famine and its aftermath (Maxwell & Fitzpatrick, 2012: 9).

This flight of Western INGOs is primarily a **result of targeting by Al-Shabaab** as representatives of 'imperialist' US and Ethiopian interests (Grunewald, 2012: S114), a state of affairs not helped by the prominence of US and other Western flags on many humanitarian aid parcels, and efforts by UN officials to incorporate INGO support into political processes in Mogadishu (Bradbury, 2010: 9-12; Grunewald, 2012: S114). Most INGOs managed to come to a *de facto* arrangement with Al-Shabaab during the later 2000s which allowed them to operate and provide some aid in Shabaab-held areas. This has been frustrated, however, since 2010 by legal restrictions placed upon the transfer of resources to and through terrorist organisations in Somalia by the US Government; WFP pulled out of Somalia in 2011 citing not only security concerns but "inability to meet donor obligations" (Bradbury, 2010: 10). These restrictions have been criticised by some commentators as preventing the delivery of vital humanitarian aid to Somalis under Al-Shabaab rule (Bradbury, 2010; Maxwell & Fitzpatrick, 2012; Menkhaus, 2010: S338).

A growing number of **INGOs from Muslim majority states have become increasingly prominent** as facilitators and providers of humanitarian aid. Not viewed or presented as US or Western 'puppets' by Al-Shabaab and other local Somali groups, these organisations have continued operating in much of south/central Somalia while their Western counterparts have been forced to withdraw (Grunewald, 2012: S114; Hammond, 2013: 191; Harper, 2013: 164-165; Maxwell & Fitzpatrick, 2012: 9-10; Mosley, 2012). The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation has become an increasingly important provider of humanitarian assistance to Somalia since the outbreak of famine in 2011 and is **viewed by Somalis as a more culturally sensitive and sincere** donor than most Western states and organisations (Hammond, 2013: 191; Harper, 2013: 164-165; Maxwell & Fitzpatrick, 2012: 9; Mosley, 2012: 11).

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7.1 Key websites

- Conciliation Resources – Somalia: http://www.c-r.org/accord/somalia

- The Heritage Institute for Policy Studies: http://www.heritageinstitute.org/

Appendix 1 – Clan and minority groups

Clan	Description
Darood	The Darood are made up of three large clans – the Harti, Absame, and Marehan. They have home territories in Puntland, eastern Ethiopia, portions of Bakool region, the Juba region, and northern Kenya (Expert comments). In recent years, Darood tensions with the Hawiye have dominated Somali politics. The Darood tend to support a federal vision for Somalia and support the accession of Jubaland as a federal state (Bryden, 2013), and are suspicious of the current government of Hassan Sheikh Mohamoud as Hawiye-dominated (Expert comments).
Dir	The Dir are composed mainly of the Isaaq clan, which views itself as a distinct clan-family not to be subsumed under the Dir (Expert comments). Other Dir clans populate Djibouti, parts of eastern Ethiopia, and pockets of Lower Shebelle and the Jubba regions (Minority Rights Group, 2010, p. 7).
Isaaq	The Isaaq occupy the northwest of Somalia and were a key force in creating the Somaliland secessionist state (Hoehne, 2010). The Somaliland government is currently dominated by Isaaq (Bryden, 2013).
Hawiye	The Hawiye dominate in and around Mogadishu, the Middle Shabelle and central Somalia, though they are also present in parts of northern Kenya and eastern Ethiopia (Minority Rights Group, 2010, p. 7). The clan is currently seen by many as dominating the Federal Government, and therefore stands to gain from aid provided to the government (Expert comments). They tend to back a unitary state (Expert comments) and oppose the formation of a federal state of Jubaland (Bryden, 2013).
Rahanweyn	The Rahanweyn consist of two sub-clans, the Digil and Mirifle. They live in the fertile southern region, between the Shabelle and Jubba rivers, which enables them to farm crops rather than raise livestock (Bradbury, 2008: 11). They speak a distinct dialect, and in the past were looked down on by the stronger and better armed pastoral clans, though now the Rahanweyn are well-armed (Expert comments). As agro-pastoralists, the notion of territoriality and 'being born in a land' (*ku dhashay*) is more important for identity and belonging than clan affiliation (Hoehne, 2010). Villages may be a more important social point and self-identification for Rahanweyn than clan (Helander, 1996). Because of their rooted nature, Rahanweyn are more likely to adopt strangers than other Somali clans (Helander, 1996). Rahanweyn currently make up a large percentage of the terrorist group Al-Shabaab (Marchal, 2011).
Ogaden	The Ogaden primarily occupy the Kismayo border region, with a large territory stretching into northeastern Kenya (Little, 2003, p. 48). They focus on cattle production and engage in Kenyan markets (Little, 2003, p. 53). They are the prime power-holders in Jubaland.
Harti	The formation of Puntland in 1998 brought together all the Harti sub-clans along with a few other Darood clans in the region (Hoehne, 2010). Outside of Puntland, Harti occupy the same area as Ogaden (Little, 2003, p. 49) but mainly reside in Kismayo town and district (Little, 2003, p. 53). They are primarily engaged in camel pastoralism and commerce (Little, 2003, p. 53).

Minority group	
Bantu	The Bantu are a number of independent groups living along the southern rivers, which had little sense of communal identity till the 1990s (Bradbury, 2008: 11). They are the largest minority group, comprised of indigenous farmers and descendants of African slaves (Minority Rights Group, 2010). Many Bantu fled to Kenya after 1991 (Minority Rights Group, 2010). Bantu are over-represented in the terrorist group Al-Shabaab (Marchal, 2011), but they are also subject to extreme cultural attacks by Al-Shabaab (Minority Rights Group, 2010).
Occupational groups	Some particular trades are looked down on: hunters (*yibir*), leatherworkers *(midgaan)* and blacksmiths *(tumaal)* (Bradbury, 2008: 11). They are scattered throughout Somalia and comprise the principal minority in Somaliland (Minority Rights Group, 2010).
Religious minorities	There are small populations of Christians and minority Islam groups (Ashraf and Shekhal) (Minority Rights Group, 2010). The TFG charter in 2004 declared Islam the official religion of Somalia, and did not assert the right to freedom of religious belief (Minority Rights Group, 2010). Christians therefore do not have any representation in parliament or government (Minority Rights Group, 2010). Christians are at risk of the death penalty under Shariah law (Minority Rights Group, 2010).