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Somalia: The Tough Part Is Ahead

I. OVERVIEW

Somalia's Islamic Courts fell even more dramatically than they rose. In little more than a week in December 2006, Ethiopian and Somali Transitional Federal Government (TFG) forces killed hundreds of Islamist fighters and scattered the rest in a lightning offensive. On 27 December, the Council of Somali Islamic Courts in effect dissolved itself, surrendering political leadership to clan leaders. This was a major success for Ethiopia and the U.S. who feared emergence of a Taliban-style haven for al-Qaeda and other Islamist extremists, but it is too early to declare an end to Somalia's woes. There is now a political vacuum across much of southern Somalia, which the ineffectual TFG is unable to fill. Elements of the Courts, including Shabaab militants and their al-Qaeda associates, are largely intact and threaten guerrilla war. Peace requires the TFG to be reconstituted as a genuine government of national unity but the signs of its willingness are discouraging. Sustained international pressure is needed.

The Courts' defeat signals the return of clan-based politics to southern Somalia. Whereas the Courts drew their support predominantly from the Hawiye clan, the TFG is widely perceived as dominated by Darod clan interests. TFG leaders reinforced this perception by pursuing policies that further alienated the Hawiye, notably an appeal for foreign troops and the government's relocation to Jowhar and then Baidoa, instead of Mogadishu. Hawiye alienation and TFG inadequacies left a vacuum into which the Courts expanded between June and December 2006, bringing a degree of peace and security unknown to the south for more than fifteen years. Mogadishu was reunited, weapons removed from the streets and the port and airport reopened. By December, the Courts had expanded from their Mogadishu base to control most of the territory between the Kenyan border and the autonomous region of Puntland in the north east, while the TFG was confined to Baidoa, protected by its Ethiopian backers. Communities seemed prepared to tolerate a strict interpretation of Sharia law in return for peace and security.

Politically, Somalia has now been returned roughly to where it was when the TFG was formed in October 2004. The government is weak, unpopular and faction ridden, and the power vacuum in southern Somalia is rapidly being filled by the same faction leaders and warlords the Courts overthrew less than a year ago. Many Mogadishu residents resent the Courts' defeat, feel threatened by the TFG and are dismayed by the presence of Ethiopian troops in the capital. Mogadishu is awash with weapons, and there have already been hit-and-run attacks on TFG and Ethiopian troops. The potential for serious violence is just below the surface.

Ethiopia's military victory has dismantled only the most visible part of the Courts: the regional administrative authority in south central Somalia (including Mogadishu), which served essentially as a political platform for Hawiye clan interests. Other elements, including the militant Shabaab leadership, remain largely intact and have dispersed throughout the country, threatening to wage a long war. A U.S. air strike on 8 January 2007 apparently wounded Aden Hashi 'Ayro, a prominent Shabaab commander, and killed some of his guards but failed to destroy any top targets. A second U.S. airstrike was launched on 23 January, but information on the targets and impact was not immediately available. The grassroots network of mosques, schools and private enterprises that has underpinned the spread of Salafist teachings and their extremist variants remains in place and continues to expand thanks to generous contributions from Islamic charities and the private sector.

Whether the Islamists, including their more extreme jihadi elements, can stage a comeback in some fashion depends largely on whether the TFG restores stability and wins public support across southern Somalia. Early steps such as declaring a state of emergency and deposing the speaker of the parliament, who had been prominent in efforts to engage the Courts in dialogue and compromise, have not been promising. It should:

- rescind the state of emergency and reinstate the speaker of parliament;
- reconstitute the cabinet as a genuine government of national unity, including credible leaders from the communities that backed the Courts;

- establish at the same time representative authorities for key municipalities, including Mogadishu and Kismaayo, in order to provide political stability and manage local security over the short term;
- give up the notion of forcible disarmament, especially in Mogadishu, and instead negotiate a plan for voluntary disarmament; and
- take up the tasks for which it was originally formed: to advance the process of national reconciliation, complete the transition to a permanent government and work its way out of a job by 2009 when elections are supposed to be held.

The rapid replacement of Ethiopian troops with a broader, multilateral peacekeeping mission is also essential to defuse public resentment towards what is considered a foreign occupation. This process is likely – at best – to take months, not weeks, however, making early moves by the TFG on the above agenda all the more essential if there is still to be a peace to keep. Ethiopia, whose conception of its security interests may leave it indifferent to the task, and the U.S., which must show a more sophisticated understanding of fighting the country's terrorism potential than the narrow one it has mostly followed there for many years, now bear a significant responsibility to consolidate peace in Somalia. They must push the TFG to take the above steps to transform itself into a more inclusive national body. This message should also be carried by the broader international community, most immediately at the end-of-January African Union Summit, as well as through the International Contact Group on Somalia, the informal governmental coordination body scheduled to meet on 9 February.

II. THE AFTERMATH

Its military intervention has achieved Ethiopia's primary objective: to eliminate the immediate security threat posed by the Islamic Courts, whose rise it perceived as a grave menace to its national security. It considers the military campaign an unqualified success. However, the destruction of the Courts may not be as comprehensive as first appeared. The Islamist movement is likely to remain a significant feature of Somalia's political and economic landscape for the foreseeable future. Furthermore, the Courts' collapse has created a power vacuum across much of the country, leaving several major groups feeling disenfranchised and hostile to the TFG. Unless the Transitional Federal Institutions (TFIs) are reformed in such a way that they are able to fill this void, Somalia will remain fractured, anarchic and stateless – precisely the conditions that fostered the rise of the Courts in the first place.[1]

A. THE POLITICAL BACKGROUND

1. Ethiopian-Egyptian rivalry

The rise and fall of the Islamic Courts was only the most recent episode in a long historical cycle in which Ethiopia has competed for influence in Somalia with Egypt and other Arab actors. Modern Ethio-Arab rivalry in the Somali peninsula dates from the mid-nineteenth century, when both states jostled with European imperial powers for control of north east Africa. The forces of Ethiopian Emperor Menelik probed the Somali interior – now the Ethiopian Somali region[2] – while Egyptian forces representing the Ottoman Empire garrisoned the northern Somali coast, and Zanzibar claimed parts of the southern Somali littoral on behalf of the Sultan of Oman.

During the lead-up to independence, Nasserite Egypt espoused the unification of all Somali peoples under a single flag, while Ethiopia fought successfully to retain its vast Somali territories. In the post-independence period, Arab governments supported successive Somali governments, while Ethiopia backed the disparate Somali rebel groups which ultimately overthrew the Siyaad Barre government.

Ethiopia played a central role in hosting peace conferences during UN-led reconciliation efforts in the early 1990s, but moved politically to the fore after UN forces left in 1995 by convening the "Sodere" process (1996), at which a diverse group of Somali factions – but not the Somali National Alliance (SNA) headed by Hussein Aideed – agreed to establish interim national institutions. Before the Sodere accords could be implemented, Egypt invited many of the same faction leaders to Cairo, ostensibly to reconcile them with Aideed. The Cairo process (1997) collapsed when several Somali allies of Addis Ababa, including current TFG President Abdillahi Yusuf, walked out.

Ethiopia seized the political initiative again in 1998 with a new "building blocks" strategy. This called for

[1] See Crisis Group Africa Reports N°116, *Can the Somali Crisis Be Contained?*, 10 August 2006; N°100, *Somalia's Islamists*, 12 December 2005; and N°95, *Counter-Terrorism in Somalia: Losing Hearts and Minds?*, 11 July 2005.

[2] Commonly known as the Ogaden, after one of the principal Somali clans in the territory.

a federative approach to political reconstruction, via international support to existing Somali authorities, such as the governments of Somaliland and Puntland, the administration of the Hiiran region and – from 1999 – the Supreme Governing Council set up by the Rahanweyne Resistance Army (RRA) in the Bay and Bakool regions. Although Hawiye-inhabited regions of south central Somalia and the demographically heterogeneous Juba Valley remained ungoverned, it was anticipated that political leaders in these areas would feel increasing pressure to establish authorities of their own. The approach won the endorsement of the regional Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)[3] and much of the Western donor community.

2. Political and clan dynamics

The downfall of the "building blocks" approach came in 2000 with the convening of the Arta Conference by Djibouti – enthusiastically backed by, among others, Egypt and the UN. The conference resulted in the establishment of the Transitional National Government (TNG), headed by Abdiqasim Salaad Hassan, which represented chiefly Hawiye interests (especially those of the Habar Gidir Ayr sub-clan), as well as opposition groups from each of the geographic "building blocks". Although Somaliland managed to remain aloof, Puntland plunged into civil strife between pro- and anti-TNG groups, and the RRA split into three main factions.

In 2001, Ethiopia played midwife to the formation of the Somali Restoration and Reconciliation Council (SRRC), a coalition of faction leaders opposed to the TNG, which Addis Ababa accused – not entirely without foundation – of links to Islamist and terrorist groups.[4] When IGAD convened the Eldoret/Mbagathi peace talks in October 2002, ostensibly to reconcile the TNG with its opponents, it rapidly became apparent that the process was being steered by Addis Ababa towards the formation of an SRRC-dominated government.[5] While the TNG had relied principally on Hawiye support – especially the president's Habar Gidir Ayr sub-clan – that new government, the TFG, came to be perceived by the Hawiye as a vehicle for Darod interests, especially those of President Yusuf's Majerteen clan. Yusuf's role as a prominent Darod commander in battles against its militias during the early 1990s struck a raw nerve in the Hawiye community: "This is a government bent on revenge against the Hawiye", a leading figure of Mogadishu's civil society told Crisis Group.[6]

Hawiye alienation from the TFG was reinforced by Yusuf's appeal, immediately following his inauguration in October 2004, for 20,000 foreign troops to protect his government and the decision to relocate that government from Nairobi to Jowhar (and subsequently Baidoa), rather than Mogadishu. By early 2006, the sense of alienation from the TFG and disenchantment with their own clan and factional leaders among many ordinary Hawiye had created a political vacuum that the Islamic Courts were quick to exploit. In many respects, the Courts represented little more than the appropriation of Islam as a political platform for Hawiye clan interests but their success at restoring peace, security and administration won admiration not only from a broad cross section of Somalis but also from much of the Muslim world. They expanded beyond Mogadishu to Kismayo and the Lower Juba Valley by awarding much of the Ogaden clan, particularly the Mohamed Subeer sub-clan, a majority stake in the region's administration.[7]

The fall of the Courts, therefore, is perceived by many Somalis as a humiliating defeat for certain clans, mainly the Hawiye and Ogaden, by two of their historical adversaries, the Harti and Ethiopia.[8] Not surprisingly, as TFG and Ethiopian troops entered Mogadishu in late December 2006, they encountered a mixed reception. While some residents welcomed them, and curious onlookers lined the streets, others staged angry demonstrations, setting tires ablaze and firing rifles into the air. "Hawiye people in the diaspora now believe that the Ethiopians are fighting [a] proxy war for the Darod clan, who want to take revenge on Hawiye", a Somali professional from the Darod clan told Crisis Group. "Ethiopian occupation is now seen by Hawiye as Darod occupation".[9]

Ethiopia's victory over the Courts has helped to revive flagging international confidence in the TFG

[3] IGAD, the regional body for the Horn of Africa, comprises Somalia, Kenya, Uganda, Sudan, Djibouti, Eritrea and Ethiopia.

[4] Prominent members of the SRRC included Abdillahi Yusuf (now TFG president), Hussein Aideed (now TFG deputy prime minister) and Abdillahi Sheikh Ismail (former TFG foreign minister).

[5] See Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°11, *Salvaging Somalia's Chance for Peace*, 9 December 2002; and Africa Report N°79, *Biting the Somali Bullet*, 4 May 2004.

[6] Crisis Group communication, January 2006.

[7] Many Ogaden resent the historical domination of Kismayo by members of the Harti clans, whom they perceive as immigrants, and were further aggrieved when the Harti were displaced in 2001 by the Juba Valley Alliance (JVA), which was composed of Ayr and Marehan from Somalia's central regions.

[8] The Harti is a sub-clan of the larger Darod clan.

[9] Crisis Group electronic communication, December 2006.

and is likely to trigger calls for more robust support. But reconciliation with the elites of the Hawiye and Ogaden communities – and any others who have felt disenfranchised by the TFG-SRRC-Ethiopian axis – is essential if the situation is to stabilise. A public statement by Mohamud Ulusow, chairman of the Habar Gidir 'Ayr clan's "Political Leadership Council", expressed appreciation for the Ethiopians' restraint in the face of attacks and called upon the "religious community, the traditional leaders and women's organisations to join forces in order to ensure the public order, safety and peace of Mogadishu as well as a long-lasting system of governance in Mogadishu".[10] On 10 January 2007, President Yusuf met with the former TNG President, Abdiqasim Salaad Hassan, to seek his support.

But many Hawiye remain suspicious of TFG and Ethiopian intentions. Somali observers told Crisis Group that some groups in the city were preparing a guerrilla warfare campaign against the "occupiers",[11] and the situation in the capital shows signs of deterioration as attacks on TFG and Ethiopian troops gradually increase in both frequency and potency. "The [Habar Gidir] 'Ayr have lost the first round", a Somali observer told Crisis Group, "but there will be many more in the coming days, and there are no knockouts in clan warfare".[12]

B. ETHIOPIA'S SECURITY AGENDA

Ethiopia's attitude towards the Courts was informed by its own national security interests. From this perspective, the Courts were defined less in terms of clan constituencies – although Ethiopia became increasingly concerned that they might overthrow its TFG ally – than in terms of their external agenda. Over the long term, Ethiopia feared that an Islamist authority in Somalia might stimulate radicalisation of its own large Muslim population but the decision to invade Somalia was driven by more immediate considerations: the Courts' links to transnational terrorism, irredentist rhetoric, support for Ethiopian rebel groups, and reliance on Eritrea. While its military success has created an opportunity to advance stability in Somalia, there are suspicions that Ethiopia would not be dissatisfied if its always suspect neighbour remained indefinitely disunited and preoccupied with internal quarrels.

1. Transnational terrorism and pan-Islamic jihad

The most serious charges against the Courts relate to international terrorism. Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys, chairman of the Courts' assembly (the shura) and a former leader of al-Itihaad al-Islaami, an early 1990s Somali jihadi organisation, and several other individuals linked to the Courts are on U.S. and UN terrorism lists. In December 2006 U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Jendayi Frazer claimed the Courts were "controlled" by members of al-Qaeda. "The top layer of the Courts are extremists. They are terrorists", she said.[13] Her statement closely mirrored Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi's assessment that the Courts' links to al-Qaeda "represent a direct threat first to Somalia and the Somali people, second to the region and Ethiopia and lastly to the international community".[14]

Ethiopia has a special concern about the presence of former members of al-Itihaad among the Court leaders, including Aweys. It holds al-Itihaad responsible for a number of terrorist acts in the mid-1990s, some of which the organisation publicly took credit for, but other extremist elements within the Courts are equally disturbing. Individuals linked to the Shabaab, a militant, multi-clan wing, have been convicted of murdering four foreign aid workers in Somaliland in 2003-2004 and are accused of plotting to disrupt Somaliland's parliamentary elections by killing government officials and international observers and bombing polling stations. Shabaab militiamen have also been implicated in the murders of several Somali professionals, a prominent peace activist, at least one foreign journalist and an Italian nun in Mogadishu.

Although Frazer's characterisation of the Courts as controlled by al-Qaeda was an exaggeration, a number of their leaders have been linked to al-Qaeda, and at least one senior al-Qaeda figure – abu Talha al Sudani – is believed to exert considerable influence over the leadership. The al-Qaeda presence in Somalia was further strengthened in late 2006 by a steady influx of jihadi volunteers from across the Muslim world (including numerous young radicals from the Somali diaspora). Estimates vary from several hundred to, less plausibly, several thousand. These volunteers probably were a mixed blessing for the Courts. The majority likely were not battle-hardened veterans but untrained,

[10] Mohamud M. Uluso, "Public Statement", 30 December 2006.
[11] Crisis Group communications, December 2006.
[12] Crisis Group electronic communication, December 2006.
[13] Andrew Cawthorne, "U.S. says al-Qaeda behind Somali Islamists", Reuters, 15 December 2006.
[14] Chris Tomlinson, "Ethiopian Premier: Qaeda-Linked Somali Terrorists a Threat", Associated Press, 2 November 2006.

inexperienced soldiers of fortune, whose management required supervision, energy and resources the Courts could ill afford. They appear to have contributed little value to the war effort.

The Courts have repeatedly rejected any links to terrorism. "We don't want the issue to become a futile back and forth, 'You are', 'We aren't' and so on", their foreign affairs chief, Ibrahim Hassan Addow, told Crisis Group:

> The United States government insists that people are here but we don't know who they are. Besides, we are not a government, we have no extradition treaties with anyone, and we believe that people are innocent until proven guilty.…Our door is open. If [the international community] wants to come here to see, to look around, they are welcome.[15]

However, the Courts issued no formal invitation to any international actor to verify the presence (or otherwise) of international terrorists in Mogadishu and repeatedly stonewalled in private talks with European and U.S. diplomats, reinforcing the impression they were shielding the extremists in their midst.

2. Somali irredentism

Since independence in 1960, the claim to Somali-inhabited territories in neighbouring countries has been at the root of three conflicts between Somalia and Ethiopia, a long-running guerrilla war in north-eastern Kenya and a short-lived insurgency in Djibouti. Somalia's catastrophic defeat by Ethiopia in the 1977-1978 Ogaden War should have put to rest any realistic ambitions Mogadishu might yet harbour with respect to these territories. The Courts' attempts to revive pan-Somali nationalism, therefore, antagonised the country's neighbours, especially Ethiopia, the largest, against whom most of the rhetoric was directed.

The Courts' pan-Somali orientation reflects the presence among its leaders of former members of al-Itihaad al-Islaami. Al-Itihaad's aims included unification of the Somali-inhabited territories of the Horn under a single Islamic government, and a chapter remained active in the Ethiopian Somali region long after the organisation's functional dissolution in Somalia.

Sheikh Aweys seems especially attached to the notion of an Islamist Greater Somalia. Barely a month after the Courts' victory in Mogadishu, he fired a broadside at Ethiopia in an interview with *Newsweek*: "Really the Ogaden is a Somali region and part of Somalia, and Somali governments have entered two wars with Ethiopia over it, and I hope that one day that region will be a part of Somalia".[16] Apparently oblivious to the international concerns this raised, Aweys repeated his Greater Somalia vision on 17 November 2006 in an interview with Mogadishu-based Radio Shabelle: "We will leave no stone unturned to integrate our Somali brothers in Kenya and Ethiopia and restore their freedom to live with their ancestors in Somalia".[17]

3. Cross-border rebel groups

The Courts' irredentist rhetoric was reinforced by close ties with the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) and the little known United Western Somali Liberation Front (UWSLF), both of which are struggling for self-determination for the Somali region of Ethiopia. Until their defeat, the Courts allegedly provided military support to both organisations, which maintained offices and spokesmen in Mogadishu,[18] as well as to the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF).[19]

The relationship between the Courts and the ONLF reportedly dates from at least February 2005, when UN arms embargo monitors claim flights from Asmara bearing arms and ammunition destined for the ONLF began to arrive at Dhuusamareeb airstrip in central Somalia. The UN report states that from approximately the beginning of February to the end of the second week of May 2005, Eritrea supplied arms on some eight occasions to Aweys and elements of ONLF based in Galgaduud region. Between late April and early May 2005, approximately three flights from Eritrea arrived in Dhusamareeb, carrying 270 trained and equipped ONLF militia.[20] Diplomatic sources in Asmara have independently confirmed Eritrea's military support to the Courts, ONLF and OLF.[21]

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[15] Crisis Group interview, Mogadishu, October 2006.

[16] Rod Nordland, "Heroes, Terrorists and Osama", *Newsweek*, 23 June 2006.

[17] "Regions in Ethiopia, Kenya should be part of Somalia – Islamist", Associated Press, 18 November 2006, at www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article18770.

[18] Relations between the two organisations are apparently strained, including conflict in the field.

[19] The ONLF and OLF are members of the Alliance for Freedom and Democracy (AFD), an organisation established in May 2006 to coordinate efforts for the overthrow of the government in Addis Ababa. Other AFD members are a wing of the Coalition for Unity and Democracy Party (CUDP), the Ethiopian People's Patriotic Party (EPPF) and the Sidama Liberation Front (SLF).

[20] Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1630, May 2006.

[21] Crisis Group interview, Nairobi, January 2006.

Both the ONLF and UWSLF deny they have military personnel in Somalia and are careful to portray their struggle as one of self-determination, as provided for in the Ethiopian constitution, not Somali irredentism. But they have openly aligned with the Courts in their confrontation with Ethiopia. On several occasions, their forces claimed to have acted against Ethiopian troops en route to Somalia in order to demonstrate solidarity with the Courts.

Even more disturbing from Addis Ababa's perspective was cooperation between the Courts and the OLF, which the Ethiopian government considers a terrorist organisation that poses a far greater domestic security threat. Hundreds of Oromo fighters reportedly arrived in Somalia between June and December 2006 to reinforce the Courts' forces, and Oromo combatants were killed and captured in the December fighting. The OLF has neither confirmed nor denied the presence of its fighters in Somalia but has denounced the Ethiopian intervention as a recipe for more chaos in the Horn.[22]

4. The Eritrean factor

The Courts' alliance with the ONLF, UWSLF and OLF was underpinned by military assistance from Eritrea, whose border dispute with Ethiopia remains unresolved. The confrontation between the TFG and the Courts thus is a second front in a wider regional conflict, one which threatens to escalate at any time.

The 1998-2000 Ethiopia-Eritrea war, ostensibly waged over their common border, cost more than 70,000 lives. While they fought bloody battles along their shared frontier, the two countries also waged a much smaller proxy war in southern Somalia. Eritrea backed Hussein Mohamed Farah Aideed, son of the general who stood his ground against U.S. troops in Mogadishu, while Ethiopia threw its weight behind a number of factions opposed to Aideed, notably the RRA. Several hundred OLF fighters, trained and dispatched by Asmara, joined Aideed.

In 1999, the RRA, with Ethiopian military support, finally wrested control of Baidoa from Aideed and established a popular local administration. Aideed's military capacity was broken, the Oromo fighters dispersed, and the second front lapsed into inactivity until the Algeria peace agreement brought the war to an untidy close in December 2000.

The repercussions of the proxy conflict were felt for several years to come, not least in the volume of arms left in southern Somalia. The RRA soon turned their weapons on each other, and their experiment in local government unravelled. Aideed retained enough Eritrean weaponry, including armoured personnel carriers, to hold Villa Somalia, the presidential palace, and remain a prominent militia leader of the Hawiye Habar Gidir Sa'ad clan. In November 2002, however, after the attack on an Israeli charter airliner departing Mombasa airport in Kenya, the U.S. persuaded Aideed to surrender – for a small fee – several dozen Eritrean anti-aircraft missiles in his possession.

In 2005, with Ethiopia still refusing to implement the decision of the Independent Boundary Commission with respect to the disputed border, Eritrea attempted to ratchet up international pressure on it through a series of risky gambles.[23] In October 2005, it banned UN helicopter flights, reducing the operational capacity of the peacekeeping force (UNMEE) by as much as 60 per cent; then it banned UN personnel from most Western countries and expelled others on charges of spying. At the same time, according to UN arms embargo monitors, it steadily increased arms shipments to the Courts, as well as their ONLF and OLF allies,[24] though the UN monitors' assertion that over 2,000 Eritrean combat troops were in Somalia appears to have been seriously overstated.

Despite Ethiopia's battlefield victories, Asmara's strategic gambit paid significant dividends. At relatively low cost, Eritrea manoeuvred Addis Ababa into a confrontation on two fronts: a major intervention in southern Somalia and a large defensive deployment along the Ethiopian-Eritrea border in order to prevent demarcation of the boundary. Though Ethiopia's military victory was a blow to Eritrea's strategy of proxy warfare, Asmara may continue to provide support in order to tie down Ethiopian troops in Somalia for as long as possible.

C. THE U.S. AGENDA

U.S. engagement in Somalia in recent years has come through the lens of its war on terrorism. Washington

[22] "Declaration of war will not lead to security but rather spark more chaos in the Horn", Oromo Liberation Front, 30 November 2006.

[23] See Crisis Group Africa Report N°101, *Ethiopia and Eritrea: Preventing War*, 22 December 2005.

[24] Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1676, November 2006. While sections of the report lacked credibility, such as the claim of Iran's alleged involvement in procuring Somali uranium and the dispatch of several hundred Courts fighters to support Hizbollah in Lebanon, most of it was accurate.

provided tepid support for the IGAD peace process, which led to the formation of the TFG, but its policies have been dominated by military rather than political considerations. Before the rise of the Courts in 2006, the Bush administration worked with militias to carry out snatch and grab operations on suspected al-Qaeda linked suspects operating in Mogadishu. This counter-terrorism agenda brought the militias directly into confrontation with the Courts and triggered the fighting that ultimately brought the Courts to power.

Crisis Group has long argued that an unbalanced U.S. strategy would ultimately be self-defeating, and that the best way to combat extremism in Somalia is through strong support for the formation of a stable, unified government.[25] The U.S. initially prevailed upon Ethiopia not to deploy forces to Somalia, out of concern it would aggravate the situation and strengthen radicals within the Courts. But in late 2006, policy shifted dramatically, giving Ethiopia a tacit green light to invade Somalia. One of the ways this manifested itself was in the initial U.S. draft of UN Security Council Resolution 1725, which, unlike the version eventually adopted, would not have excluded front-line states from participating in the proposed peacekeeping force in order to provide a cover for the Ethiopian involvement.

Having now supported the Ethiopian overthrow of the Courts and even participated in military strikes against fleeing members of the Shabaab and suspected al-Qaeda figures, the U.S. bears considerable responsibility to help stabilise the country, not only by pressing the TFG to transform itself into a more representative national entity but also by exercising active diplomacy to facilitate this. It should not believe that it can successfully delegate this political task to Ethiopia or even to its European or other regional partners.

D. THE IGAD COMMUNIQUÉ

In Djibouti, on 2 December 2006, the Courts signed a communiqué with the IGAD Secretariat that ostensibly addressed many of the security concerns. After two days of discussions, the Courts pledged to respect the territorial integrity of neighbours and refrain from interference in their internal affairs; asserted they would deny sanctuary to "any forces which are intent on undermining the security of IGAD member states"; and condemned all acts of terrorism.[26] In return, the IGAD Secretariat noted "with appreciation" the Courts' efforts to restore peace and stability to areas of Somalia under its authority and called for the withdrawal from Somalia of all foreign troops.

While the communiqué largely reflected Kenya's efforts to engage constructively and re-establish its neutrality in the Somali conflict, Ethiopia conducted separate talks with the Courts' delegation about its concerns. According to an Ethiopian official familiar with the dialogue, these amounted to a restatement of demands by both sides, with little substance.[27] Retrospectively, it appears the Ethiopian initiative was also an ultimatum, intended to give the Courts a last chance to avoid war by severing ties with Asmara and ceasing support for Ethiopian rebel groups.

E. THE COURTS

The diversity of the Courts' leadership makes it difficult to generalise about the perceptions and motivations that led it to confront the TFG and Ethiopia. Nevertheless, it is fair to say that the Courts resent Ethiopia's involvement in Somali affairs, which they perceive as a threat to their faith, their nationhood and the future of Somalia as a state. The anti-Ethiopian rhetoric resonated with the many Somalis who view Ethiopia as an historical enemy, secretly determined to prevent the return of peace, stability and unified government to Somalia. From this perspective, the TFG's federal orientation is an Ethiopian stratagem to weaken the Somali state, while Puntland and Somaliland are simply Ethiopian creations intended to further divide its people. The decision to engage TFG and Ethiopian forces around Baidoa in late December 2006 seems to have been propelled by a belief of radicals not only that confrontation with Ethiopia was necessary, but also that a battlefield victory would help restore the unity and dignity of the Somali people.

Broadly speaking, the organisation that took that decision had three main components: a Hawiye authority in much of south-central Somalia; the Shabaab; and a centrist faction led mainly by former al-Itihaad al-Islaami members. Each perceived the Courts' aims and methods differently and has been affected differently by Ethiopia's victory.

[25] See Crisis Group Reports *Can the Somali Crisis Be Contained?; Somalia's Islamists*; and *Counter-Terrorism in Somalia*; all op. cit.

[26] "Communiqué issued at the end of consultations between the delegation of the Somali Council of Islamic Courts (CSIC) and the IGAD Secretariat in Djibouti held on the 1st-2nd December 2006".

[27] Crisis Group electronic communication, December 2006.

1. A regional authority

By far the largest and most visible part of the Courts was the de facto regional authority in much of central and southern Somalia, anchored in the Hawiye clan. The supreme organs of the Courts – the executive committee and the shura – were almost exclusively dominated by Hawiye. The expansion to Kismayo and other non-Hawiye areas served to align other clan interests (such as the Absame in Lower Juba, and the Hawadle in the Hiiraan region) but was not reflected in the composition of the leadership.

Within the Hawiye, support for the Courts was unevenly distributed. The most ardent supporters tended to be from Aweys' sub clan, the Habar Gidir Ayr, while the Abgaal, Murosade and Habar Gidir Sa'ad tended to be more reticent. The Courts' original shura was almost exclusively Hawiye and so heavily dominated by the Ayr that it was immediately frozen and superseded by a more balanced "Standing Committee" so as to avoid interclan tensions.

The regional authority generally reflected the pragmatic, traditionalist membership of the Courts, although individual leaders of some district courts distinguished themselves by excessive zeal (such as the leader of one Court who threatened that anyone who did not pray five times a day would be decapitated). Many Court officials were former civil servants, moderate Islamists or simply practising Muslims.

For such people, the Courts had already achieved most of their objectives by restoring peace, security and a governing administration to Hawiye-inhabited areas, unifying Mogadishu and providing a cohesive political platform for Hawiye interests. They assumed the Courts would eventually negotiate with the TFG, and possibly other Somali authorities, to form a national unity government capable of fulfilling the tasks required by the Transitional National Charter. Many feared – correctly – that the activities of militants within the Courts would endanger the enterprise by alienating the international community and igniting war with the TFG and Ethiopia.

On 27 December 2006, as Ethiopian forces converged on Mogadishu, the Courts' leadership announced it was abandoning the capital and leaving political leadership to sub-clan leaders. At the same time, it returned many of the weapons it had confiscated from sub-clan militias and private enterprises since June. A Mogadishu-based journalist told Crisis Group:

> The clans simply withdrew their support from the Courts. Following their battlefield defeats, especially after Jowhar, they said: "We don't trust you to protect us any more. Give us our weapons back and let us organise our own defence". The Courts had no choice but to defer to clan authority.

In the absence of Courts authority, Mogadishu has begun to revert to its earlier fragmentation and anarchy. Faction leaders overthrown by the Courts are reasserting their authority in various parts of the city, and the port has fallen back under control of a sub-clan militia. To exercise authority and stabilise the situation, the TFG must now strike a deal with sub-clan leaders, rather than the Courts.

2. Hisb'ul Shabaab

Unlike the regional authority, the Courts' militant wing, the Hisb'ul Shabaab, is a cross-clan entity whose jihadi leadership includes members with links to al-Qaeda. The Shabaab provided elite elements in the Courts' forces, both a strike force and "commissars" to maintain order and discipline. Senior Shabaab leaders include Aden Hashi 'Ayro, Abdillahi Ma'alin 'abu Uteyba', Mukhtar Roobow, Ibrahim Haji Jama 'al-Afghani' and Fou'ad Mohamed Qalaf, several of whom trained in Afghanistan.

The Shabaab's national character means it sees the struggle in a pan-Somali – if not pan-Islamic – frame of reference and was not satisfied with liberation of Hawiye areas. The Shabaab viewed the TFG, Puntland and Somaliland as instruments of Ethiopian hegemony, considered talks with them as counter productive and worked systematically to undermine negotiations between Courts leaders and the TFG. Between November and December 2006, it shifted its centre of gravity increasingly towards Kismayo, where it also hosted the steady trickle of foreign volunteers eager for jihad. The southwards shift was likely a product of growing tension with the mainstream Courts leadership as well as of a desire to retain a degree of operational autonomy.

Shabaab fighters suffered heavy losses in the battles with Ethiopian troops, and the shock of defeat led many to desert. Some units, however, appear to have withdrawn in good order on several fronts, and the core leadership remains intact. In early January 2007, a U.S. air strike in southern Somalia reportedly killed eight Shabaab fighters and injured their commander, Aden Hashi 'Ayro, but failed to kill any senior Shabaab or al-Qaeda leaders.

The loss of its safe haven will not necessarily spell Shabaab's end. Clandestine cells have functioned for several years in Somalia, assassinating professionals, civil society leaders, aid workers and journalists. It is

likely to revert to its pre-Courts covert methods, seeking to exploit public disenchantment with either the TFG or the Ethiopian military in order to expand its operations.

3. Al-Itihaad al-Islaami

The glue that held the Courts together was the leadership of former al-Itihaad al-Islami cadres, prominent among them Aweys, Mukhtar Robow, and Ibrahim Hassan Addow. Courts financiers such as Ahmed Nur Jim'aale, former chairman of al-Barakat, and Aboker Omar Adaani, a major shareholder in the Banadir company, were also aligned with al-Itihaad in the early 1990s. These ageing leaders, respected as clerics or businessmen and tempered by their unsuccessful attempts to seize power by force a decade ago, have held the Courts' political centre between the Islamist jihadis of the Shabaab and more clan-oriented, religious traditionalists.

Like the Shabaab, al-Itihaad's leadership was multi-clan, fusing jihadism with pan-Somali nationalism. The group was in effect dissolved in 1997, following Ethiopian raids on its bases in south-western Somalia. Ethiopia evidently hopes that its victory over the Courts will buy a similar grace period from Islamic radicalism in Somalia, if not eliminate it altogether. The al-Itihaad experience offers some optimism in this regard but also cautionary lessons.

Between the dissolution of al-Itihaad in 1997 and the emergence of the Courts in 2006, most former al-Itihaad members returned to quiet lives. Others continued to preach their ultra-conservative brand of Salafism, with the jihadi component removed, or gave money to Salafi mosques, schools and enterprises. The Courts' success in the south inspired some ex-leaders to return to the political arena. Former members joined younger Islamist activists in building support for the Courts. Sheikh Ali Warsame from Somaliland and Sheikh Abdulqaadir Ga'amey from Puntland, the most senior al-Itihaad leaders in their respective areas, visited Mogadishu in late 2006 to consult with Aweys and the Courts' leadership. Both were reportedly cautious in their subsequent assessments, telling followers they approved of the Courts' achievements but were alarmed by Shabaab radicalism. "These guys remember the blood spilt during al-Itihaad's jihad in the early 1990s", a former member of the movement told Crisis Croup. "They don't want to go through it again, and they think that's where the Shabaab is leading them".[28]

As a result, the Courts' defeat has had little impact on this seasoned generation of Salafist Islamic reformers and their grassroots networks of mosques, schools, charities and private enterprises. Yet, these include many of the institutions that nurtured the current generation of Shabaab leaders and provided the rank and file of the Courts' militia. Ethiopia's offensive has left the bedrock of revolutionary Islam in Somalia very much intact and capable of replenishing its losses within a relatively short time.

III. PLANNING FOR PEACE

If Ethiopia's spectacular military successes are not now consolidated in an inclusive political settlement and a comprehensive reconstruction program – in that order – Somalia is likely to revert to its fractured, pre-intervention state or, worse, experience a Hawiye-led insurgency in which Somali and foreign jihadis return to the battlefield. Stabilisation of the situation requires a number of urgent measures:

- establishment of a representative administration in Mogadishu;
- an end to the state of emergency, reinstatement of the speaker of parliament and a national-level dialogue on power sharing leading to a broad-based, inclusive transitional government;
- a phased, mainly voluntary process of disarmament and demobilisation;
- revision of the Transitional Federal Charter to set a realistic schedule for completing the transition; and
- withdrawal of Ethiopian forces and their replacement by a neutral peacekeeping force.

A. MOGADISHU ADMINISTRATION

The most formidable challenge for the TFG and Ethiopia is stabilisation of Mogadishu, a city of 1.5 million that defied all efforts at pacification until the arrival of the Islamic Courts in June 2006. The TFG's inability to establish itself in the capital has undermined its credibility since it was formed in October 2004. In the aftermath of the Ethiopian victory, the TFG leadership has indicated that it intends to relocate the government to Mogadishu. Whether it can do so in safety depends not on the Ethiopian military or a future international force but on whether the predominantly Hawiye population is prepared to tolerate its presence.

[28] Crisis Group interview, Nairobi, November 2006.

Since 1991, Mogadishu has defeated successive attempts to build a stable, representative authority, including one of the most promising, the "Banadir Administration", in early 2006, shortly before the Islamic Courts took power. Rather than trying to build a new municipal government from scratch, the TFG would be well-advised to revive that local government for several months, while consulting with local leaders on a more permanent solution.

Unfortunately, the TFG's first steps have not been promising. In early January 2007, Prime Minister Geedi announced new management for the Mogadishu port under a close relative. "He's just naming his cronies to these positions", a civil society leader from Mogadishu told Crisis Group. "If the government continues this way, it will lose public confidence and the opportunity to govern the capital".[29]

In mid-January, President Abdillahi Yusuf appointed several municipal officials: Mahamud Hassan Ali "Adde Gabow", governor of the Banaadir Administration, who had been ousted by the Courts, was made mayor, with Ibrahim Shaaweeye, a mayor under the TNG, as his assistant for peace and reconciliation. Both are politicians of stature but in the absence of functional institutions their appointments are symbolic, not substantive. Moreover, the lack of a representative assembly increases the risk their nominations will be divisive.

B. NATIONAL-LEVEL DIALOGUE

A stable and representative administration for Mogadishu is a necessary but not sufficient condition for a constructive relationship between the Hawiye and the TFG. This will require a national power-sharing agreement that brings credible Hawiye leaders into positions of genuine authority within the transitional institutions. Again, the government's initial steps have not been encouraging.

Despite the fact that Prime Minister Geedi is a member of the Hawiye Abgaal sub-clan, his appointment in 2004 was not well received among the Hawiye. A former veterinarian and a political neophyte, he lacked the stature and experience expected of the most senior Hawiye official. Many Somalis were mystified why a political unknown was given such a sensitive post, and some assumed a foreign hand. "Geedi is Addis Ababa's choice", a civil society leader from Puntland told Crisis Group, echoing many sentiments. "He wasn't the candidate of the Hawiye or of the Somali people".[30] Unless the prime minister's job is on the table, few Hawiye will take any TFG power-sharing offer seriously.

In theory, reconstitution of the TFG as a genuine government of national unity can be addressed as a purely internal matter. The president could simply dissolve the government or call for a vote of confidence, which – given the government's poor track record – the prime minister would be almost certain to lose. But President Yusuf has resisted such changes in the past, and many Somalis believe Ethiopia considers Geedi sympathetic to its concerns and protects him. "The president would be happy to change him", a source close to Yusuf told Crisis Group, "but the Ethiopians are blocking it. They want Geedi to stay".[31]

Instead of broadening its support base, the TFG has shown signs of moving in the opposite direction. On 13 January the rump parliament imposed a state of emergency for three months and on 17 January removed Speaker Sharif Hassan, who had vocally opposed the Ethiopian intervention. President Yusuf accused the speaker of failing on three counts: by violating the Transitional Federal Charter, not cooperating with the government and aligning first with faction leaders, then with terrorists.

International pressure is likely to be required to produce the kind of changes needed for the TFG to succeed. The U.S. appeared to recognise this when its ambassador to Kenya, Michael Rannenberger, issued a statement describing the Ethiopian victory as "an historic opportunity for the Somali people to achieve a broad-based, inclusive government" but cautioning that Washington's relationship with the TFG would depend on its willingness to work for national reconciliation.[32] Assistant Secretary Frazer described the dismissal of the speaker of parliament as "counter to [the] spirit of reconciliation",[33] and the European Commission suspended its assistance to the Transitional Federal Parliament in response to the decision to introduce a state of emergency.[34]

The European Union (EU), the African Union and the League of Arab States need to take a consistent position that the TFG, in its present form, is an

[29] Crisis Group telephone communication, January 2007.

[30] Crisis Group telephone communication, December 2006.
[31] Crisis Group telephone communication, December 2006.
[32] David Shelby, "United States Sees Chance for National Reconciliation in Somalia", USINFO Bulletin, U.S. Department of State, 29 December 2006.
[33] "US slams Somali speaker's sacking", BBC News, 18 January 2007, at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/6273949.stm.
[34] Crisis Group interviews, Nairobi, January 2007.

inadequate instrument for national reconciliation and political reconstruction and must be reformed if it is to succeed. On 22 January, the EU issued a statement calling on "the TFIs [Transitional Federal Institutions] to solve their internal differences and to reach out to all Somalis of good will, in a spirit of national reconciliation. It is of the utmost importance to ensure that all key stakeholders – including clan elders, Islamic leaders, representatives of the business community, civil society and women – are engaged in an inclusive political and institutional process on the basis of the Transitional Federal Charter".

An opportunity to advance the process of reconciliation and dialogue emerged when Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, chairman of the Courts' Executive Committee, crossed the border and surrendered himself to Kenyan authorities on 22 January. Instead of treating him as a criminal or returning him to Somalia, as they have done with more junior Courts fugitives, the Kenyans transferred him to an upscale Nairobi hotel. Apparently in consultation with the Kenyan government, the U.S. ambassador, Michael Rannenberger, implied that Sharif should be included in a future political dialogue and scheduled his own meeting with him for 24 January.

A religious traditionalist, Sheikh Sharif is widely perceived as one of the more moderate Courts leaders, but less influential than Sheikh Aweys, whose whereabouts is unknown. Sheikh Sharif's influence over Court militants and his capacity to blunt a potential insurgency should not be overestimated but his re-engagement as a political leader would be of symbolic importance and lend some credence to Ethiopian and American claims that the targets of their attacks have been extremists and suspected terrorists, not the Courts or the Muslim community as a whole.

C. DISARMAMENT

One of the TFG's first acts following the capture of Mogadishu was to issue a decree calling for disarmament of its population. Prime Minister Geedi gave the city three days to surrender weapons voluntarily before the government took coercive measures. Many Hawiye, however, would view such an act as capitulation and fear that disarmament would leave them vulnerable to reprisals by a hostile government.

Somewhat surprisingly, two prominent faction leaders expected to oppose the disarmament efforts, Mohamed Qanyare Afrah and Musa Sudi Yalahow, surrendered vehicles and weapons on 17 January in exchange for posts in the national government. [35] Omar Filish followed suit the following day. It was the first sign that the government might be prepared to approach disarmament as part of a broader, political process, but the imposition of a state of emergency and the removal of the speaker of parliament are unlikely to inspire confidence in the broader population that a political settlement is in sight.

Successful disarmament – especially in Mogadishu – requires both a political settlement and enhancement of the government's capacity to provide security. An aggressive, coercive program is likely to encounter violent resistance and create more problems that it resolves.

D. THE TRANSITIONAL FEDERAL CHARTER

Politically Somalia is essentially where it was in October 2004, when the TFG was formed. There has been little or no progress on the tasks stipulated in the transitional charter, such as preparation of a draft constitution, formation of "federal" authorities in regions and districts or a formal process of national reconciliation. It is unrealistic to expect the government to catch up on two and a half lost years. A reconstituted TFG will need to be assigned a revised schedule of tasks that it can hope to achieve in completing the transition to a permanent government. Especially important is drafting a new constitution and preparing for national elections in 2009.

E. PEACE OPERATIONS

The early withdrawal of Ethiopian forces from Somalia is a critical element in stabilising the situation and restoring some of the TFG's legitimacy in the eyes of ordinary Somalis. Addis Ababa cannot afford to support a large deployment and is well aware that its forces offer a foil against which opposition groups can mobilise. The first Ethiopian troops began to withdraw from Somalia on 23 January. But a precipitous withdrawal risks leaving a power vacuum in southern Somalia that the TFG alone is unable to fill. Addis Ababa has indicated that it will stage a phased drawdown in order to avoid a relapse into chaos but is not prepared to link its timetable to AU plans for deployment of a peace support operation.

[35] One account stated dismissively, however, that "… so far disarmament has been mostly a farce. Mr. Qanyare and a few other militia leaders turned in some rusty guns this month", Jeffrey Gettleman, "New Somali Government Faces the Age-old Problem of Clans", *The New York Times*, 22 January 2007.

International consensus is building towards deployment of a multinational force to replace the Ethiopians. A draft "Outline Deployment Plan" circulated by the AU in late January proposes an "African Union Mission in Somalia" (AMISOM) so as "to stabilise the current situation in that country, in order to create conditions for the conduct of humanitarian activities and immediate take over by the United Nations".[36] The mission would involve approximately 7,690 troops[37], a 270-member civilian police component and an indeterminate number of civilians. The first troops, however, would not deploy until the second week of March 2007. The mission would hand over to the UN after twelve months.

The tasks envisioned in the plan are ambitious for such a small force. Fewer than 8,000 troops would be hard pressed to provide security for key institutional sites such as parliament and the presidency and strategic installations such as ports and airports, as well as keep the roads open. But the force is also expected, inter alia, to "provide assistance to the TFG to consolidate its authority over the whole of Somalia", prevent illegal inflows of arms and assist in disarmament of all armed groups not under TFG control as well as in the training of TFG security forces. Unless a more limited and realistic set of objectives is assigned, the proposed force is likely to be stretched too thin to do any of this effectively. More to the point, without a political process that turns the TFG into a true government of national unity, an AU force – while perhaps less provocative than the Ethiopians – would in time also be seen as an occupying army.

Security Council Resolution 1725 of 6 December 2006 – which authorised a limited IGAD/AU deployment in and around Baidoa to protect the then hard-pressed TFG – must now be amended to provide a UN mandate for the international force to be deployed in Somalia. The Council must also revise the existing arms embargo to accommodate this force and allow the TFG to re-establish effective national security forces that can extend and maintain its authority. A draft of a resolution to supersede 1725 will be introduced shortly. In view of concerns for the long-term capacity of an AU force, the Council should establish a timeline or set of benchmarks for its transition to the UN.

It is still far from certain, however, that the necessary troops and hundreds of millions of dollars of financing would be available for either the AU mission or a UN successor. The U.S. has suggested that it could earmark $20 million for the purpose, while the EU has $15 million set aside in its Africa Peace Facility which could be made available, but it is unclear where the remainder of the funding would come from. Likewise, although a number of African governments are considering contributing troops, only two, Uganda and Malawi, have made firm commitments.[38] Uganda's forces have been training for the mission for several months and could deploy relatively soon, but it will be several months before a credible and effective AU force is on the ground in Somalia – if ever.

A key consideration in framing AMISOM's concept of operations is the extent to which the TFG can create a political environment conducive to the force's deployment and success. If important communities remain hostile to the TFG, they will be equally hostile to any foreign force they perceive as protecting it. The character of the AU mission would then be peace enforcement rather than peace keeping, which would require a much more robust force to which far fewer countries would be likely to contribute troops.

Even if the Somali population is generally supportive – or at least tolerant – of an AU force, there remains a risk from the Shabaab, as well as clan and nationalist groups harbouring grievances against the TFG. All these are well aware that troop-contributing nations will have less stomach for a fight than Ethiopia, which saw itself as defending vital national security interests; testing of the new troops, therefore, is likely to begin soon after deployment. While the force must be prepared and equipped to defend itself from such attacks, it should not be expected to function as a police force or to pursue and eliminate the Shabaab. This must be the task of government troops, with the assistance of bilateral partners.

The risk of a gap between Ethiopian withdrawal and arrival of peacekeepers is real but it may not be as acute as some observers believe. Ethiopia unofficially had several thousand troops on the ground in Somalia before its full-scale offensive and is likely to leave a significant presence behind, even after a formal withdrawal.

[36] African Union, "Outline Deployment Plan", undated.
[37] Nine infantry battalions of 850 troops each, plus 40 military police.
[38] Uganda's parliament has authorised 1,500 troops; Malawi has yet to give a figure.

F. NEXT STEPS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

There are further critical roles for the broader international community to play in bringing lasting stability to Somalia. This will be among the most important agenda items at the 29-30 January AU Summit in Addis Ababa. It is imperative that African leaders seize the already shrinking window of opportunity and commit adequate resources to Somalia's crisis. The top priority must be strong encouragement and support for a national reconciliation process and formation of more inclusive Somali institutions. Africa leaders should simultaneously approve deployment of an international force (AMISOM) to help stabilise Somalia in the wake of the imminent Ethiopian withdrawal. A more generous response than has so far been forthcoming is urgently needed to reach operational levels sufficient to help stem a relapse into war. Countries such as Nigeria, South Africa, Mozambique, Angola, Tanzania, Rwanda and Tunisia, which have been approached for contributions, should respond positively.

The momentum that the AU summit should generate must be furthered by the International Contact Group on Somalia[39], when those key actors meet on 9 February in Dar-es-Salaam. The Contact Group should be used to promote a unified international approach and press the TFG to adopt a more inclusive and moderate stance. Many Somalis are deeply suspicious of external influence and agendas; visible Contact Group pressure on the TFG to engage broad sections of society would help calm growing tensions and prevent new destabilisation.

Members should also play a decisive role supporting the international force. As the AU is still unable to fund its own peacekeeping operations, it is up to the wider international community, through the Contact Group, to inject the requisite assistance in a timely manner. AMISOM will require not only sufficient numbers but also adequate mobility to respond to situations. Non-African states should provide appropriate logistical support and other force multipliers.

Timely and steadfast leadership will also be required of the UN Secretariat, especially of the new Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, who will attend the AU Summit. He should liaise closely and continuously with relevant leaders to underscore the fragility of the situation in Somalia and spur them into concerted action. The UN Political Office for Somalia, headed by Ambassador Francois Lonseny Fall, should continue to instigate dialogue among clans and between Somali civil society and the TFG.

[39] The International Contact Group on Somalia includes Norway, Sweden, Kenya, the European Union, Italy, Tanzania, the UK, the U.S., the UN, the AU and the Arab League.

IV. CONCLUSION

Ethiopia's victory provides an historic opportunity for Somalia's stabilisation and reconstruction but it carries equal risks of further instability, protracted conflict and incubation of extremism. In defeating the Islamic Courts, Ethiopia has tackled the symptoms rather than the root causes of the security challenges Somalia presents to the region. Ensuring that this opening is not wasted requires the TFG leadership and its international partners, especially Addis Ababa but not least the U.S., to confront several difficult political choices.

Consolidation of the new situation on the ground depends on the degree to which a legitimate, functional system of governance can be re-established. The signs are mixed. The TFG's asserted willingness to deal with potentially hostile communities and their leaders has been offset by the declaration of a state of emergency and the dismissal of the speaker of parliament, poorly thought-through measures which risk narrowing its base of support.

The international community cannot dictate choices to the TFG, but it can – and must – affirm that its political, military and financial support is contingent on the degree to which the Somali leadership shows a firm commitment to consultation, reconciliation and power sharing. Failure to grasp this opportunity would mean an all-too-familiar story line for Somalia of factional fighting and fractured government, in which the conditions that led to the rise of the Courts would surely repeat themselves eventually.

Nairobi/Brussels, 26 January 2007

APPENDIX A

MAP OF SOMALIA

Map No. 3690 Rev. 5 UNITED NATIONS
January 2004

Department of Peacekeeping Operations
Cartographic Section

APPENDIX B

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP

The International Crisis Group (Crisis Group) is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organisation, with nearly 120 staff members on five continents, working through field-based analysis and high-level advocacy to prevent and resolve deadly conflict.

Crisis Group's approach is grounded in field research. Teams of political analysts are located within or close by countries at risk of outbreak, escalation or recurrence of violent conflict. Based on information and assessments from the field, it produces analytical reports containing practical recommendations targeted at key international decision-takers. Crisis Group also publishes *CrisisWatch*, a twelve-page monthly bulletin, providing a succinct regular update on the state of play in all the most significant situations of conflict or potential conflict around the world.

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The Crisis Group Board – which includes prominent figures from the fields of politics, diplomacy, business and the media – is directly involved in helping to bring the reports and recommendations to the attention of senior policy-makers around the world. Crisis Group is co-chaired by the former European Commissioner for External Relations Christopher Patten and former U.S. Ambassador Thomas Pickering. Its President and Chief Executive since January 2000 has been former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans.

Crisis Group's international headquarters are in Brussels, with advocacy offices in Washington DC (where it is based as a legal entity), New York, London and Moscow. The organisation currently operates thirteen field offices (in Amman, Bishkek, Bogotá, Cairo, Dakar, Dushanbe, Islamabad, Jakarta, Kabul, Nairobi, Pristina, Seoul and Tbilisi), with analysts working in over 50 crisis-affected countries and territories across four continents. In Africa, this includes Angola, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, Liberia, Rwanda, the Sahel region, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda and Zimbabwe; in Asia, Afghanistan, Indonesia, Kashmir, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Myanmar/Burma, Nepal, North Korea, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan; in Europe, Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro and Serbia; in the Middle East, the whole region from North Africa to Iran; and in Latin America, Colombia, the Andean region and Haiti.

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