

### The nature of the state in Somalia and Somaliland: The Conversations of the Statebuilding and Peacebuilding Processes

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### *Integrated Field Research Report*

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# **When the State is not a State and Why the State is a State: The Conversations of the Statebuilding and Peacebuilding Processes in Somalia and Somaliland**

## **Abstract**

Based on research data collected in Somalia from May 2015 until August 2016, this paper empirically analyses the internal dynamics and external dimensions of the statebuilding trajectories of Somalia and Somaliland. By looking at how postcolonial structures configured the form and faces of stateness, the paper evaluates the internal dynamics and external dimensions of past and present politics of Somalia and Somaliland to offer empirical and theoretical contributions to why the attempts at peacebuilding and statebuilding projects in Somalia fail from time to time and why Somaliland, by contrast, remains a contrary to such an extent as a unique in both peacebuilding and statebuilding. The comparisons and contrasts between the two entities vary, but the paper shows that there are more dissimilarities than similarities, such as structural differences, state differentiations, contrasting actors and different stakes. Although assessing institutions and actors reveal why a state is a state in Somaliland, examining the state structures in place and the stakes being competed demonstrate why power struggle and resource competition become violent in Somalia. The paper contributes to the research on peacebuilding and statebuilding in war-torn societies as well as on post-war construction and political conflict in Africa.

## **Introduction**

On a warm Sunday at noon, 10 July 2016, I flew from Aden Abdulle's International Airport in Mogadishu and within less than an hour and a half, the African Airways landed at Egaal International Airport in Hargeysa. My mind began to plunge into a deep reflection of the political lives of those who were named after the airports: Aden Abdulle Osman, known as Aden Adde 'Aden the White', an Italian-trained southern businessman, and Mohamed Haji Ibrahim Egaal, a norther British-trained politician. Aden Adde was the Speaker of the Assembly in Somalia under the UN Trusteeship soon before independence, while Egaal as the Prime Minister of British Somaliland oversaw the entity to unite Somalia on 1 July 1960. Somaliland proclaimed independence on 26

June (year), four days before Somalia. United together, they formed The Somali Republic. Thirty years later, on 18 May 1991, Somaliland declared to have 'reclaimed' its sovereignty and established the Somaliland State (Ahere 2013; Bradbury 2008; Lewis 2008; Renders 2012; Richards 2014; Walls 2014). The singularity of one single Somalia has withered away, with the designation of 'Somalia' being enlarged itself into contemporary 'Somalias', but Aden Adde represents a unified one single Somalia, at least theoretically. Egaal, by contrast, stands in practice as the founder – or the father – of Somaliland, basically the man who built on the entity from the scratch. Egaal achieved a unique state-building from below, while Aden Adde avoided to arbitrate the war-weary political groups and retreated to his farm. The Aden and Egaal names given to Mogadishu and Hargeysa airports are not only ophthalmic illustration that Somalia and Somaliland have taken two contrasting routes of statebuilding, but a manifestation that both have pursued two peacebuilding practices through paradoxical paths.

To mediate these two different political or practical trajectories of statebuilding and peacebuilding in Somalia and Somaliland requires a critical consideration of the recent past and present. While Somalia followed – and continue to follow – peacebuilding and statebuilding projects from the top and largely externally-imposed from the outside by the international community, Somaliland pursued statebuilding and peacebuilding processes from below – that is, community level accords shunned with milk and peace centred on the traditional conflict resolution mechanisms (Academy for Peace and Development 2015). The management of the Mogadishu and Hargeysa airports clearly shows the two routes. The security of the Mogadishu airport is administered by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). Carry-on bags and other passengers' baggage, including mine, were checked by guide dogs directed by Ugandan soldiers, while Somali passengers appeared aghast being checked by a beast prohibited by their religion to touch or be touched. This was not the case in Somaliland which governs for and by itself from an income generated by its public. The Egaal airport is a rare site where Somaliland finds a symbolic state recognition for issuing passports and security checks, the place where 'the state begins and ends' (Gandrup 2016: 3). On the queue at the Hargeysa airport, young immigration officers began to ask African Airways passengers for their identity papers. Most of the passengers from Mogadishu insisted that they did not have papers. 'After all', they said, 'we are Somalis', a reminder to the

Somaliland authorities that they are in a territory still legally part of Somalia. The most senior immigration officer, acting in a quiet and calm manner, listened sympathetically to the pleas by Mogadishu passengers. Without demanding a bribe, a common practice in Mogadishu, the officer allowed passengers to proceed to the counter to get an entry.

In the introduction to his edited volume, *Perilous States: Conversation on Culture, Politics, and Nation*, Marcus (1993) proposed that in-depth conversations produce fresh perspectives on unprecedented and unsettling political problems. The practical security arrangements pursued that warm Sunday at the Aden Abdulle airport and continued to present contrarily at the Egaal airport with the background of the political contextualisation remains a precedent of the beginning of the crucial conversations for statebuilding and peacebuilding in Somalia and Somaliland.<sup>1</sup> Internally and externally, Somalia is known as the world's most failed state (Koskenmäki 2004: 1), while Somaliland is promoted as an exceptional case of 'successful post-war political reconstruction' (Renders 2013: 3).<sup>2</sup> While Somaliland was relatively succeeded to establish a state capable of providing peace and security, Somalia is still in perpetual conflicts and persistent civil wars. The state as a source of competition was charted in a critical juncture between the continuation of disintegration, as is Somalia, or promising configuration, as it has become in Somaliland (Villalon and Huxtable 1998). Though weakened by the ousted regime, the social fabric and the kinship ties became intact in the North, whereas it was collapsed with the regime in the southern part of the country.<sup>3</sup> Migdal's (1988) discussion of states as empirical realities versus a set of practices or idea of quasi-states and state sovereignty or even work on 'twilight' states can be useful to explore the political condition between Somalia and Somaliland. What they are meant to look like and what they ought to look like are profoundly different from what they really look like. The existing literature on Somalia and Somaliland fail to clarify how and why the structural divergences in relation to conceptual and methodological dilemmas of statebuilding and peacebuilding have seldom been

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<sup>1</sup> For the role of the airport in the statebuilding of Somaliland, see (Gandrup 2016).

<sup>2</sup> Lewis (2014) makes a Somalia-type sketch of Somaliland that is likened to Yemen, seeing both as 'unstable governance' zones. This description is conflicting given the empirical evidence gathered from the field.

<sup>3</sup> The North stands for Somaliland and the South means Somalia. Throughout this paper, we use interchangeably the South and the North to capture the nuances of post-colonial and post-Siad Barre political and socio-economic conditions of Somalia and Somaliland.

examined.<sup>4</sup> Much has been written on both entities, yet the paradoxical patterns of their statehood are less understood. Political scientists have remained reticent about delving deeper into the different historical trajectories of the politics of Somalia and Somaliland, with few notable exceptions (e.g. Walls 2014).

The important question that this paper sets out to answer is Consider What is the nature of the state in Somalia and how does it contrast in Somaliland? The paper explains why peace has become a problem and state a liability in Somalia and how state was established and peace realised in Somaliland. It does so not by focusing on interstate conflict, but by comparing and contrasting the structural state modes and means, particularly how the present and past politics influence the patterns of peacebuilding and the model of statebuilding. Drawing on Brosché and Höglund (2016) who make central in their analysis of statebuilding and peacebuilding in war-torn societies by bringing actors, institutions and stakes actors to the centre of conceptual discussion, the paper takes these three key components as an analytical framework. However, the paper develops this innovative theoretical framework to include structural state systems and clan politics to capture the nuances and situate the empirical reality on the ground. The paper argues that statebuilding and peacebuilding in Somalia and Somalia is shaped by many layers, such as the variances of the postcolonial state structure and institutionalised clan politics, the manipulation of state actors and fluctuating stakes. Through the assessment of actors and institutional clan politics and stakes, the paper reveals institutional and structural state differences revealed by the differentiation of contrasting actors and high politico-economic stakes. As noted by Renders (2012: 4-5): 'Formal and informal elements [of state structures can] coexist, overlap, intertwine and influence each other. Institutions do not exist in a socio-political vacuum. Neither do the actors concerned stick mechanically to their institutionally prescribed behaviour, discourse, and modes of action'.

Based on an ongoing qualitative ethnographic observation conducted in Somalia and Somaliland, the paper proposes that Somalia and Somaliland, which provide empirical evidence for the paradoxical trends of the conflicting statehoods, need to come to terms

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<sup>4</sup> The only exceptional is Ahmed and Green (1999) who explore the effects of war and state collapse on Somalia and Somaliland.

with their past to deal with the present. For many years, political and economic conditions in Somalia make it a difficult place to gather information. Personal insecurity, the political climate of uncertainty, combined with daily economic hardship confronting the masses, made the collection of systematic data difficult. Researchers intent on examining Somali issues preferred to gather their data in other relative peaceful parts, such as Somaliland. Hardly do researchers try to carry out research in war-torn Somalia where suicidal attacks and explosions are recurring. Data was collected from news reports, content analysis of primary documents, focus group discussions, ongoing ethnographic (participant-observer) observations. Data was collected through focus group discussions and repeat semi-structured formal and informal interviews (both in public and in private) with academics, businessmen, bystanders, political players, traditional clan headmen, UN staff and countless ordinary people (altogether 157 persons). Research was also conducted in Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya in 2015 and 2016.

## **The Past Plunders and the Present Politics**

### ***The Differentiation of Structural State***

The roots and realities of the structural state historicity in both Somalia and Somaliland had its origins within the altered approaches of the European colonialism which carved the Somali territories in the Horn of Africa into five territories. Two of these were ruled by the British, the rest three by the French, the Italians and the Ethiopians (Brons 2002; Drysdale 1964; Lewis 2002; Mohamed 2007). The British designated their portion British Somaliland, the Italians named their chunk '*Somalia Italiana*' (Italian Somalia). The British created a state system in the North that contrasted starkly with the system in the South (Contini 1969), that was characterised by transparent institutional structures but more dependent on the clan system compared to the South where the Italian colonial authorities preferred total domination to rule over clans. Hence two paradoxical state structural systems developed; one purely British, and the other totally Italian. The British model was based on an indirect rule system of governance, basically a protectorate, while the Italian state model was more or less a direct rule governance system, a colony for that matter. Both colonial systems of governance, however, pursued a 'decentralised despotism' (Mamdani 1996: 37) to administer their 'unruly'

Somalis (Gustavo 1939; Hanley 2004 [1971]). What difference has a dual colonial state system made on the Somalis who lived in Somalia versus those of Somaliland? If colonialism had a deep structural impact on Somaliland so too was Italian colonialism (especially with its fascist period) in Somalia. If the real and persistent differences between the British and the Italian rule, surely their impacts must have, perforce, been different too.

Somaliland is an older sister of Somalia. Somalis in Somaliland negotiated their independence with the British on their own at Lancaster House in London in July 1959 (Colonial Office 1960; Somaliland 1960). Somalia's case was different since it was debated in the UN General Assembly in November 1949 (Cassanelli 1994; Iman 2015; Trunji 2015). The birth of the Somali nation-state was confirmed on 1 July 1960, with the jubilation of the Somali masses, activated by the activities of the nationalist movements borne out during the World War II.<sup>5</sup> The idea for amalgamation between the two entities emanated from a motion issued in April 1960 by the Legislative Council of British Somaliland, collectively calling for a union with Somalia (*The Times* 1960a; *The Times* 1960b; also Lewis 1962; 162; Renders 45; Tripodi 1996: 93). The fusion was legitimised by an act of union complemented by a popular support from the public, particularly Southerners. From Somalia and Somaliland union, the Westminster-style British parliamentary system of the North was to be superseded by the Palazzo Montecitorio-style of Italian parliamentary system in the South (The Constitution of the Somali Republic, Article 1). The only difference was that, where the Italian Parliament followed bicameral, the Somali became unicameral.

The evolution of The Somali Republic was an accidental state from the first place. The joyful experience of the union was interrupted by the clear remainder that the new republic was celebrated with an incomplete sense of statehood as three other Somali territories were under occupation. Aden Adde compellingly affirmed, in what was his first speech to the outside world, during the formation of the Organisation of African Union (OAU) in 1963 that the Somali Republic will peacefully seek to merge with other

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<sup>5</sup> 'Aden Abdille Osman iyo Malinti Xoriyada', <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OmbcBMYbaNc> (between min. 00:01 – 1:43), accessed on 19 July 2016); 'Waraysi dhaxalgal ah oo Marxuum Cigaal lagula yeeshay Djibouti', <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=riSUS-LyGYs> (between min. 3:26 – 6:21), accessed on 13 April 2014.



missing Somali territories (*The Ethiopian Observer* 1963: 45-48). The smooth transition from decolonisation to post-colonial rule meant a continuation of the colonial state bedecked with Somali faces. The aspirations and ambitions of the political players and bystanders from the North, as difficult as it was, immediately clashed with those from the South. The northerners were quick to express and articulate their grievances through oral poetry and, at times, through stone throwing. Shortly following independence, one aggrieved poet from the North expressed his people's outrage in a poetic euphemism, describing the defunct British Somaliland not less than an abandoned betrothed lady.<sup>6</sup> This was designed – or destined – to demonstrate that the union project had been invalid in the eyes of the people in the North. The failure of the new postcolonial leaders to reconsider the growing grievances against the new power dispensation by a considerable number of citizens contributed to the loss of state legitimacy and public support by Northerners (General Elmi Sahal Ali, telephone interview, 23 June 2014; Urdoh 1967: 20).

### ***The Beginning of Discontent***

The conversations of statebuilding in The Somali Republic began as a political bargain anchored on which clan should take what. The conventional clan wisdom as a crucial factor to which clan consideration had to be conferred determined that the President and the Prime Minister *should* not belong to the same clan-group. This wisdom carried a cloaked clause of power-sharing gentleman's agreement between Hawiye and Daarood political players, an agreement that put other major clans, such as the Isaaq, the predominant clan in the North, as well as the Digil/Mirifle, on the periphery (for clan analysis, see Mansur 1995). The conventional power dispensation was the Hawiye for the post of the presidency, the Daarood for prime Minister and the Isaaq for speaker of the parliament.<sup>7</sup> Aden Adde was persuaded by the Daarood political players that the Hawiye and the Isaaq constituted the Irir genealogical ancestry, so the distribution for powerful political positions had to be based on the Irir and the Daarood basis. Since he was an Irir, Aden Adde was told to choose a prime minister from the Daarood clan-

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<sup>6</sup> The poet chanted: 'For the marriageable Haweeyo, my mates advised me to wed) / While she gave me a green light, I left her alone) / It is me who brought this spiteful upon myself) / All ye who feel as I do, do not spurn sovereignty)' (For details, see Johnson 2010: 231).

<sup>7</sup> The speaker of the parliament was not sufficient and the Isaaq élites never felt satisfied with it (Ghalib 1994).

group. When Aden Adde became the first President of the Republic, most Somalis expected him to give the position of the prime minister to Egaal, but his failure to do so led to unforgivable memories (field notes, Hargeysa, July-August 2016). Instead, he appointed prime minister Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke from the Majeerteen, the clan of his formidable wife Asha Elmi Mataan. The unusual appointment, fomented élite animosity between Isaaq and Majeerteen political players, and equally outraged masses in Somaliland who felt betrayed by their southern brethren with whom they ‘sacrificed’ and ‘surrendered’ their sovereignty for the cause of the Greater Somalia.<sup>8</sup> To the dismay of many Isaaq élites, both the posts of the chief commandant of the armed forces and the chief commissioner of the police forces were given to the southerners (Adam 1995; Ghalib 1995).

The postcolonial politics of distributing influential power positions based on clan affiliations, as practised in Mogadishu, was not what the Isaaq élites in the North had expected. The configuration of the state power dispensation behind-the-scenes was not without flaws as two determinant conundrums faced the new republic. First was a postcolonial state restructuring and second was institutionalised clan politics. The Isaaq people felt that there was no meaningful political power left for the North as influential power positions had already been negotiated and distributed behind-the-scenes by Hawiye and Daarood political players and what remained was only leftovers. Since the state was captured – or so was shared – by the Hawiye and the Daarood, the zero-sum political structuration had nothing much to offer to the Isaaq, a clan that had produced more committed nationalists than Hawiye and Daarood combined.<sup>9</sup> As clan identity became the basis for dispensing power positions, the new state itself became the producer of clannism, the principle of favouritism and nepotism for one’s clan members. How political players and brokers in the South were reading the new state structure was to be profitable for themselves personally and protective for their clans (focus groups, Mogadishu, 30 May 2015 and Hargeysa, 18 July 2016, Hargeysa). The fact that the new republic was constructed and configured on clan basis rather than the North-South power sharing came to haunt forever. The Isaaq grievances were excruciatingly

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<sup>8</sup> For the recent analysis on the Greater Somalia, see Zoppi (2015).

<sup>9</sup> Household names, such as Haji Farah Omaar, Sheikh Ali Madar, Clement Salool Alex Qolqoole and Michael Marino, were unequalled in the history of modern Somali nationalism. ‘1DA LUULYO 2011 PART 2 London UK for Universal Tv tii ugu dadka badneyd ebid. qubaha’, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5hBvGe0DVU4> (between min. 57:51 – 1:08:06), accessed on 19 July 2016).

surfaced to the fore on 9 December 1961, when some British- and Egyptian-trained mutinous military officers attempted to seize power through a coup, with the sole intention of seceding Somaliland from Somalia. The coup, though aborted, was triggered by three interconnected reasons: (1) the passing of the post of prime minister, (2) the perceived injustice over deferred military promotion and (3) the result of the constitutional referendum on 20 June 1961, where 54% of the Northern population had voted in opposition to it (Caddow 2001: 17; Del Boca 1992: 344; Drysdale 2000: 77; Dualeh 1994: 24). The state response to such legitimate grievances were coercive and mainly focused on suppressing revolts instigated by the Isaaq in 1963 and the Habar Gidir clan of the Hawiye clan-group in 1964. The revolts were an extreme expression of reaction towards the post-colonial political power dispensation in which they deemed heavily marginalised under the Daarood-dominated administration.

The trial of the coup plotters in 1963 was intriguing as it became a replica of colonial court operating in a post-colonial space. The chief judge of the court was British with Italian prosecutors and Indian lawyers.<sup>10</sup> The military-led coup in 1961 was the first indicator that that the union between the two territories were not founded on a firm basis. But the responsible manner in which the civilian government accepted the acquittal verdict of the coup plotters was also unparalleled compared to other coup in postcolonial Africa where the fate of such officers would most likely have been a death sentence. The court process was a political drama on one hand, but a fair judicial process on the other hand. However, the fistful manner the civilian government had handled the clan uprisings evoked traditional clan rivalries, especially between the Isaaq versus the Majeerteen on one hand and the Habar Gidir and the Majeerteen on the other. The local police force in Dhuusamareeb led by Koosafaaro, a Daarood/Dhulbahante officer, with the orders of his chief General Mohamed Abshir Muuse, a Daarood/Majeerteen, carried the first colonial-type operation by unleashing a collective punishment campaign on the Eyr/Habar Gidir (Aroma 2005a). This led to the formation of the first armed resistance group known as *Koofiya-Dhuub* in Somalia.<sup>11</sup> From then on, the perceived marginalised political players from the Hawiye and the

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<sup>10</sup> The main instigators of this coup were eighteen young military officers from the North. among and other officers. See 'Trial of Army Officers in Mogadishu', *Somali News*, Friday, February 15, 1963, A4.

<sup>11</sup> For an excellent summary reviewing these events, see Amina (1994: 99-109).

Isaaq began to blame President Aden Adde for siding with their political rivals based on their marital affiliation..

## **The Disintegration and Development**

### ***The Emergence of Somaliland***

The moment for which the northerners waited came in 1967, when Aden Adde lost the presidency to Abdirashid, his former premier. Somali politics changed in favour of the North as Abdirashid immediately nominated Egaal as prime minister. This was a ground-breaking solution for the ruinous relations between the North and the South. Egaal's appointment was a landmark for two reasons. First it: mitigated the northern's grievances and second re-established diplomatic relations with the British. In addition to leaning to the West, especially the U.S. and the UK, Egaal pursued perilous policies of soothing the acrimony over lost territories between the Somali Republic and its neighbouring states of Ethiopia and Kenya. He was in this unfinished business, when his government was cut short by the wind of the military coup that swept through most of the African continent. As the civilian rule, which lasted for nine years, was forcefully overthrown by a military junta, led by the Commandant of the army General Mohamed Siad Barre,—from the Daarood/Mareehaan—attempts to address the Northern people's grievances were now in jeopardy (Dualeh 1994). Since Siad Barre perused the nuances of the Somali clan politics better than anyone else in his military junta, he accommodated the Isaaq élites from the North while isolating their Majeerteen rivals in the South. It did not take long for the Isaaq political players to understand that Siad Barre, who was previously a soldier both for the British and for the Italian colonial rule, was inclined to re-introduce the colonial policy of 'divide and rule'. Given the arming and political backing of one clan against the other, no clan or community was safe from Siad Barre's wrath (interviews with army Somali officers, 20 September 2015 and 3 May 2016; Africa Watch 1990; Adam 1992; Adam 1994; Besteman 1996; Faarax 1990).

Siad Barre's regime's twenty-one-year long oppressive rule till it, was ousted on 26 January 1991;<sup>12</sup> led to upheavals that culminated not only in Somalia becoming

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<sup>12</sup> The declaration choice of the formation of the Somali National Movement (SNM) in April 1981 and the United Somali Congress (USC) in January 1989 was the reflection and the result of colonial separation of Somalia and Somaliland.

stateless but also claimed by multiple entities, power personalities and polities. Though the Tillyan model of 'war makes the state' (Tilly 2002: 35-60) was appreciated in Somaliland – and to some extent, Puntland, his 'state makes war' thesis was invalidated in (South-Central) Somalia. From the perspective of violent statebuilding, warfare prepares rulers to restrain rivals (*ibid.*). This holds true for Somaliland, but it has not been the case in Somalia where the war did not restrain contestants. On the contrary, whenever a conflict ended another began. Efforts of reconciling multifarious and miscellaneous warring armed groups and reconstituting the central state ended with an utter failure. Somalia saw the emergence of violent struggles for power between various factional leaders (the so-called 'warlords') throughout the 1990s, plunging into a period of intermittent violent conflicts between the years 1991 and 2000. While Somalia disintegrated a

s a unified state, Somaliland, emerged largely unified although lobbyists do not accept the fact that it was borne out from the state collapse in Somalia. Somaliland began to take a different route, but not without violence, even it was restated that it had chosen violence over politics (Bradbury et. al. 2003).

## **The Poles of Power and Peacebuilding**

### ***When Peace is not a Peace***

Following the grand conference of Bur'o declaration of the Somaliland independence, the Somali National Movement (SNM), which liberated Somaliland from Siad Barre's remnants, began a process of statebuilding, but failed to restore peace due to internal power struggles. The project of statebuilding was more preferential to the SNM, as it was necessary for the appeal of international recognition, than to a peacebuilding process. A turbulent period developed where the SNM went through intra-Isaaq infightings as the new SNM government was violently challenged. Rather than beginning a process of peacebuilding, the new president Abdirahman Ahmed Ali 'Tuur', a Habar Yonis, pursued a statebuilding project. By the time Tuur had commenced his mission to build the state, everything had to be started from zero. Tuur's mistake was seeking to strengthen the state in order to reach to the periphery while barely controlling the capital Hargeysa. His determination to secure income-generating source for the state pushed him to clash his defence minister Colonel Mohamed Kaahin, the heavyweight Habar Awal war veteran (focus group discussions, Hargeysa, 13 and 20

July 2016). The challenge that Tuur had met from the Habar Awal led to armed conflict, when he was replaced by Egaal, the most senior Habar Awal political player. In contrast to Tuur, Egaal began a process of peacebuilding among the Isaaq clans. Since Tuur was challenged by the Habar Awal, it was expected that Egaal would encounter a confrontation with the Habar Yonis.

Egaal was persuaded to return to his clan for support, but the fact that he carried out a political path contrary to the SNM objectives frustrated the process of peacebuilding. Having failed to obtain the support of the main SNM leaders, Egaal could not but need to use the former Siad Barre remnants to realise the ongoing process of the statebuilding. The challenge particularly posed to him by the so-called *Calancas* (the red flag group) had forced him to use the former Siad Barre intelligence officers to consolidate his power and expand authority. Following Siad Barre's fall, these officers felt it difficult to survive in a pool of warring groups without a government, so they navigated ways of being useful to whoever in power. Yet Egaal sought to alter the political culture bequeathed to Somaliland from the Siad Barre regime into a civilian administration assisted by *caaqillo*, *chief caaqillo* and *guurti* (traditional clan headmen). It was not him, however, but the organisers of the grand conferences of Borame and Sheikh who had transformed the militarised politics of SNM into a civilian state system. To his benefit, these conferences helped Egaal to obtain the legitimacy to rule. For his government to get assistance in his day-to-day business, Egaal granted salaries to the *caaqillo and chief caaqillo*. Such incorporation drew directly from British rule.

To rule was one thing, but to administer was another. To foster peace with the war-weary SNM veterans, Egaal carried out demobilisation programmes for militias, while carefully consolidating his power base (Feisal Ali Sheikh, Hargeysa, 18 July 2016, interview). In contrast with Somalia, Somaliland was less resourceful because the only source of income was the Berbera Port and the Hargeysa airport, which were tussled by the Habar Awal and the Habar Yonis on one hand and the Habar Awal and the Edegelle on the other (Somaliland civil servants, Hargeysa, 17 July 2016, interviews).<sup>13</sup> In

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<sup>13</sup> Marchal (1996: 79) maintains that the conflict between the Habar Awal and the Habar Yonis was more economics and business than political. It is clear that a politico-economic factor overshadowed the long historical contestation between the two leading political players and businessmen of the two clans (Somaliland civil servants, interviews, 17 July).

Somalia, the control of towns outside the capital Mogadishu, such as Baydhabo and Kismaayo, was an asset securing the extraction of extorted income. The international aid was also flowing en masse into Somalia given the UN/US military intervention of Restore Hope. This exacerbated a competition for revenues. Egaal realised that he inherited a weak state and rarely attempted to use military power to defeat his rivals. Where Egaal and Tuur had civilian (political and diplomatic) background, the main competitors for political power in Somalia, such as General Mohamed Farah Aideed, Colonel Ahmed Omar Jees, Colonel Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, Colonel Mohamed Nuur Aliyow, General Mohamed Abshir, General Mohamed Said Hersi 'Morgan, with the exception of Ali Mahdi Mohamed, were military men who believed in military solution than political settlement (e.g. Aideed 1994; Ahmed 2012).<sup>14</sup> Egaal's unexpected attempt to intervene in Somali politics in 1999, when competing armed factional groups were 'doing well out of war' (Collier 2000: 91-111), was obstructed by the sudden intervention of President Ismail Omar Geelle of Djibouti.

### ***When Peace is a Peace***

The literature on peacebuilding often focuses on the top-down approaches and thus tends to overlook indigenous peacebuilding initiatives initiated by women, religious groups, community members and other civil society groups (Roland 2004; Thakur *et. al.* 2005).<sup>15</sup> In Somaliland, a process of peacebuilding assisted by traditional clan elders was pursued, even though still some peripheral areas in Somaliland were not totally convinced for the statebuilding process. The blueprint framework for top-down peacebuilding process has not worked and even became unattainable over the last twenty-five years for Somalia. Attempts at creating peace from the top have failed repeatedly since the Black Hawk Down fiasco in 1993 in which the U.S. forces were bogged down by Somali National Alliance (SNA) forces of General Aideed (Elmi 1992; Hirsch and Oakley 1995). Peacebuilding needs to address human needs, but it requires institutions that not only create and maintain peace but ensure the rule of law. When there is a lack of police force and other formal institutions, the role can be played by

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<sup>14</sup> Tuur would later renounce the Somaliland secession in November 1994, retreating to Mogadishu where he became vice President in General Aideed's *Salballaar* (broad-based) government in June 1995.

<sup>15</sup> Goetze and Guzina (2008: 320) have argued that 'in order to build peace, we need to build states, in order to build states, we need to build nations, in order to build nations, we need to build civil societies, in order to build societies we need to build democracy'.

indigenous institutions. The traditional clan elders in Somaliland filled in this void, but disregarding them made peace in Somalia infeasible.

The political stability in Somaliland can be attributed to clan elders and local clan conflict resolution mechanisms which are able to arbitrate between competing political players in contrast with Somalia which forbids clan elders to intervene in political disputes. The twilight authority or the hybrid state system whereby the traditional clan elders have a political say on political matters worked well in Somaliland, whereas in Somalia the politico-economic power of the political players undermined the emergence of a rule parallel to their authority. While in Somalia they are useful for the process of selecting parliamentarians, in Somaliland traditional clan elders are a permanent part of the state structure. The *Guurti*, the clan council, plays an important role not only in solving clan conflicts, but also in resolving political conflicts (field notes, Hargeysa, 11 July 2016; Mohamed Ahmed Mohamed Barawani, Hargeysa, 19 July 2016, interview). The Somaliland's case has offered hope to people and political players to collaborate with the clan elders (*Somaliland Today* 2016; *The Africa Report* 2015). The *Guurti* have extensive powers as far as to legitimise the government in power, but the fact that they decide the extension of presidential mandate makes the state system very rotten. Before reconfiguration of the state in post-Tuur Somaliland, the government was subordinate to clan authority. The traditional clan headmen in Somali society were historically selected not through a direct or representative democratic process, but via clan consensus rooted in an egalitarian open discussion (Gundel and Dharbaxo 2006). In some places in Somali territories, such a selection procedure endured the involvement of even those who were mentally ill. To take one example, a notable Sultan of the central Somali territories, the outstanding Sultan Ahmednur Ali Guled, who reigned during the mid-twentieth-century in Adaado town, had once permitted a locally-known mentally-deranged man to add his opinion to a matter of a sub-clan dispute (focus group discussions, Adaado and Godinlabe, 1-9 June 2015). Remarkably, the Sultan approved the judgement of the deranged man in his final verdict.

### ***The Come-back or Go-Back?***

Even though it had experienced years of contested and conflicting politics, Somaliland started as a 'negotiated state' (Hagmann and Péclard 2010; Renders and Terlinden



2010) or a 'mediated state' (Menkhaus 2008) that developed into a hybrid state order combining modern and traditional modes of authority. The evolution of hybrid institutional development and socio-economic difference contributes to the Somaliland successes as a state. Negotiated settlement and solution to the political conflict between clans and communities led to relative stability. Unlike Somalia Brosché and Höglund (2016: 69), Somaliland has been struggling not to achieve peace and built a functioning state, but to achieve international recognition for that state. Why Somaliland needs an international recognition? Does it aim to capture international resources as some critics constantly claim? The international aid continues to fuel the political conflicts in the emerging new mini-states in Somalia.<sup>16</sup> The fact that Somaliland authorities are not sufficiently concentrating on local resources reveals that they see the international recognition as a conduit for international aid. Somalia has perfected the portrayal of what Clapham (Clapham 1996: 20) considered the 'letterbox sovereignty' – which means the idea 'that whoever opened the letters in the presidential palace received the invitation to represent the state concerned in the United Nations and other international bodies'. Reflecting on the Siad Barre's dictatorial and destructive policies, some observers have argued that Somalia is better off without a state (Leeson 2007; Powell et. al. 2008).<sup>17</sup> One important implication of this position is that, rather than viewing war as a 'stupid' act (Crammer 2006) – war is not necessarily a bad thing anyway – research should consider the other sides of the war and armed conflicts. Other observers – more sympathetic than anyone else – prayed for the Somali State to come back (Luling 1997).

The come-back suggestion depends on the political path to take. It is all about how politics is structured and which state system is preferred. The civilian politics allowed Somaliland to come up with a new state upon a new African concept of a state, an indigenous forms of governance, whereas Somalia hardly appropriates the definition of state as an organised political polity with a single system of governance given the emergence of Galmudug State, Jubbaland State, Puntland State, the Southwest State and other emerging mini-states. Over the years, Somaliland has been struggling to keep

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<sup>16</sup> Recently, there were reports that aid contributed to the conflict between the Federal Government in Mogadishu and Puntland (Garowe 2016).

<sup>17</sup> One important implication of this position is that, rather than viewing war as a 'stupid' thing (Crammer 2006), research should consider the other sides of war.

itself away from the proliferation of ‘federal’ states so contagious with Somalia. The Somaliland civil society leader states that the fragmentation of Somalia into fiefdom further erodes the prospect for Somaliland to-join Somalia as one single unified Somali State (Mohamed Ahmed Mohamed Barawani, interview, Hargeysa, 19 July 2016). In the federal vocabulary of Somalia, Somaliland is seen as a ‘one-clan project’ from which non-Isaaq clans would be politically marginalised sooner or later once the entity is recognised. But the Isaaq are not the only ones, albeit the loudest, who are advocating for formal independence from Somalia for Somaliland. There are quite supportive elements for the case in the Gadabiirsi, the Iise and the Warsangeli clans, even in the midst of such dissenting voices as the Dhulbahante.

### ***Peacebuilding and Nationbuilding***

Somaliland was built on a grievance-based ideology rather than nationhood identity of Somalilandness to attract for a wider communal and cohesive solidarity above clan.<sup>18</sup> It is worthy of note that, when the SNM liberated most of Somaliland in 1991, they did not attempt to take advantage of the weaker position of the less numerous clans to conquer them and powerfully impose their role, partly because the various Isaaq political players – under the cloak of clan rivalry – were competing over power: who should take what. Although the process of statebuilding was largely successful in the Isaaq-dominated territories, there are conflicting voices of people from Awdal and Sool regions objecting to the secession project (BBC 2016). This means that narratives of statebuilding and peacebuilding in Somaliland, even if negotiated, are not settled. The problem the Dhulbahante political players have with Somaliland relates to clan allegiance, for example the memory of Siad Barre’s rule in which they had a lion’s share, a fact that forces them to wait for a rule led by another Siad Barre and the question of the Harti unity which primarily attaches them with Puntland. The Gadabiirsi élites, on the other hand, integrated deeply into the Somaliland State system soon after some elements of the Dhulbahante and the Warsangeli joined their co-clansmen in Puntland in 1998.<sup>19</sup> From there on, there was no language that could politically align the

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<sup>18</sup> Political identities in Somaliland and Puntland can be influenced by the production of the political processes upon which they were emerged (Mamdani 2001: 281).

<sup>19</sup> The fact that the Gadabiirsi academic-turned politician Ahmed Samatar, who once condemned what he called the Isaaq domination of every aspect of life in the new Somaliland, including the state, is now an avid supporter of the Somaliland State suggests that authorities in Hargeysa have accommodated dissent voices and thus achieved much more political support than they had possessed from the outset. ‘Prof. Ahmed Ismail [S]amatar

Gadabiirsi with the Harti clan coalition formed to promote parochial clan interests contrary to their political alliance in the 1960s under the United Somali Party (USP). The only concern for the Gadabiirsi élites is to increase their parliamentary seat numbers.

A further problem is that an existing set of Somaliland identity encompassing all the clans and communities has not born out with the formation of the state in Somaliland. In the capital Hargeysa, there is no common identity of *Somalilandness*, but there is an overarching one of unanimously unified ideology advocating for Somaliland as a nation-state paralleled to Djibouti or Somalia. The assumption that 'lesser educated citizens are more likely to embrace manufactured (sub)nationalist sentiments' (Englebert 2009: 22) – is to the contrary in Somaliland. The more they educated, the more they lobby to secede from the union and the less they educated, the less they harbour (sub)nationalist sentiments (field notes, Hargeysa, 22 July 2015). Since Somalia is still called a 'parent state' in the context of the language of the international diplomacy, when in 2002 the Somaliland authorities formally invited the African Union to assess its suitability for membership of the organisation, the fact-finding mission presented to the AU Commission that Somaliland's case was 'unique and self-justified African political history' (AU Document 2005; also International Crisis Group 2006). The AU mission suggested that Somaliland's case would not open the door to other secessionist claims on the continent, a fear that bars the other African States to recognise the entity. However, Somaliland's success has invariably been gauged in contrast with the state collapse and the state failure in Somalia. When the two pictures are weighted against each other, the outcome is immensely obvious: anything compared to Somalia can suddenly seem to be a success, so much so the compared becomes exceptional. This kind of comparison and contrasting politics has hitherto worked for Somaliland.

## **The Statehood and Stateness**

### ***The Identity Politics***

As the above sections illustrate, the statebuilding and peacebuilding programmes have been long-term processes in Somaliland, in contrast with Somalia, where both

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(Somaliland waa muqadas) oo ka soo laabtay Hargaysa', <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cSfjo8KPZCU> (between min. 0:51 – 35:05), accessed on 20 July 2016.

statebuilding and peacebuilding are quick short-term projects. The state is absent outside the so-called 'green zone' – the area around the presidential palace – and rarely reaches to the outskirts of the capital. In everyday life, discourses of stateness – to be or not to be a state – structure political messages with which people identify their political engagements with powerful political players who profit from those states. The state structure in Somaliland is built on a presidential system in which the president has a vice president, but in Somalia the president and the prime minister have transecting and traversing powers invested in them by the constitution (cf. The Constitution of Somalia 2012; The Constitution of Somaliland 2000). Such different state structures contribute to political stability in Somaliland, but instability in Somalia, exacerbated by the struggles for power through clan politics. How to satisfy clans and create clan balancing delay the development of robust state institutions in both Somalia and Somaliland. When appointing army or police generals, the Somaliland president has to consider an equal share between the clans (focus group discussions, Hargeysa, 14 and 18 July 2016). Clan identity (Brosché and Höglund 2016: 85) is 'the most important political asset' in both Somalia and Somaliland. Clan is more conservative socially and politically conventional in the latter than in the former.

The conventional wisdom in Somaliland is that each clan has its time to assume the presidency. The would-be political players from the Habar Je'elo, the clan of the incumbent Somaliland president, will not contest for the presidency in the next presidential elections. It was thought that the time for Edagale or Arap has come, but the Sa'ad Muuse/Habar Awal, the most influential clan in Somaliland, argued for a legitimate case of their first turn to hold the presidency of Somaliland, as the Habar Yonis, the Iise Muuse/Habar Awal and the Habar Je'elo held the presidential seat. Though this could be our turn to eat (Branch *et al.* 2010), such accepted power-sharing understanding does not – and cannot – exist in Somalia where the intra- and inter-clan competition for power can hardly be settled. The Hawiye and the Daarood political players are unwilling to allow each other to take their turn and this leads to the state system prone to authoritarianism and to gradually develop into a dictatorship. The state in Somalia is violently contested not only by political players and businessmen from the Hawiye and the Daarood, but by others from a cluster of clans and communities, who compete within themselves in the name of their clans, sub-clans and sub-sub clans (field

notes, Mogadishu, July-September 2015, April-July 2016). The conventional wisdom that the state in Somaliland is heavily dominated by the Isaaq clan-group, more cohesive than the Hawiye and the Daarood, makes the competition over power positions and state resources less violently contested. The other main factor is that, while there is no established powerful clan-group in Somalia, members of the Isaaq clan-group constitute a clear majority in Somaliland.<sup>20</sup>

Power positions are loosely distributed in Somalia through the Four Point Five (4.5) Formula which requires four clan-groups; the Daarood, the Digil/Mirifle, the Dir (the Isaaq is included in this category) and the Hawiye to have equal power positions in the government. It is, however, the sole authority of every Hawiye president who he chooses for prime minister from the Daarood and who he chooses from other remaining clans for ministers, director generals, ambassadors, managers, so on. There are some rare exceptions to this rule. The prime minister and the speaker of the parliament use their influential positions to add three to five ministers into the cabinet. Most, if not all, of those selected are chosen not for their qualifications, but for their loyalty to the presidency. Despite Somalis recommended for government positions by the international community and Ethiopia, the loyalty to the presidential palace is much more important than the loyalty to the state, which is something that hinders the efficiency of state functions. As one advisor to the presidency admitted, 'we seek people whom we trust and who show loyalty to us' (presidential advisor, Mogadishu, 20 May 2015, interview). Through this loyalty, ministers in Somalia take money derived from the ministerial budget to the presidency, while in Somaliland ministers go to the presidency to get additional money for their ministers (field notes, Mogadishu and Hargeysa, 2015 and 2016). This is not to sugar coat the state system in Somaliland which has its defects and flaws. Corruption is no less prevalent in Hargeysa which the police are claimed to have more discipline and experience than their counterparts in Mogadishu (Somaliland police officers, Hargeysa, 19 July 2016, interviews), a claim also reversed by Mogadishu police officers (Somalia police officers, 11 August 2015, interviews). From a direct participant-observation, the two police institutions are as corrupt as any other by referring to the same tactics of the Siad Barre regime to extort

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<sup>20</sup> Population statistics produced by the British rule in the beginning of the World War II put the Isaaq clan-group at more than 70% of the territory inhabitants (British Somaliland Document 1941).

money from the public (field notes, Hargeysa, 21 July 2016 and Mogadishu, 21 September 2015). But the institutional corruption – buying and selling out votes – is more widespread in Somalia than Somaliland during the periods when the parliament sits to elect a president.

### ***Power and Positions***

Somalia lacks established political parties other than personal parties, while Somaliland has a rigorous but rowdy political opposition parties, like the Waddani and the Ucid, which had a say – considering the current political stalemate between the government part of Kulmiye and the political opposition party of Waddani – in the reconfiguration of the state system and distribution of power.<sup>21</sup> The nature of interaction and advancement between the two political players in Somalia and Somaliland is not as visible as it seems from the outside. The discontinuity of the political players is a crucial factor in this regard. In Somaliland, the main political players – Ahmed Siilaanyo, the incumbent President; Saleebaan Mohamoud Aden, the Chairman of the *Guurti* (the Upper House); Muuse Biihi Abdi, the presidential hopeful, as well as the political opposition leaders Feysal Ali Waraabe and Abdirahman Mohamed Abdullahi ‘Irro’ – have not been changed since the 1990s and playing politics since the Egaal days. As the Executive Director of Somaliland Non-State Actors Forum (SONSAF) highlighted, ‘you have to be an old hand to have your place in Somaliland politics’ (Mohamed Ahmed Mohamed Barawani, Hargeysa, 19 July 2016, interview). Somalia, by contrast, produces a new cadre of political players in every four years. This makes statebuilding difficult and averts peacebuilding process to take root. As one elder in Somalia noted, ‘the state of Somalia was captured by political brokers and businessmen who crave for money much more than anything else’ (Mohamed Hassan Hussein, Mogadishu, 29 May 2016, interview). Once they join the political field, the new political players in Somalia grasp that they lack the fundamentals and ingredients to build a power base without resorting to the international community. However, states cannot be built on the sole basis of the donor shadow. As an academic at the University of Hargeisa pointed out, state legitimacy and public support are the prerequisites for a state to be considered as a state (Nasir Mohamed Ali, Hargeysa, 15 July 2016, interview). Legitimacy is crucial for

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<sup>21</sup> As is South Sudan (Brosché and Höglund 2016), the policy of co-optation – the attempt by the government to work with its rivals – does not exist in Somalia.

the post-war reconstruction and political stability of Somalia enabling the 'weak state' to function (Holsti 1996), but it cannot be achieved while people's grievances are not addressed.

The issue of recognition is very critical and conflicting both in Somalia and Somaliland, so are the stake-related issues of resources and representation. The stakes are shaped by the state system in place depending on the price of power positions have always been higher in Somalia than in Somaliland. Government positions in the latter are distributed through balancing clans (as in Somalia, to some extent), but they are occupied by people who were selected because they possess political, economic or intellectual influence. One is accepted in the influential positions of power in Somaliland if confirmed to possessing one of three prerequisites: (1) a political career, (2) an academic profession, (3) or a rebel background. Somalia politics are structured such that if one does not have money to buy the influence for political office, one cannot enter the national parliament. Those who have the money and the means to influence the top political players in power could aspire to assume a political position in the government. Here, similar to South Sudan, 'the prospects for ordinary members to influence decisions are strictly limited' (Brosché and Höglund 2016: 85). Political players in South Sudan 'are given prominent positions depending on how large a threat they constitute' (*ibid.*, 81). But this is not the case in Somalia, where there exists a 'winner-takes-all' state system that leaves little to rival powerful competing groups. Assassinations are thus rife in the capital Mogadishu to allow for powerful political players, who had already been playing in the political field, to eliminate their political challengers (Ayaan Mohamed Ali, Mogadishu, 7 July 2016, interview; Ibrahim Hassan Ahmed, Mogadishu, 31 May 2015, interview). At Maansoor Hotel and Summertown, the famous political players in Somaliland seem not to have a fear for their security, as their Somalia counterparts in Hotel Jasiira, Hotel SYL and Hotel Makka Al-Mukaramah in Mogadishu (field notes, Hargeysa, 13-21 July 2016; field notes, Mogadishu, 19-25 May 2015).

## **Sovereignty and Sorrow**

### ***Externality of the State***

The internal actors alone have not complicated – and continue to complicate – statebuilding and peacebuilding efforts in Somalia, but the external intervention also

plays a decisive factor. The support for armed groups, such as the Ahlu-Sunna and for the proliferation of clan-based mini-states by Ethiopia as well as the huge western intelligence presence in Mogadishu all contribute to the political conflicts in Somalia and generate a war economy deeply dependent on the outside forces. The international community and neighbouring Ethiopia have a strong hand in reshaping the structure of the state, while the AMISOM forces are nurturing the state like a life-machine. In Somalia, the statebuilding and peacebuilding projects have been engineered by either Ethiopia or the international community (IGAD Communiqué 2015; Somali Compact Report 2015). The dozens of peace and reconciliation conferences held for Somalia since 1991 are prominent cases in point (field notes, 15 October 2002, Eldoret, Kenya – 9 August 2003, Mbagathi, Kenya). As noted, Somaliland's was a negotiated state, but in Somalia the state has never become a negotiated other than super-imposed. This is so because statebuilding and peacebuilding from the top proved wrong in Somalia. The international community cannot be blamed for this trend; the local actors outsource their conflict to the international community to gain support of excluding each other in the process of statebuilding and peacebuilding. The contrasting patterns of statebuilding projects between Somalia and Somaliland indicate that, while the former one is an externally-imposed one, the latter is organic and home-grown. The paradoxical pattern and process of statebuilding and peacebuilding in Somaliland followed a framework that draws more from indigenous input than external involvement.

There is intermittent international hand in Somaliland in contrast with Somalia where, nearly, every Western state has a presence in the highly-walled Halane compound in the Aden Adde airport (field observations in Halane 4-5 August 2015). The statebuilding projects in Somalia continue to follow unfitting Manhattan-type governmental procedures laid down by the UN bureaucracies. The drafting of the constitution for Somalia was even led by the UN Political Office (UNPOS) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which produced a Somali-owned – but not a Somali-led – state.<sup>22</sup> This led to never-ending building projects in Somalia, dependent on the donors' desires to adopt certain measures for peacebuilding and statebuilding. The annual UN resolutions compel the Somali political players to preserve the Somali

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<sup>22</sup> For the Somalia and Somaliland constitutions, see (Elmi 2012) and Aguilar (2015), respectively.



sovereignty, but they do not tell Somaliland authorities to (re)negotiate with the federal government in Mogadishu. The international community avoids even to involve Somaliland in the process of peacebuilding and statebuilding in Somalia either to assist or offer experiences for fear of being accused of sponsoring the secession project. This renders the international community staff in Mogadishu to isolate themselves from drawing a lesson from the experiences of the state formation. There is a dispute over whether the experiences of the Somaliland statebuilding – one without fails – can be applied to Somalia where the political contestation for power remains much violent and rowdy than any other Somali territory. In Somaliland, statebuilding and peacebuilding are part of a single continuum. In Somalia, statebuilding is a business, peacebuilding a project, to reap benefits from the Western donors. Yet the international community remains reluctant to interact with the fact that where the state is a state endures unrecognised and where the state is not a state enjoys recognition.

### ***Redrawing of Colonial or Clan Boundaries?***

The empirical fact that Somaliland is now lounging for a case of redrawing back to the colonial border is a testament of the colonial nostalgia. Will the border between Somaliland and Puntland be a colonial border or clan border? Somaliland argues for the preservation of the colonial border line demarcation, but Puntland authorities have insisted on the traditional precolonial Harti clan boundary.<sup>23</sup> Somaliland claims the belonging of the British Somaliland borders, but – from a paradoxical pattern, this is heavily contested by Puntland, the neighbouring semi-autonomous state, which is still theoretically part of Somalia. The creation of Puntland as a clan-state was a copycat adventure from Somaliland as far as its constitution is a document extracted from the latter, except that it permits the existence of ‘federal’ Somalia, while Somaliland has declared a complete divorce from Somalia (Mohamed Ahmed Mohamed Barawani, Hargeysa, 19 July 2016, interview).<sup>24</sup> Emerged out from the building block approach,

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<sup>23</sup> Recent observers who studied both entities have described Puntland as a ‘clan dictatorship (Hagmann and Hoehne 2009: 50-53). Some minority sub-clans within the Majeerteen are called ‘Kurtumo’ or *Majeerteen yaryar* (literally meaning the short or the little). The current Puntland leader attempted to make it a Daarood entity by incorporating Marehaan and Ogaadeen into his cabinet (*Allgedo Online* 2014). Paradoxically, the Puntland constitution stipulates that ‘Puntland is an independent integral part of Somalia’, while carrying out everything that the federal government in Mogadishu had the right to do must. Ironically, the Puntland constitution provides a space in which stateliness could emerge (Hesse 2010: 343-362).

<sup>24</sup> While Somaliland proclaimed independence, Puntland pronounced autonomy as a state more or less like a sovereign entity resembling the Katangese case in Congo or Biafra in Nigeria in the 1960s. Compare *The*

Puntland pursues a decentralised state format for the collapsed Somalia proposed by Ethiopia in the mid-1990s.<sup>25</sup> The limits and limitations of this format were attested by the fact that Puntland has contested borders with Somaliland and Galmudug. The perception that people in Somaliland may live without Somalia, but people in Puntland cannot, due to the latter's past patrimonial affiliation with successive postcolonial Somali governments, is explained why one entity sticks to secession, the other to remain autonomy.<sup>26</sup> The peace in Puntland largely draws from the fact that the entity serves as a political platform for the dominant Majeerteen/Mohamoud Saleebaan political players. The reason that no clan could dominate in the rest – that is, the South-Central Somalia – can be attributed to the recurring conflicts in that part of Somalia.

The question of the relations that Somaliland has to have with Puntland makes it susceptible to armed conflict. It also exacerbates the possibility or prospects held by most southern Somalis that Somaliland may remerge with Somalia. However, the majority of Somaliland people have no memory of a unified Somalia. No coherent set of narratives seem to convince the people of Somaliland that reuniting Somalia would be better. This is because the conversations of the unified state have thus far failed to bear fruits. Rather, the recent direct talks between the two entities held in Ankara, Dubai and London hinted to the political players in Somaliland that their appeal to recognition may bear fruit sooner or later (*Hiraan Online* 2016; IRIN 2016). If Somaliland follows the path of South Sudan's, such an endeavour is thought to be legitimising an internationally-observed divorce. Bearing in mind their stable state in the volatile Horn region, people in Somaliland have convinced themselves that such unrivalled attributes may eventually lead to international recognition (focus group discussions, Hargeysa, 23 July 2016). The most difficult aspect is how they could protect their hard-earned gains from the contemporary political bickering of the old Siad Barre school political players. Hitherto Somaliland people have drawn one important element from their recent history: that the most valuable commodity they export to the region is peace (Hesse 2010: 343-62; Huliaras 2002: 157-182; International Crisis Group 2006). The

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*Republic of Somaliland*, Submission on Statehood and Recognition of Republic of Somaliland, Hargeisa, June 1996; *The Charter of Puntland State of Somalia*, 1998.

<sup>25</sup> For an overview summary on the building block approach, see Bryden (1999: 134-140).

<sup>26</sup> Johnson and Smaker (2014: 3-23) seem to suggest that Puntland should follow the Somaliland's route, basically to secede from Somalia by creating a separate state, but they appear to ignore the ambitions of the Puntland political actors which are, inter alia, to use the entity to jump onto the state resources in Mogadishu.

understanding of the public and the political players is that, if peace is destroyed in the contemporary politicised disputes of who should take what from whom to where, it would be difficult for the secession project to succeed.

The problem in Somaliland is that there are no signs of forgiveness as that all southern Somalis are held responsible for the crimes committed by the Siad Barre regime (Abdirahman Abdullahi Mohamed, Viber conversation, 17 July 2016). By contrast, in Rwanda, genocide survivors tend to forgive even those who cut off their beloved family members' heads and this popular forgiveness led the country to emerge from the most genocidal field in Africa to the least murderous space in Africa (Rettig 2008). In *Kheyriyadda*, the city centre of Hargeysa, there stands tall a war aircraft with a Somali national flag on both sides epitomising Siad Barre's war aircrafts that launched airstrikes on the town while flying from the Hargeysa airport (field notes, Hargeysa, 11 July 2016). The symbol of the real MiG17 war aircraft is decorated with colourful expressions of people being massacred by the Siad Barre regime; a mother with her son on the back covered by waving Somaliland flag. The motto inside the symbol is *Xus oo Xusuusnow* (respect and remember). The drawings show an old man who lost his two hands and one leg during the Siad Barre regime's genocide on the North (Africa Watch 1990). The *Daljirka Dahsoon* (the unknown soldier) in Hargeysa is different from the *Daljirka Dahsoon* (the unknown soldier) in Mogadishu as the latter embodies the unified Somali State. The notion of seceding from the South has been alive in the North since the June 1961 referendum against which majority of people in Somaliland voted it, but it was nonetheless the unrestrained violence perpetuated by the Siad Barre regime that rendered the secession popular legitimacy among them.

Grievances and the cause for Somaliland secession are interconnected, but do not completely articulate the long historical trajectory of the changing patterns of the colonial and postcolonial states. Given that Somaliland seeks for recognition to export the relative peace it enjoys to the Horn of Africa region, the political marginalisation, economic exclusion and genocide committed by the Siad Barre (Africa Watch 1990) have created a sense of unity among the Isaaq people, fostering and facilitating peace much easier than in war-torn Somalia. People evoke in their everyday interactions the 'holocaust' committed by the military regime perpetrators about the case of Somaliland

statehood (field notes, Hargeysa, 26 July 2016). The over-arching narrative sustaining the Somaliland secession had its roots with the genocide perpetrated against the Isaaq clan-group by the Siad Barre regime. One female cook reminds that 'the Siad Barre's legacies will never soon be forgotten in Somaliland' (Luul Ahmed Hersi, Hargeysa, 22 July 2016, interview). The consequences of the Siad Barre regime continue to influence the factional relations of Somalia and Somaliland. The conversations repeat a coded message that states 'never predatory state again', a code relating to narratives inherited by the memory of the military regime. Yet Somaliland authorities do not try to influence Somali politics to predict a favourable outcome. While having less say in the state structure of Somalia, political players from Somaliland in Mogadishu seem to be dismissive when discussed on the issue of the Somaliland secession (field notes, Mogadishu, May-September 2015 and April-July 2016). They insist that Somaliland cannot become a separate state, a narrative very vivid in Mogadishu. One Somalia government member from Somaliland went on as far as to assert that 'Somaliland is a narrow-minded, backward project' (senior Somalia government member, Mogadishu, 23 June 2016; interview). This language was released not in public but in private, though. It is forcefully reiterated publicly by political players from Somalia and Somaliland in Mogadishu that Somaliland has made massive progress that warrants commendation.

## **Conclusion**

This paper has addressed the different trajectories of statebuilding and peacebuilding in Somalia and accounted simultaneously for the interplay between the similarities and dissimilarities of both entities. The paper has illustrated that the 'precarious balance' (Rothchild and Chazan 1988) of 'perilous states' (Marcus 1993) between the state structures, institutional clan politics and stakes in Somalia and Somaliland are profoundly contrary to each other. This fact will not only politically prevent the two polities to come to terms but practically make the secession project inexorable. Referring to Bierschenk, Twijnstra and Titeca argue that 'African statehood is path-dependent, and its bureaucracies best resemble "never-finishing building sites"' (264). The African State, as Villalón and Huxtable (1998) pointed out, has primarily been posed in a 'critical juncture' when trying to mould from a sudden disintegration to a reviving reconfiguration. Countries undergoing or undergone violent armed conflicts

warrant cautious and careful ways of seeking political settlements. Central to the functioning of the state is legitimacy and support. Scholars of international relations and political science (Bates 2008; Milliken 2003; Starr 2013; Zartman 1995) may be perplexed to grasp the proposition that Somalia should be a sovereign state, the Somalia which its government was founded, formed, formulated and framed by the international community, the Somalia that enjoys legitimacy conferred by the international community, the Somalia that exists not due to, but because of, the dysfunctional Somalia that hardly unable to offer basic features of a functioning state in a Weberian sense (field notes, Halane, Mogadishu, 4-5 August 2015). Despite the insecurity prevailing in the country, it is always claimed that the economic potential for Somalia is high, although the grounds for this are not made clear (British Embassy Mogadishu 2014; Reitano and Shaw 2013; Webersik 2006; Webersik and Crawford 2015).

Studies on Somaliland have been ever-growing to document the developments there since the late 1990s, when the newly-emerging state system in Hargeysa led by Egal, an old hand of Somali politics, succeeded reinstating a contrastingly relative peace in comparison to the rest of Somalia (Renders 2012). The state structural patterns in Somaliland have always been distinct compared to those of Somalia. Some observers say this was because of the two different colonial legacies: the direct Italian colonial rule and the indirect British protectorate rule. The French scholar Prunier (2010: 35-49) has postulated that, given the failures of Somalia, the major reason why Somaliland remains successful in the foundation of forming a unique state – despite the failures of Somalia – is the idiosyncratic make-up of the two (British and the Italian) colonial systems. Presumably, Italian scholars, such as Federico Battera, Angelo Del Boca, Cristina Ercolessi, Antonio Morone, Giampaolo Calchi Novati, Paulo Tripodi and Alessandro Triulzi, would perhaps contest such a provocative premise espousing that the contemporary dissolution bequeathed to Somalia was due to Italian legacy. The paths and patterns of Somalia and Somaliland have not only been shaped by colonial state structures alone. Even if they confronted two contrasting colonial rules, their colonial construction was reshaped by the subsequent postcolonial institutionalised clan politics. Following the collapse of the Siad Barre regime, Somalia and Somaliland turned two different roots of state reconstruction. Somalia is still at war with itself complicated by the competition for power and chronic corruption. Today, Somalia is no longer a

state, not even a country, but a geographical zone fought over by the federal government of Somalia versus Al-Shabaab and the international community versus Al-Shabaab through unending contestation. Somaliland has also its own limitations. The reason why Somaliland should join Somalia and why it joined The Somali Republic has not yet been clarified. The political heat cooking up in Hargeysa over power competition warrants urgent appraisal to understand the changing internal dynamics and the shifting alliances.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> The most intricate political problem facing Somaliland today is Siilaanyo's leadership. Siilaanyo was a former Siadist bar excellence. He worked for the dictator for 12 consecutive years but his six years with the SNM compensated this. However, in April 1988, he fled to London when the SNM would have to conduct the most massive and major assault to intercept Siad Barre's near annihilation against the Isaaq people. Where was his decisive leadership skills when needed most? When the French scholar Gérard Prunier was travelling with the SNM, eating and observing with them, despite mines were exploding on the way, Siilaanyo was sleeping in his comfort house in West London.

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