

Research Paper

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Somalia's Federal Future

Layered Agendas, Risks and Opportunities

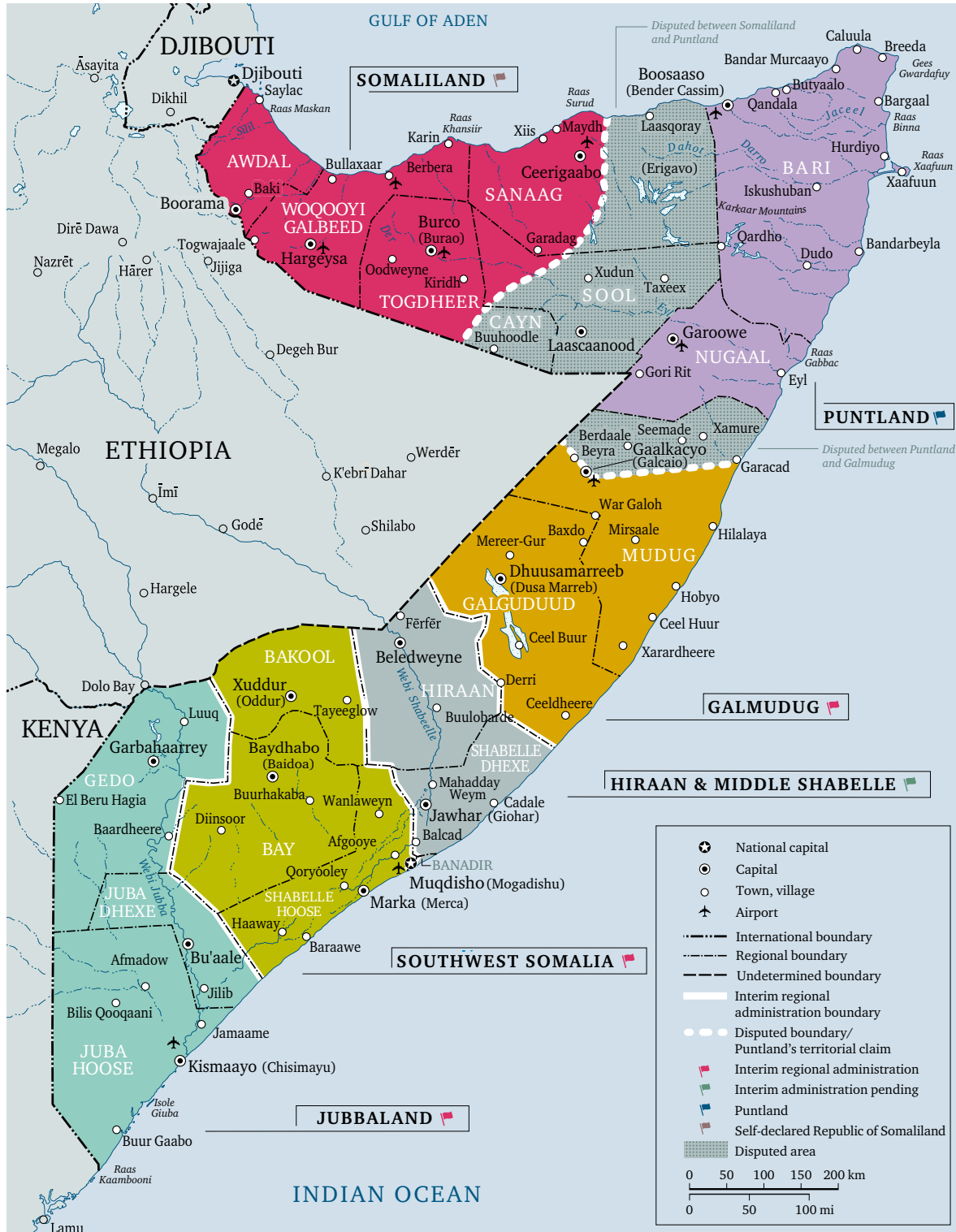


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Summary

- Pressure remains high for an electoral transition in Somalia in 2016, with little appetite for the prospect of the current framework being extended. The desire for direct elections is in the process of yielding to the reality that there is insufficient time or political will to establish the required legislative and institutional frameworks. However, pressure is mounting to develop an acceptable alternative mechanism in the time remaining.
- The transition remains heavily dependent on external security intervention (in the form of the African Union Mission in Somalia – AMISOM). However, the strong influence of neighbouring countries in that force ultimately compromises the medium- to long-term viability of the political order that is emerging. A transition to a UN peacekeeping mission could relieve some of these tensions, allowing for the exit of 'frontline' states (Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti) from deployment on Somali territory.
- A fast-track application of the post-2013 interim Jubbaland administration (IJA) template to other parts of southern and central Somalia risks exacerbating tensions within and between regions, and between regions and Mogadishu. The precedents set during the contested process of establishing the IJA in 2012–13 do have important implications for formation of other member states in the federal structure, but the local contexts vary significantly across southern and central Somalia.
- Puntland represents the only functional member state without aspirations of sovereignty (unlike Somaliland, the outlook for which falls beyond the scope of this paper). Nevertheless, its appetite for participation in the federal project is contingent on respect for existing political realities in its territory, in the face of challenges from competing interpretations of the provisional constitution and state formation. This includes the territorial dispute with the emerging Galmudug administration over north Mudug, as well as impending debates over revenue-sharing from natural resources.
- Respect for minority and smaller clans within the process of member state formation will be essential for stability as federal institution-building continues. The logic of '4.5' power-sharing – whereby the larger clans dominate political processes, the control of land and resources, and the benefits of political office and patronage – feeds the grievances of smaller groups, allowing continued openings for spoilers. Groups that feel that their interests will not be met will resist the process.

Map of Somalia: Federal Member State and Interim Regional Administrations



Sources: This map has been prepared based on United Nations Department of Field Support, Cartographic Section, Map No. 3690 Rev. 10, December 2011, with additional content from the Rift Valley Institute and International Crisis Group, together with annotation by the author and the Africa Programme at Chatham House.

Note: Somalia refers to the internationally recognized territory of Somalia; Somaliland refers to the northern region that proclaimed independence in 1991; Puntland refers to the north-eastern Somali region that was established as a federal state in 1998. The boundaries and names shown and designations used on the map do not imply endorsement or acceptance by the author or Chatham House.

Introduction

As has long been the case, politics in Somalia are fraught, contradictory and often opaque from the perspective of external observers. Insecurity remains a crucial factor, shaping the options and reactions of internal players, as well as the perceptions and agendas of regional and international intervention. However, for all that infighting and insecurity continue to undermine progress towards stability, there is a real sense of a shift, since 2012, in the political landscape in Mogadishu and other parts of southern and central Somalia. The process of establishing a federal framework for governing Somalia – which in principle has been under way since the 2002–04 Mbagathi peace conference produced the transitional federal charter (TFC)¹ – has only begun to seem meaningful, and to produce genuine political contestation (both productive and conflictual) since the adoption of a provisional constitution in 2012 and the creation of a new parliament and executive according to its framework.

This paper examines the dynamics of competition over the definitions and directions of the federal project in Somalia since 2012. In particular, it will highlight the significant fault lines and achievements inherent in the current approach to implementing a federalist agenda – which in important ways is externally driven and top-down. There have been key developments in institution-building over the last three years – most visibly the emergence of three aspiring federal member states. However, the longer-term realities of Somalia's war-economy, rent-seeking in politics and the ambivalent influence of external actors cloud these achievements.

Pressure, largely external, to adhere to the 'Vision 2016' agenda – especially the revision, finalization and approval by referendum of the provisional constitution, and then the holding of direct national elections under the new order – risks undermining what progress has been achieved in establishing new governance institutions for the country, in Mogadishu and in the emerging federal member states. Although donor focus and resources are not unlimited, to a significant degree what progress has been made is contingent on external resources and intervention.

In February 2015 the Somali federal government (SFG) saw the inauguration of its third cabinet, under its third prime minister in three years, Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke. The high levels of turnover in the executive branch – familiar from the 'transitional' 2004–12 period – reflect tensions within the SFG over the influence and agenda of President Hassan Sheikh Mahmoud and those influencing his administration, in particular the so-called Damul Jadid network.² The president's broad interpretation of his mandate, which the provisional constitution had more narrowly defined, and the strong influence that he and his allies have exercised since he took office in September 2012, is also a source of tension with a loose alliance of parliamentarians (grouped in three main caucuses³) – undermining the capacity to proceed with the legislative agenda.

¹ The Transitional Federal Charter of the Somali Republic, February 2004; a copy of the text is available via International Labour Organization, http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---ilo_aids/documents/legaldocument/wcms_127637.pdf (accessed 24 August 2015).

² Damul Jadid, or 'new blood', is sometimes described as a network of aligned interests. It emerged from the elites within Al-Islah, the Somali branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, as divisions arose over how directly involved in politics (and particularly armed confrontation) they should be, following the 2006 ascendance of the Islamic Courts Union. From the mid-1990s, Al-Islah had also become associated with the business community, making it prospectively influential. Damul Jadid comprises figures who favoured more direct involvement. However, the label has become politically charged, and it would seem that not all of those described as belonging to the group actually do. Meanwhile, the degree of coherence of the group itself is not entirely clear.

³ Since 2012 a range of 'caucuses' have released statements taking positions on certain issues. However, the three most significant such blocks appear to be loosely allied with each other over the issue of Damul Jadid influence over cabinet formation. These are TTQ (National Reform Caucus), KDQ (National Salvation Caucus) and MMQ (National Interest Caucus).

The months October–December in 2013 and again in 2014 were characterized by gridlock and infighting within the SFG over the dismissal of incumbent prime ministers and horse-trading over the selection of replacements. During these lost months, progress towards the government's Vision 2016 goals ground largely to a halt. Most recently, in August 2015 a group of over 90 parliamentarians revived an effort to table an impeachment motion against the president, accusing him of exceeding his constitutional powers, and of corruption and nepotism. While this is largely symbolic, since the support of at least two-thirds of the 275-member lower house of parliament would be required in order for a vote of no confidence to pass, the device appears to be intended to tarnish President Hassan's reputation ahead of an election year; and it will further distract parliament from its state-building goals. Nevertheless, international pressure for a transition to take place in 2016 has not diminished.⁴

Notwithstanding this most recent development, the Vision 2016 process risks overreach, given the scale of political negotiations and technical arrangements needed for direct elections to be held on time. If an extension to the government's mandate is to be avoided, then an indirect mechanism for conducting a change of administration will have to be agreed. Even such a compromise would involve managing tensions. Many see the emerging federal member states as exclusive political projects, and those who perceive themselves as having lost out – either in Mogadishu or in the state capitals – could emerge as spoilers.

Remembering the state; and contextualizing state-building

The mandate of the transitional federal government (TFG⁵) was ended in August 2012, under pressure from regional and international partners. A prospective shift in the country's situation was identified at the time, but the positivity of the early 'Somalia rising'⁶ reaction has been tempered. However, there remains an idea that southern and central Somalia is now on a different path from the morass of the TFG period – albeit still heavily dependent on external support.

In practice, deliberation over Somalia's future is framed by the terms 'federalism' and 'constitutionality'. However, neither term has been consistently defined. This inconsistency allows competing political elites to make technical and morally framed cases in favour of their agendas. The legalistic vocabulary of such debate risks obscuring other competing political agendas from the international backers of the federal process. Moreover, agitation for legalistically framed settlements encourages external actors (donors and regional influencers) to push for rapid implementation of the federal project.

In the context of the current debates over governance and state-building, Somalis are re-examining the Somali state prior to collapse. For many Somalis, a legacy of the pre-1991 state under Mohamed Siad Barre has been persisting distrust in an overbearing centralized government. That said, such distrust tends to be more intense for elites associated with the political projects in the regional/local context, whereas those directly linked to the federal institutions in Mogadishu have tended to emphasize the need for a strong and capable – if not overly centralized – state.

⁴ UN News Centre, 'UN and partners urge resolution to crisis after Somali legislators approve motion to impeach President', 19 August 2015, <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=51679#.VdrcrFJRHcs> (accessed 21 August 2015).

⁵ The TFG was created by the Transitional Federal Charter, the principal organizing document of Somalia agreed during the 2002–04 Mbagathi peace conference. See *The Transitional Federal Charter of the Somali Republic*, February 2004, available from International Labour Organization, http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---ilo_aids/documents/legaldocument/wcms_127637.pdf (accessed 24 August 2015).

⁶ Hammond, Laura (2013), 'Somalia rising: things are starting to change for the world's longest failed state', *Journal of Eastern African Studies*; 7:1, pp. 183–93.

Attempts to contextualize current Somali politics frequently refer to the past two decades of civil war in order to contrast the state-building efforts with a (frequently poorly defined) 'chaotic' past. However, it is perhaps more useful from a policy standpoint to situate a discussion of current federalism in the light of the past roughly three decades.⁷

The first 'decade', from the mid-1980s, saw a period of intensifying conflict, with both rebel action and government retaliation increasing in momentum; by the mid-1990s, the eruption of clan-related violence had diminished substantially.

During the second 'decade', from the mid-1990s to about 2004/05, political entities emerged in the northwest and northeast. Somaliland and Puntland subsequently consolidated and deepened their political foundations and institutions. Militias were able to provide relative stability, and controlled many regions and locales of southern and central Somalia – with less force required than in the preceding decade.

The third 'decade', from 2005 to the present, saw fierce conflict renewed, as the TFG attempted to build a base in the capital while there was an intensified struggle for dominance between Islamists and warlords. Ethiopia forcibly intervened in 2006 to quell the emerging Islamic Courts Union (ICU) and help entrench the TFG. This intervention in turn was a catalyst for the insurgency of Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahidin (al-Shabaab).

The violence of the 'third decade' has coloured politics at all levels. Indeed, it is notable that while President Hassan came to power in 2012 promoting a 'six-pillar' policy agenda, he noted shortly after his inauguration that his top priority was 'security', as were his second and third priorities.⁸

Is external engagement sustainable?

In large part, the current sense of a turning point is a reflection of sustained – and costly – external engagement. One outcome of this has been to signal that – for all its fragility and flaws – federalism in Somalia remains the dominant political process with which to engage. Even those opposed to the leadership or framing of the federal government continue (in the main) to contest their case within its framework. This is not an insignificant accomplishment, although a significant distance remains before the federal framework achieves traction across Somalia and legitimacy at a local level.

Important questions have been left unaddressed, or have been avoided (particularly since 2012), in pursuit of externally supported goals related to security, and which have promoted a top-down, centrally focused state – and institution-building agenda – with an intense focus on the establishment of federal member states,⁹ and seen as a prerequisite for negotiating the post-2016 political framework. In particular, international engagement has created two dynamics:

⁷ The following periodization was first formulated by the author in Mubarak, Mohamed and Mosley, Jason 'On federalism and constitutionality in Somalia: difficulties of 'post-transitional' institution building remain', *African Arguments*, 12 February 2014, <http://africanarguments.org/2014/02/12/on-federalism-and-constitutionality-in-somalia-difficulties-of-post-transitional-institution-building-remain-by-mohamed-mubarak-and-jason-mosley/> (accessed 7 October 2014).

⁸ The president made this comment during a speech on his second day in office. See, 'President of Somalia sets top three priorities: Security, security, security', *New Statesman*, 25 September 2012, <http://www.newstatesman.com/blogs/politics/2012/09/president-somalia-sets-top-three-priorities-security-security-security> (accessed 12 October 2014).

⁹ Also described as interim regional administrations during two-year provisional period.

- The first is centred on security, and stems from the African Union Mission in Somalia's (AMISOM) offensive against al-Shabaab, which has forced the group out of many urban centres across the country since 2011. The offensive also increasingly involves the security forces loyal to the SFG. AMISOM broadly aligns the interests of the international community with regional agendas. The European Union (EU) funds most of its costs through a UN support mission,¹⁰ and Somalia's neighbours all have troops committed to the operation (a theme that will be developed below).
- The second dynamic has been the high-level international support for federalism as the preferred vehicle for state-building. Since 2011 the finances and chivvyng of the international community¹¹ and regional players¹² have kept the 'federal project' from collapsing, and have helped to promote it as the main forum in which politics are being contested. This has given the process additional momentum, although resistance remains (particularly, but not exclusively, from al-Shabaab).

Although security remains a high priority and a key motivator of external involvement, the space has been opened for consideration of a more durable political order in Somalia. As a result, political memory of the state prior to the last three decades, as described above, is of increasing significance. Even for those (including most people under 40 years of age) without strong personal memories of the politics of this period, the Barre era looms over the current contested political negotiations on the way forward.

Many challenges remain in terms of the finalization and implementation of the constitution, as well as the institutional and other preparations necessary to hold national elections by 2016.¹³ In practice, however, the push to bring to a conclusion the mandate of the TFG and parliament, which were hamstrung by infighting and corruption for most of their existence, meant that during 2012 energy was focused mainly on creating the framework – which the provisional constitution ostensibly provides – to move beyond the 'transitional' framework to a political system without an expiry date.¹⁴ External pressure for a change of government in 2016 remains high after the repeated mandate extensions under the TFG. In March 2015 the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Somalia, Nicholas Kay, indicated that the international community would not accept term extensions, although he subsequently acknowledged the likelihood of an electoral mechanism other than direct

¹⁰ The UN Support Office for AMISOM (UNSOA). The EU's contribution is crucial, with €793 million contracted for AMISOM as of January 2015. The EU transfers most funds to the African Union (AU), which is then charged with administering them. See Rein, Conrad (2015), *The EU and peacekeeping in Africa: the case of AMISOM*, *Global Affairs*, 1:2, pp. 193–204, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/23340460.2015.1036341> (accessed 21 August 2015).

¹¹ Key international actors include multilateral players – UNSOM, the EU, the African Union – as well as bilateral influence from key donors, including the UK, US, Norwegian, Swiss, Italian, Swedish and Turkish governments.

¹² Regional influence has come mainly in bilateral form from Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda (all troop contributors to AMISOM), with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) playing an important role as a regional forum. Influence and financing from Somalia's 'near abroad' has also been significant, especially from Sudan, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait and Egypt.

¹³ Recruitment for members of the National Independent Electoral Commission and the Boundaries and Federation Commission was under way as of March 2015. See 'Somalia To Recruit National Independent Electoral Commission for the 2016 election', *Somali Current*, 25 March 2015, (<http://www.somalicurrent.com/2015/03/25/somalia-to-recruit-national-independent-electoral-commission-for-the-2016-election/>) (accessed 24 April 2015). A voters' register (probably to be created in the absence of a reliable census) is needed not only for national elections, but also for a referendum on the constitution – envisaged to take place before the polls in 2016. The formation of an Inter-Regional Consultative Forum, a predecessor to the Inter-state Commission, as called for in the provisional constitution, began in February 2015, with a meeting in Mogadishu between the leaders of the SFG, Puntland and the interim administrations for Jubbaland and Southwest Somalia. The Forum is for discussion of the mechanics of implementing division of powers between levels of government.

¹⁴ For an overview see Mosley, Jason (2012), *End of the Roadmap: Somalia after the London and Istanbul Conferences*, Programme Paper, London: Chatham House. For a critique of the international role, see also Marchal, Roland (2012), 'Somalia on hold', briefing for NIS Foundation; available via <https://focusonthehorn.files.wordpress.com/2012/05/somalia-on-hold.pdf> (accessed 11 October 2014).

elections.¹⁵ Following US Secretary of State John Kerry's visit to Mogadishu in May, the Somali president gave assurances that elections would take place in 2016.¹⁶

A top-down approach is not new to external intervention in Somalia. However, the centralized drivers of the current process are somewhat obscured by the structure and terminology of the approach being taken – that is, a process committed to the emergence of federal member states, ostensibly a more local political entity, and one strengthened in principle by bottom-up political processes, which should create some form of local legitimacy.

Top-down, or bottom-up?

The governance debate in Somalia has tended to conflate the question of what Somali citizens expect from the performance and shape of any central government (in terms of its reach, mandate, capacity and delivery of services) with the political tensions that dominated the transitional period and which have continued under the SFG over the form that government will take. This is a product of confusing the actions of local and regional elites – in terms of each other, the SFG in Mogadishu and international actors – with the expression of some democratic (bottom-up) view towards these political processes.

This may be a conflation of Somalia's traditional, purportedly 'acephalous' socio-political structures, in the form of the *diya*-paying group and clan, with the idea of a downwardly accountable and democratic social structure.¹⁷ Although elites can appeal to a 'support-base' on clan lines, by instrumentalizing those social structures, the political agenda is determined by elite bargain, and does not necessarily reflect popular will. Utilizing social structure to mobilize combatants or political supporters has been a defining feature of politics in Somalia since state repression intensified towards civil war in the 1980s.¹⁸

Recent tensions and the conflicts that they have produced reflect the motivations of elites at various levels. As such, it is somewhat misleading to see the local or regional administrations that are in place, or that are emerging, as reflections of popular will in those areas (although elections in Somaliland suggest movement towards harnessing popular will in many parts of that territory). This may be a 'building blocks' approach,¹⁹ but it is not inherently democratic. It is necessary to separate the question of what is politically viable in the current security context from the question of whether local, regional and national institutions are downwardly accountable and democratic.

The federal project appears still to be viable, if under strain. However, donors should not confuse any level of viability with democratic legitimacy (in whatever way the concept of democratic may be defined in the context of Somalia). This is essential in order to distinguish between the prospects for continued institution-building and capacity-strengthening within the current context of federalism, and the questions of legitimacy and inclusivity.

¹⁵ 'UN envoy dismisses current Somali leaders' term extension bid', Hiiraan Online, 19 March 2015, http://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2015/Mar/98660/un_envoy_dismisses_current_somali_leaders_term_extension_bid.aspx (accessed 1 July 2015). See also 'Somali Islamists driven into north, south pockets: UN envoy', Reuters, 7 May 2015, <http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFKBN0NS1NB20150507> (accessed 1 July 2015).

¹⁶ See for example 'Kerry Makes Historic Trip to Somalia in Show of Support', Voice of America, 5 May 2015, <http://www.voanews.com/content/kerry-makes-historic-trip-to-somalia/2749556.html> (accessed 5 May 2015); and 'Somalia's President Says Country on Track for 2016 Elections' Bloomberg, 6 May 2015, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-05-06/somalia-s-president-says-country-on-track-for-2016-elections> (accessed 1 July 2015).

¹⁷ For a discussion of the limits of customary mechanisms of justice and accountability in Somalia, see Schlee, Günther (2013), 'Customary law and the joys of statelessness: idealised traditions versus Somali realities', *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 7:2 pp. 258–71.

¹⁸ For an analysis of the shift from state-led to communal violence, both instrumentalizing clan identity for mobilization purposes, during the late 1980s and particularly during the 1991–92 factional conflict following the overthrow of the state, see Kapteijns, Lidwien (2013), *Clan Cleansing in Somalia: The Ruinous Legacy of 1991*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

¹⁹ Bryden, Matt (1999). 'New hope for Somalia? The building block approach', *Review of African Political Economy*, 26:79, pp. 134–40.

Contestation over the formation of member states

Of all the debates over the nature of federalism and constitutionality in Somalia, few are as intense as that concerning the formation and recognition of future federal member states. A fundamental contradiction exists in the text of the provisional constitution as it now stands:²⁰

- Clause 1 of Article 49 of the provisional constitution stipulates that it is the House of the People (the lower house of parliament) that shall determine the number and boundaries of the federal member states.
- Clause 6 of the same article stipulates that two or more regions may voluntarily merge to form a federal member state.

In leaving room for interpretation as to how member states should be formed, this constitutional ambiguity immediately led to tensions between the SFG and aspirant member states. Although under Article 49 it is parliament and the regions themselves that should handle this process, the executive branch also made a case for its involvement in managing local and regional government (including the appointment of governors) by drawing on Article 48 (2), which establishes that regions that do not join a state are to be administered by the federal government for a maximum of two years.²¹ With many parts of southern and central Somalia still under the control of al-Shabaab in 2012, this interpretation gave the government in Mogadishu significant leeway to attempt to influence local events.

The Jubbaland precedent

The first major tussle between Mogadishu and an aspirant federal member state – Jubbaland, claiming Gedo, Lower Juba and Middle Juba regions – has set an important precedent in practical terms for how debates over constitutionality are to be settled, and for showing the limits of the political power of the various parties.

The formation of Jubbaland member state has been spearheaded by the Ogaden-clan associated Ras Kambooni militia. The process was backed by the Kenyan military intervention of 2011, one of the main aims of which was to see the establishment of a sympathetic administration in the Somali regions along its border (which could also help to contain al-Shabaab). The Kenyan army, with Ras Kambooni fighters in tow, took control of Kismayo in October 2012, just weeks after establishment of the SFG.

The period between October 2012 and May 2013, when Ras Kambooni leader Ahmed Islam ‘Madobe’ was declared Jubbaland president by a conference of elders from the three constituent regions, was marked by escalating tensions between Ras Kambooni and the SFG. A rival conference had emerged, with tacit support from the SFG, and declared Barre Adam Shire ‘Hirale’ – a warlord from the Marehan clan and former TFG defence minister – as president. The SFG’s challenge to Madobe’s Jubbaland project questioned the inclusivity of his process. Hirale’s claims were similar, and he drew on additional militia support from clans that had previously supported al-Shabaab’s administration. Clashes broke out between Hirale’s and Madobe’s militias, and the context appeared to be set for a major, violent conflict in the south (a repeating theme of the past decade and more).

²⁰ An unofficial translation of the provisional constitution is available via the United Nations Political Office for Somalia; see <http://unpos.unmissions.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=RkJTOSpoMME=> (accessed 1 July 2015).

²¹ Ibid.

However, diplomatic intervention by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and in particular from Ethiopia, resulted in the signing, in Addis Ababa in August 2013, of an agreement to form an interim Jubba administration (IJA) – led by Madobe. This agreement had three major features with relevance to the constitutional debate:²²

- It limited Madobe's effective territorial claim in line with political and military reality – reducing his status from president of Jubbaland member state, over which neither he nor his Kenyan allies exercised full control. Madobe became the leader of an 'interim' administration based in Kismayo.
- It forced the SFG to accept the IJA's emergence from a process that had not been initiated by Mogadishu, and helped to establish the limits of the federal government's practical influence in areas 'liberated' from al-Shabaab. The process had also demonstrated the weak position that the SFG was in militarily, in terms of imposing its view outside the capital.
- It also ran counter to the provisional constitution, as regards the letter of the law, blurring some lines in order to establish a workable political agreement.²³ This has set the tone, acknowledging by implication that the constitutional process could involve some effort to create institutions that reflect political reality, rather than taking as given the constraints or contradictions of the provisional constitution.

The pattern established in this agreement has now served as a model for processes to establish two subsequent interim administrations, with one launched in June 2014 for Southwest Somalia (Bay, Bakool and Lower Shabelle) and one launched in July 2014 for central Somalia (Galgadud and Mudug), to be called Galmudug.²⁴ Furthermore, modalities for the state formation process of the interim Hiraan and Middle Shabelle administration have been agreed and are planned for September–December 2015.²⁵ As with the IJA, these interim administrations reflect aspirant territorial control. Also in common with the IJA, not all elites found their interests reflected in the agreements, and some have thus rejected the new administrations.

The process in Southwest Somalia moved forward more quickly, with former parliamentary speaker Sharif Hassan Sheikh Adan selected as president of the interim Southwest Somalia administration (ISWA) in November 2014. The process for central Somalia remained largely stalled over the following months. Clashes broke out in Galgadud between the Ahlu Sunna wal Jama'a (ASWJ) and Somali national armed forces militias in December 2014, then again in February 2015, and have continued sporadically since then, despite attempts to agree a ceasefire.²⁶ ASWJ is aligned with the SFG against al-Shabaab, but its leaders consider themselves marginalized within the federal framework – tensions exacerbated by the agreement signed in July 2014. Negotiations eventually produced a regional assembly for the new interim administration, in late June 2015. However, ASWJ – which took control of Dhusamareb earlier the same month after ousting the SFG – rejected the

²² These points were earlier articulated by the author in Mosley, Jason, 'Reality of Somali Federalism Doesn't Match 'Vision'', Chatham House Expert Comment, 16 May 2014, <http://www.chathamhouse.org/expert/comment/14449> (accessed 7 October 2014).

²³ Heritage Institute for Policy Studies, 'The Jubba Agreement: Imperfect Progress', <http://www.heritageinstitute.org/the-jubba-agreement/> (accessed 12 October 2014).

²⁴ 'Somalia: Promoting federalism'. *Africa Research Bulletin: Political, Social and Cultural Series*, 2014, 51: 20240C–20241B. See also Thomas, Tres, 'Somalia's New Federalism Deal Is A Disaster (And It's Everyone's Fault)', *Somalia Newsroom*, 6 August 2014, <http://somalianewsroom.com/2014/08/06/somalias-new-federalism-deal-is-a-disaster-and-its-everyones-fault/> (accessed 5 October 2014).

²⁵ 'Somalia: Hiran, Middle Shabelle gear up for federal state', *Garowe Online*, 9 August 2015, <http://www.garoweonline.com/page/show/post/3318/somalia-hiran-middle-shabelle-gear-up-for-federal-state#sthash.aDc0kKRv.dpuf> (accessed 21 August 2015).

²⁶ 'President of Galmudug to open talks with Ahlu Sunna', *Shabelle Media Network*, 19 August 2015, <http://shabellenews.com/?p=12166> (accessed 21 August 2015).

process, instead moving to establish its own administration and state formation process. In July Abdikarim Guled was elected president of the interim Galmudug administration (IGA). Guled, an ally of the Somali president and prominent figure within Damul Jadid, had previously held the interior and national security portfolios in the SFG.²⁷

Consideration of what is working in the case of the IJA, and of the challenges still facing it and the other interim member state projects, helps to illustrate the overall challenge of the federal approach as currently framed.

Features conducive to IJA viability

While not all provisions of the IJA agreement have been implemented, it is worth noting one further feature, and one background condition – in addition to the three main elements set out above – that have both contributed to the viability of the IJA project since August 2013.

First, although Barre Hirale was not a signatory to the IJA agreement, negotiations took place after the deal in an effort to bring him and his allies into the project. In August 2014 Hirale signed a reconciliation agenda with the IJA, and his militia were allowed to enter Kismayo (although this agreement subsequently collapsed, see below). The IJA subsequently set an agenda for reconciliation with other clans in Gedo and the Jubas, which has in principle allowed for the possibility of other regional elites to take part in the Jubbaland project. In practice, however, achieving this has been a challenge. For example, the establishment of Jubbaland's regional assembly in May 2015 – and in particular the selection of its speaker, Abdi Mohamed Abdirahman, from the Rahanweyn clan – was criticized by the Rahanweyn-dominated ISWA leadership under Sharif Hassan, and was met with stiff resistance from federal parliamentary speaker Mohamed Osman Jawari (also a member of the Rahanweyn elite). Jawari oversaw a vote of no confidence with regard to the process to select IJA's regional assembly in early June – triggering a short suspension of relations between Kismayo and Mogadishu.²⁸ In mid-August Madobe's landslide victory in Jubbaland's (contested) presidential election, at which he secured a new, four-year mandate, further reinforced both his and the IJA's position.²⁹

The second factor bolstering the IJA process has been the presence of Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) personnel, under AMISOM command since 2012, in and around Kismayo. The question of the overall impact of external influence will be further discussed below, but here it is sufficient to say that the presence of an AMISOM contingent sympathetic to the emergence of a Jubbaland state has provided useful support for Ras Kambooni and the IJA in the context of tensions with Barre Hirale and the SFG.

²⁷ Thomas, Tres. 'Puntland, Galmudug, ASWJ, and the Somali Government Set to Face Off over Federalism Disputes?' *Somalia Newsroom*, 10 July 2015, <http://somalianewsroom.com/2015/07/10/puntland-galmudug-aswj-and-the-somali-government-set-to-face-off-over-federalism-disputes/> (accessed 23 July 2015).

²⁸ Thomas, Tres. 'Jubaland Suspends Relations With Somalia's Government – What's Next?' *Somalia Newsroom*, 8 June 2015, <http://somalianewsroom.com/2015/06/08/jubaland-suspends-relations-with-somalias-government-whats-next/> (accessed 10 June 2015).

²⁹ Thomas, Tres. 'As Madobe Wins the Presidency, Jubaland Politics Remain Highly Contested in Somalia', *Somalia Newsroom*, 18 August 2015, <http://somalianewsroom.com/2015/08/18/as-madobe-wins-the-presidency-jubaland-politics-remain-highly-contested-in-somalia/> (accessed 20 August 2015).

Structural weaknesses of the IJA project

In some respects, the two main structural weaknesses of the Jubbaland project are the inverse of the features described above. First, the Jubba river valley is home to a diverse group of communities that are poorly reflected in the Ras Kambooni-dominated IJA (although better represented in the new regional assembly). This has been a major source of tension throughout – as before – the project, allowing its opponents – including the SFG, Barre Hirale and al-Shabaab – to draw on local support in attempts to block, undermine or otherwise sabotage the project.

Managing the range of elite interests will be one of the IJA's greatest challenges. Indeed, the agreement to bring Hirale into the process collapsed after clashes between Ras Kambooni and his forces in December 2014. Previous attempts to create coalitions to control and govern the Jubba valley over the past two decades have all encountered, and have generally been undermined by, similar problems.³⁰

Diversity is the reason a reconciliation mechanism was included in the IJA agreement. This goes beyond the diversity of elite interests, i.e. considering only the better-resourced and armed actors. Among the smaller and historically marginalized groups of the Jubba valley are the so-called 'Somali Bantu', as well as other groups of non-Somali ethnic heritage (including former slaves), which have settled in the region and assimilated or associated with Somali clans. These groups have suffered heavily during factional conflict and since, as their land – particularly the productive lower reaches of the Jubba – was fought over. (Similar dynamics obtain in the Shabelle river valley.) Hitherto, inclusion of such minorities remains largely unaddressed.³¹

Second, in so far as the Kenyan AMISOM presence has provided stability for the IJA (as has Ethiopian diplomatic influence), the question remains whether any local administration in Kismayo is structurally dependent on an external military force for survival. In the medium term, the ability to stand on its own will depend in large part on whether the administration will be able to balance the agendas of the competing regional elites.

The clan conundrum

From the perspective of the international community, the IJA appeared to offer a template for wresting the other competing regional administration projects into the overall federal process. These ranged from existing local regional/administrations (such as, in central Somalia, Ximan and Xeeb, and Galmudug), to the aspirant constituent assemblies debating formation of new member states, including the three- and six-region versions of an ISWA (see the section Influence from the Region, below, for a description of these two versions), and a Shabelle State. Many of these aspiring/existing administrations had overlapping territorial ambitions.

In the preceding section, the Jubba valley's diversity was discussed as a destabilizing factor. Population diversity is a similarly divisive factor across the rest of southern and central Somalia. Even in areas understood to be dominated by a clan family, for example the Hawiye in central Somalia, elite interests have long fragmented on sub-clan, or sub-sub-clan, lines. Control over economic activities or

³⁰ Consider for example Madobe's experience during late 2008 as part of a coalition administration in Kismayo between Ras Kambooni, the Anole group and al-Shabaab, which was a short-lived exercise before al-Shabaab took full control in early 2009.

³¹ For more detail on the populations of the Jubba valley, see Besteman, Catherine (1999), *Unraveling Somalia: race, violence, and the legacy of slavery*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press (in particular Chapters 3 and 4).

the rents associated with the offices of the state³² have provided sufficient incentive for conflict. These dynamics have motivated (at least in part) most actors in the context of Somalia's civil war, including al-Shabaab and other Islamist militant movements (such as ASWJ).³³

The '4.5' clan power-sharing formulation – dating back to the 1997 Soderre conference in Ethiopia³⁴ – has underpinned efforts to address such diversity of elite interests since then. Despite the absence of clan calculation from the provisional constitution, it even informs the structure of the SFG, in practice at least, until direct elections are put into place. The 4.5 formula represents Somalia's longest-established effort at decentralized governance, as it places some functions of the national government in the hands of a 'devolved' institution – in this case, clan elders. However, the legitimacy of some who have claimed to be elders at various negotiations during the civil war has often been disputed. As such, the model could be seen to represent a form of consociational decentralized governance³⁵ – one of the four main options that were mooted in the mid-1990s in Lewis and Mayall's 'menu of options'³⁶ – although more recently questions have been raised about the limits of hybrid political institutions that rely on traditional institutions, such as the authority of elders in forming a stable democratic state.³⁷

As regards the current attempt to form member states, a key shortcoming has been the limited group of elites that have signed up to the three interim administrations. Larger clans are more organized and have superior resources, and so in effect dictate regional state formation politics and the constitutional negotiations under the prevailing 4.5 clan formula (or a regional version of 4.5 for division among the clans in a given area). However, ongoing neglect of minority interests increases the chances of future instability. Lack of resources has constrained the ability of these groups to secure a place in negotiations, which in turn feeds fears that their interests will not be considered in the federal project (particularly while the 4.5 formula remains in use). This has since 2007 contributed to al-Shabaab's ability to present itself as an alternative to these groups (even to certain Rahanweyn), although in many cases such groups have little choice in their allegiances.³⁸ Al-Shabaab's administration has offered a counter-access to influence and relevance for elites, even if this is pragmatically (rather than ideologically) grounded.

Puntland's primacy

Moving from the discussion of clan, it is important to reflect on the significance of Puntland, the only functioning prospective member state that does not aspire to sovereignty of its own. Since its formation as an autonomous administration in 1998, Puntland has established a range of precedents

³² For a compelling argument on the attraction of the rents associated with sovereign command, even in the context of failed states, see Engleburt, Pierre (2009), *Africa: Unity, Sovereignty, and Sorrow*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner. Although he treats Somalia as an exception, Engleburt's model provides a useful explanation of the motivations for being associated with the internationally backed transitional government processes, which have continued to hold sovereign authority in principle for the country.

³³ For a useful survey of the political agendas of various groups in the Somali context, including al-Shabaab, see Life & Peace Institute (2014), *Alternatives for Conflict Transformation in Somalia*, LPI Report, May 2014, Uppsala, <http://www.life-peace.org/wp-content/uploads/The-ACTS-Report.pdf> (accessed 10 October 2014); Hansen, Stig Jarle (2013), *Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group, 2005–2012*, London: Hurst & Company, explores the more pedestrian motivations for the group's regional administrations. Marchal, Roland (2011), 'The rise of a jihadi movement in a country at war: Harakat al-Shabaab al Mujaheddin in Somalia', Report for UK Foreign And Commonwealth Office Paris: SciencesPo, http://www.sciencespo.fr/cepi/sites/sciencespo.fr.cepi/files/art_RM2.pdf (accessed 11 October 2014) provides some of the clearest examples of the challenges of local governance – in this case by al-Shabaab, but relevant to the new member state administrations and SFG.

³⁴ Bryden, Matt, 'New hope for Somalia? The building block approach'.

³⁵ Elmi, Afyare Abdi (2014). *Decentralization Options for Somalia*, Mogadishu, Heritage Institute for Policy Studies, http://www.heritageinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Decentralization_Options_for_Somalia-ENGLISH.pdf (accessed 11 October 2014).

³⁶ Lewis, Ioan M. and Mayall, James (1995), *A Study of Decentralised Political Structures for Somalia: A Menu of Options*, Report prepared by consultants from the London School of Economics and Political Science; Commissioned by the European Union, EC Somalia Unit, with the assistance of the UN Development Office for Somalia, http://tobiashagmann.freeflux.net/files/media/horn/docs/lewis_mayall_1995_decentralised-structures-somalia.pdf (accessed 9 October 2014).

³⁷ Hoehne, Markus, V. (2013), 'Limits of hybrid political orders: the case of Somaliland'. *Journal of Eastern African Studies*. 7:2, pp. 199–217.

³⁸ See Mosley, Jason, 'Reality of Somali Federalism Doesn't Match "Vision".'

in terms of future member states' relations with a central government in Mogadishu. Some of the most significant have come in latter years – notably its independent relations with donors, its courting of foreign investors in its natural resource sector, and, most recently, its debates with the SFG over the provisional constitution and the implementation agenda towards the 2016 elections. Although Puntland was a prime mover under the 2011–12 'roadmap' process whereby the provisional constitution was drafted and endorsed by a clan-based assembly,³⁹ the Puntland government rejected some of the language in the constitution that it regarded as threatening to its interests. Particular objections were raised concerning the definition of member states, which appear to contradict Puntland's own territorial claims.

As noted above, the constitution indicates that two or more regions can form a member state. However, Puntland's territory includes part – but not all – of Mudug region (see map): Puntland's institutions have evolved out of a former insurgency, with its roots in a clan-framed regional identity – the Harti sub-clan of the Darod clan family – and the influence of these Harti sub-clans runs into north Mudug. Since Puntland is held up as the benchmark for aspirant member states, this has important implications for the future of the formation of federal member states in two respects.

First, Puntland's clan-based territory sets a difficult precedent for other member states. Nowhere else in southern and central Somalia is there a clear clan organizational principle such as that of the Harti, whereby related sub-clans have created a durable coalition around mutual territorial and political interest.⁴⁰ This mainly underscores the need to consider alternative factors to clan when evaluating the functionality and viability of member states. Indeed, Puntland itself is fractured along sub-clan lines within the Harti grouping; and while these divisions have created tensions, they have not derailed the project.⁴¹ Moreover, whereas Puntland's institutional arrangements have had more than a decade to evolve, recent member state formation processes in southern and central Somalia represent a fast-track approach to managing diversity of elite interests. This bodes ill for stability.

Second, and echoing one of the points above in respect of the IJA agreement, Puntland has received clear signals that its territorial integrity will be respected. Shortly after the agreement to work for an interim administration in central Somalia was signed in July 2014, the international community (which had endorsed the arrangement) indicated that Puntland's territorial integrity should not be affected.⁴² In October 2014 the SFG and Puntland signed an agreement reinforcing this.⁴³ That the emerging IGA still aspires to full control of Mudug creates a quandary for Mogadishu, which has sent conflicting signals. As such, Puntland has also demonstrated where a top-down approach to implementing the provisional constitution – i.e. from the centre – will entail reaching accommodations with existing political realities.

³⁹ Puntland's President Abdirahman Mohamud 'Farole' was a signatory to the 'roadmap' process. TFG Prime Minister Abdiweli Mohamed Ali 'Gaas', who participated in that process, succeeded Farole as president of Puntland in January 2014.

⁴⁰ See quote from Menkhaus in Rift Valley Institute, 'Somalia's Jubbaland: Past, present and potential futures', Meeting report: Nairobi Forum, 22 February 2013, p. 1.

⁴¹ International Crisis Group (2013), 'Somalia: Puntland's punted polls'. Africa Briefing no 97, 19 December 2013, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/~//media/Files/africa/horn-of-africa/somalia/b097-somalia-puntlands-punted-polls.pdf> (accessed 12 October 2014).

⁴² The EU, UNSOM and IGAD sent a joint letter to the government of Puntland to this effect in advance of a visit by the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Somalia, Nicholas Kay, to Puntland in August 2014. For a copy of the text, see <http://www.raxanreeb.com/2014/08/somalia-un-eu-and-igad-envoys-for-somalia-send-concern-letter-to-puntland-president-after-the-region-suspended-ties-with-mogadishu/>; (accessed 12 September 2014).

⁴³ 'Somalia: Puntland clinches deal with Federal Govt', Garowe Online, 14 October 2014, <http://www.garoweonline.com/page/show/post/610/somalia-puntland-clinches-deal-with-federal-govt> (accessed 14 October 2014); A copy of the agreement is available via IGAD, see [http://igad.int/attachments/978_141014%20Agreement%20between%20FGS%20and%20Puntland%20\(Eng\).pdf](http://igad.int/attachments/978_141014%20Agreement%20between%20FGS%20and%20Puntland%20(Eng).pdf) (accessed 1 July 2015).

Influence from the region

Some of the above discussion of member states has referred to the presence or influence of external actors. This section will look more closely at the question of regional influence – particularly that of Ethiopia and Kenya.

A decade ago, the initial discussions within IGAD on the formation of a peacekeeping mission (IGAD Peace Support Mission to Somalia – IGASOM) to back the new TFG swiftly ruled out the participation of troops from Somalia's neighbours.⁴⁴ This meant that, of the IGAD members, only Uganda and Sudan would have been eligible. Indeed, when the mission was eventually constituted under AU auspices as AMISOM (into which IGASOM was subsumed), Uganda supplied the first contingent of 1,650 troops.

AMISOM has expanded significantly since then, with a mandate to deploy more than 21,500 troops and more than 500 police. The mission now includes, *inter alia*, military personnel from Ethiopia (4,395), Kenya (3,664) and Djibouti (1,000, with plans to deploy a further 900), while the Ugandan component stands at 6,223.⁴⁵ Particularly since the Ethiopian military intervention of December 2006 against the ICU, and the subsequent rise of al-Shabaab, the political calculus of factions associated with the transitional federal institutions (TFIs) and their international backers has shifted, creating an enabling environment for the military presence of neighbouring countries. In addition, negotiations within the IGAD framework have provided a mandate for support to the TFIs and now the SFG via AMISOM. In effect, this regional process has endorsed spheres of influence for Ethiopia and Kenya in central and southern parts of Somalia, along their borders.

AMISOM's presence – and in particular both the shift in its mandate towards a more robust enforcement role outside Mogadishu from 2011 and the vigorous participation of its troops (especially from Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia) – has resulted in al-Shabaab's loss of control over significant territories in the past three years. Starting from Mogadishu, it now includes many of the key urban areas in central and southern Somalia. Furthermore, although the SFG has not been in a position to expand its influence directly into many of these areas beyond a token administrative presence, the AMISOM-led operation has created a political environment in which federalism has remained the dominant political process. For the most part, even opponents of the process and the leadership are conducting their political activities within the framework of the federalism. For example, ASWJ's clashes with the government in Galgadud reflect competition for influence within the process of member state formation, rather than an effort by ASWJ to create a different framework.

As it stands, the deployment of AMISOM troops from Kenya and Ethiopia reflects the national security concerns of those states. Kenya's troops joined AMISOM after a unilateral military intervention in late 2011, Operation Linda Nchi ('Protect the Country'), which eventually culminated in the KDF's capture of Kismayo and occupation of additional positions in Lower and Middle Juba. The Kenyan intervention supported Ahmed Madobe's Ras Kambooni militia (as described above, Madobe is now president of the IJA). Similarly, Ethiopia's troops, having occupied Mogadishu and positions in various southern and central locations from the end of 2006 and early 2009, re-entered Somalia from positions across the border in small numbers in late 2011, and then in force from early 2012, driving al-Shabaab from Baidoa and other towns in Bay and Bakool regions along the border.

⁴⁴ Healy, Sally (2009), 'Peacemaking in the midst of war: An assessment of IGAD's contribution to regional security', LSE Crisis States Working Paper, Series no. 2: Regional and Global Axes of Conflict, Working Paper 59.

⁴⁵ See <http://amisom-au.org/frequently-asked-questions/> (accessed 6 August 2014).

Ethiopia has a long history of intervention and influence in Somalia. It has played a consistent role in the intra-clan dynamics among the Rahanweyn.⁴⁶ Many Rahanweyn elites consider Ethiopia to be a strategic ally (although others, including those supporting al-Shabaab, have fought against their presence). Ethiopian influence is detectable in the wrangling over contrasting visions for Southwest Somalia – one including Bay, Bakool and Lower Shabelle (SW3), and the other comprising those three regions as well as Gedo and Middle and Lower Juba (SW6). An agreement was signed in June 2014, endorsed by the EU, UN, AU and IGAD missions, establishing an interim administration on the basis of the SW3 territorial ambitions.⁴⁷ Abdifatah Geesey, a former governor of Bay region, and regarded by Ethiopia as a local ally, signed the deal on behalf of the SW6 delegation. The agreement was, however, rejected by the then president of the SW6 administration, Madobe Nunow, who had dismissed Geesey from his cabinet the day before it was signed. Geesey was made minister for security in the ISWA under Sharif Hassan, and Nunow was himself subsequently brought into the administration as livestock minister.

In the case of both the IJA and Southwest Somalia, the direct influence of Kenya and Ethiopia on the political outcome of the interim administrations has presumably been significantly enhanced by the presence of their troops on the ground in the areas in question. While history suggests that Ethiopia will continue to exert its influence even from inside its borders, Kenya's intervention is a departure in its foreign policy-making.

Considerations for the international community

This concluding section will set out some areas where the international community might adjust its approach, or shift its focus, in order to alleviate prospective tensions as the 'vision' for implementing federalism continues towards a transition in 2016.

Managing regional influence and UN peacekeepers

As discussed above, the inclusion of troops from neighbouring countries within AMISOM is particularly relevant for the question of implementing federalism in practice in Somalia. The balance between the common interest in displacing al-Shabaab and the fraught politics of implementing a federal system is fragile; and if and when the threat of al-Shabaab is diminished, the direct security influence of neighbouring countries in the near to medium term is likely to yield diminishing returns to stability.

Under the current AMISOM mandate, the expense of the mission and capacities of the troop-providing countries are limiting factors. The replacement of this AU mission with a better-funded and (potentially) better-equipped UN mission could alleviate at least part of that strain.

The deployment of a more neutral peacekeeping force could allow for a settlement to emerge in both parts of southern Somalia (i.e. Jubbaland and Southwest Somalia) that reflects more the reality of the balance of political power between Somali groups there. This is separate from the question of whether the emerging member state administrations are inclusive or representative. Rather, the aim would be to limit Kenyan and Ethiopian influence in internal Somali politics as federalism continues to develop.

⁴⁶ Bakonyi, Jutta (2013), 'Authority and administration beyond the state: local governance in southern Somalia, 1995–2006', *Journal of Eastern African Studies*. 7:2. 272–290.

⁴⁷ Thomas, Tres. 'Analysis: Flawed Baidoa Deal Will Have Worrying Ripple Effect in Somalia', *Somalia Newsroom*, 30 June 2014, <http://somalianewsroom.com/2014/06/30/analysis-flawed-baidoa-deal-will-have-worrying-ripple-effect-in-somalia/> (accessed 13 October 2014).

Definitions and forms of decentralized government

As discussed above, both the long experience of Puntland and the more recent case of the IJA in Kismayo illustrate the degree to which flexibility is needed in the finalization and implementation of the constitutional framework. The debate over the Jubbaland process in 2012 and 2013 gave rise to alarming levels of clan-based rhetoric, recalling the communal and factional violence of the early 1990s. While this clearly illustrated the acuity and sensitivity of political memories of the civil war, and in particular the clan-framed violence and persecution of that era, it also threatened to destabilize the entire approach towards federalism. An approach based on a 'closed' reading of the constitution – the 'constitutionality' mentioned early in the paper – is thus inappropriate, and, for the purposes of reaching a durable settlement, the existing and developing political realities on the ground will need to be accommodated.

For the international community – especially the UN system, which expended significant energies on the draft constitution – this will mean allowing the text to be perhaps significantly revised to reflect political reality. In practice, the IJA and the most recent agreement with Puntland both suggest that this flexibility exists. It will be important in the period to 2016 not only to maintain but also to promote such flexibility to the parties. Achieving this will probably also require significant investment in the capacity and legitimacy of the judiciary, which would be the logical institution to handle interpretation of the constitutional framework as it evolves. The resignation of the chair of the Constitutional Review and Implementation Commission, which is overseeing the revision process, points to challenges in carrying out the work. Thus, strengthening of the judiciary must be a focal point for urgent external support.

Addressing the concerns of minorities and smaller clans

Most of the above discussion, and its focus on balancing the needs of regional elites, has necessarily obscured another significant set of considerations in the form of the interests of smaller clans and minorities. While less numerous as individual units, such groups together represent a significant proportion of the population, and understanding and addressing their needs will be essential for establishing stable regional and local government. A 'winner takes all' approach to control of resources and political power in Somalia over the course of the civil war has consistently fostered divisions in local loyalties that opposing groups could exploit to undermine existing political orders. Al-Shabaab is not the only group to function in this way, nor was it the first. Ultimately, finding ways to gauge and address the interests of smaller group elites will be an important aspect of member state formation.

The political processes and state formation projects currently under way do not represent bottom-up approaches. Rather, these are decentralized approaches for managing a larger group of elite interests. If the international community is to promote inclusivity and representative systems, a first step will be to promote mechanisms that can address the needs of smaller groups. There will still be work to do to create space for the democratic will of the population to be expressed, but this is a systemic challenge faced by many countries – not only by Somalia, and not only in the developing world.

Acronyms and abbreviations

Al-Shabaab	Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahidin
AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
ASWJ	Ahlu Sunna wal Jama'a
AU	African Union
EU	European Union
ICU	Islamic Courts Union
IGA	interim Galmudug administration
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IGASOM	IGAD Peace Support Mission to Somalia
IJA	interim Jubbaland administration
ISWA	interim Southwest Somalia administration
KDF	Kenya Defence Forces
SFG	Somali federal government
TFC	transitional federal charter
TFG	transitional federal government
TFI	transitional federal institutions
UNPOS	United Nations Political Office for Somalia
UNSOA	UN Support Office for AMISOM

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