Strategies for Managing Regional Conflicts

Ethiopia's Foreign Policy in 1991-2018



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Declaration

This dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. It is not substantially the same as any that I have submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for a degree or diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. I further state that no substantial part of my dissertation has already been submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for any such degree, diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. It does not exceed the prescribed word limit for the Degree Committee of Department of Politics and International Studies.

Abstract

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Regional rivalries have been a major source of insecurity in the Horn of Africa, and have contributed to inter-state wars, civil wars and state partitions. This thesis examines Ethiopia's rivalry management strategies under the EPRDF government. It does so by focusing on the initiation, escalation and de-escalation of Ethiopia's rivalries with Sudan, Eritrea and Somalia in the period 1991-2018.

I argue that Ethiopia's approach to rivalry management has been shaped by its foreign policy orientations. Three distinct orientations are identified, which lead to different strategies and outcomes. The first and oldest foreign policy orientation is Ethiopia Irredenta, which is rooted in Ethiopia's pre-modern Imperial past. It has two core foreign policy objectives: territorial irredentism and status seeking, and has an approach to rivalry management that centres on military force and the pursuit of a victor's peace. The second orientation is the Revolutionary orientation, which guided the EPRDF's foreign relations in 1991-1998. It was based on the premise that the belligerence of past Ethiopian governments had been the main cause behind regional conflicts, and concluded that with the 1991 revolution in Ethiopia peaceful regional relations would follow suit. This orientation did not anticipate conflict and therefore led to policies such as a significant demobilization of Ethiopia's armed forces. It also did not problematize cooperation and hence did not formulate a strategy for cooperation. The Developmental State orientation guided Ethiopia's foreign policy in 2002-2018, and was premised on the idea that Ethiopia was an economically and politically fragile state that needed to prioritize speedy economic development. From this premise an approach to rivalry management that centres on strategic restraint and the active pursuit of economic development was derived. This meant that Ethiopia had to avoid conventional military confrontation due to its high economic costs, and instead rely on diplomatic strategies such as co-optation, linkage-diplomacy and coercive isolation to manage rivals. Under the Revolutionary orientation, rivalries between Ethiopia and Sudan, Eritrea and Somalia were initiated. This trend was reversed under the Developmental State orientation, which culminated in Ethiopia deepening its alignment with Sudan, establishing security inter-dependence with a number of Somali actors and finally terminating its rivalry with Eritrea in 2018.

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Acronyms

ASWJA	Ahlu Sunna Wal Jaama
AlAI	Al Ittihad Al Islamiya (Somalia)
APO	Amhara People's Organization (Ethiopia)
AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
ARS	Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia
AU	African Union
BGLM	Benishangul Gumuz Liberation Movement
COI	Commission of Inquiry
CFA	Cooperative Framework Agreement
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement (Sudan)
Derg	(Amharic) Provisional Military Government of Socialist Ethiopia
EDF	Ethiopian Defence Forces
EFFORT	Endowment Fund for the Rehabilitation of Tigray
EPLF	Eritrean People's Liberation Front
EPRDF	Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front
ENCDC	Eritrean National Congress for Democratic Change
EDP	Eritrean Democratic Party
EIJ	Eritrean Islamic Jihad
EYSC	Eritrean Youth Solidarity for Change
ESDL	Ethiopian Somali Democratic League
EEBC	Ethiopia-Eritrea Border Commission
EECC	Ethiopia-Eritrea Claims Commission
FGS	Federal Government of Somalia
5PPP	Five Point Peace Plan
GSE	Government of the State of Eritrea
GoS	Government of Sudan
GERD	Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam
ICC	International Criminal Court
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IGADD	Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development
IGASOM	IGAD Peace Support Mission in Somalia

JBC	Joint Border Commission
JBDC	Joint Border Development Commission
JFWC	Joint Field Work Committee
JMC	Joint Ministerial Commission
JMDC	Joint Ministerial Defence Committee
DMLEK	Democratic Movement for the Liberation of the Eritrean Kunama
NBI	Nile Basin Initiative
NCP	The National Congress
NIF	National Islamic Front
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OLF	Oromo Liberation Front
ONLF	Ogaden National Liberation Front
PAIC	Popular Arab and Islamic Congress
PFDJ	People's Front for Democracy and Justice
PGE	Provisional Government of Eritrea
RRA	Rahanweyn Resistance Army
RSADO	Red Sea Afar Democratic Organization
SNF	Somali National Front
SRRC	Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council
SSC	Sol, Sanag and Cayn
SPLM	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
SRS	Somali Regional State of Ethiopia
SSDF	Somali Salvation Democratic Front
TPDM	Tigrai People's Democratic Movement
TPLF	Tigray People's Liberation Front
TFG	Transitional Federal Government
TFA	Transitional Federal Assembly
TGE	Transitional Government of Ethiopia
TNA	Transitional National Assembly
ONLF	Ogaden National Liberation Front
UIC	Union of Islamic Courts
UNISFA	United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei

UNMEE	United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea
UNMGSE	UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea
UNSC	United Nations Security Council

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This thesis examines how Ethiopia managed its regional rivalries during the period 1991-2018. It does so through three case-studies of Ethiopia's relationships with Eritrea, Somalia and Sudan. Following the overthrow of the communist regime (Derg) in Ethiopia by the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) in 1991, Ethiopia began the post-Cold War era with positive regional relations. This peace was short-lived, however, and gradually Ethiopia found itself in a state of rivalry with Sudan and various Somali actors in 1995 and 1996, and in a two-year border war with Eritrea in 1998-2000. Over the next two decades, all three relationships would again transform from rivalry to cooperation. Ethiopia and Sudan cooperated extensively in various sectors. With regard to Somalia, Ethiopia managed to transform rivalries with former warlords and Islamist groups into security interdependence. The twenty-year rivalry with Eritrea also ended with a peace deal in 2018.

This study focuses first on the strategies and policy tools applied by Ethiopia to manage these processes of conflict and cooperation, and secondly, accounts for how these strategies affected the initiation, escalation and de-escalation of the rivalries. The main finding is that Ethiopia's strategic choices were affected by its foreign policy orientations, which in turn had an impact on the rivalry trajectories. Three such orientations are identified: the Irredenta orientation that reflected Ethiopia's historic attitude towards its neighbours; the Revolutionary orientation adopted by the EPRDF on coming to power in 1991; and the Developmental State orientation adopted after the war with Eritrea ended in 2000. Rivalry de-escalation can primarily be attributed to the Developmental State foreign policy orientation, the main purpose of which was a structural transformation of the economy through swift industrialization. A corresponding Developmental State foreign policy orientation was formulated that identified the promotion and safeguarding of economic development as Ethiopia's primary foreign policy priority. Ethiopia's approach to rivalry management was as a consequence driven by the concept of strategic restraint, in which conventional military confrontations were to be avoided – due to their

negative impact on development – and threats were instead to be managed predominantly through diplomatic tools such as co-optation and coercive isolation.

The Horn of Africa – which for the purpose of this thesis will be defined as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)[1] region – is an exception to the predominant continental pattern of peaceful inter-state relations.[2] Regional rivalries have been a major source of insecurity in this part of Africa leading to four inter-state wars since the beginning of the Cold War,[3] notable among which were that between Ethiopia and Somalia in 1977 and that between Ethiopia and Eritrea in 1998; the latter alone claimed an estimated 100 000 casualties. Rivalries have also exacerbated civil wars in Ethiopia, Sudan and Somalia through proxy-warfare, and eventually also contributed to the partition of all these states. The dynamics of rivalry onset, escalation and de-escalation are therefore a critical part of regional security in the Horn of Africa.

Inter-state rivalry has also been of great importance to international security outside the Horn of Africa. Various studies have illustrated that a small number of states account for a disproportionate number of wars in the world.[4] Understanding these unique relationships in which most wars occur is one of the most important issues in the study of international security. While extensive case and comparative studies have been conducted on most parts of the world, Africa, according Rasler et al., remains an underexplored area in this literature.[5]

Ethiopia is home to around 40% of the IGAD region's population, and shares borders with all IGAD member states except Uganda. The sum of its regional relations (rivalries and alignments) is therefore a substantial part of the regional aggregate. Ethiopia has also

[1] IGAD is an East African regional organization focused on peace, conflict and development. It is composed of Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia, Kenya, Sudan, Uganda and South Sudan.

[2] Douglas Lemke, *Regions of War and Peace. Cambridge*, (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press. 2002): 161

[3] Others include Sudan-South Sudan 2012 and Somalia-Ethiopia 1964.

[4] Michael P. Colaresi, Karen Rasler, and William R. Thompson, *Strategic Rivalries in World Politics: Position, Space and Conflict Escalation*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Paul F. Diehl and Gary Goertz. *War and Peace in International Rivalry*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000).

[5] Karen Rasler, William R. Thompson, and Sumit Ganguly. *How Rivalries End*, (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013): 194.

emerged as a regional power in recent years and has been playing a central role in all major regional security challenges, such as peace-keeping and mediation in Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan and in the hydro-politics of the Nile. Understanding Ethiopia's agency, and its approach to conflict management is therefore also of critical importance to understanding regional politics in the Horn.

1.1. Literature Review

1.1.1. How does Ethiopia manage its Rivalries?

There are few studies that focus explicitly on Ethiopia's rivalry management strategies, but some insights about its behaviour can be derived from analysis of general regional conflict. In most accounts Ethiopia's regional foreign policy has been characterized by coercion and dominance.[6]

Of all of Ethiopia's neighbours, Somalia's security challenges have received the most attention. The dominant perception of Ethiopia's policies towards Somalia has been that the EPRDF like its predecessor has been fearful of a resurgence of Greater Somalia Irredentism (the Somali Republic laid claim to Djibouti, and Somali-inhabited areas in Kenya and Ethiopia during the Cold War). This fear has been presumed to be a central motive behind Ethiopia's policies towards Somalia under the EPRDF. Mohamed H. Ingiriis sees a continuation of Ethiopian policy from Haile Selassie to the EPRDF that 'aimed at weakening the Somali state by creating a terminal disorder for Somalia.'[7] In a similar vein, Plaut has also portrayed federalism in Somalia as an Ethiopian (and Kenyan) imposition, which has had the aim of dividing and conquering Somali society.[8] In this narrative Ethiopia is seen as a state that is perennially fearful of a unified Somali state, and consequently employs the strategy of disorder to maintain a perpetually weak Somali

[6] See for example: Afyere Elmi and Abdullahi Barise, 'The Somali Conflict: Root Causes, Obstacles, and Peace-Building Strategies', *African Security Review* 15, no. 1, (2010); Sonia Le Gouriellec; 'Regional power and contested hierarchy: Ethiopia, an "imperfect hegemon" in the Horn of Africa', *International Affairs* 94, no. 5, (2018).

[7] Mohamed Haji Ingiriis, 'From Al-Itihaad to Al-Shabaab: how the Ethiopian intervention and the "War on Terror" exacerbated the conflict in Somalia,' *Third World Quarterly*, (2018): 4.

[8] Ibid: 12; Martin Plaut, 'Ethiopia and Kenya help dismember Somalia', *New Statesman,* (September 3, 2013). http://www.newstatesman.com/africa/2013/09/ethiopia-and-kenya-help-dismember-somalia.

state.[9] The second common line of thought is that Ethiopia's influence in Somalia can primarily be attributed to military force and coercion.[10] The combination of an emphasis on the use of military force and divide and rule strategies have led to the emergence of an image of an Ethiopian state with hegemonic ambitions.[11] Finally, these narratives also often portray a singular Somali response to Ethiopia's role in Somalia – that of resistance.[12] Kidist departs from this trend by highlighting how Ethiopia's fear of insecurity spilling-over from Somalia into its own territories has been one of the motives for its policies on Somalia.[13]

On Ethiopia's relationship with Eritrea, the diplomatic positions of the two states in the no-war no-peace stalemate have been at the centre of attention.[14] The stalemate has been portrayed as devoid of any strategic logic and has been partially attributed to the 'political culture that they [Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and EPRDF] share, [which have been] deepened by years of guerrilla struggle', as well as 'Ethiopia's vastly superior skill in diplomacy' and 'Eritrea's startlingly inept approach to diplomacy.'[15] The regional dimension of this conflict has been highlighted by a number of scholars. Abbink for example has illustrated how proxy-warfare became the central tool of destabilization employed by Ethiopia and Eritrea during this rivalry by supporting each-other's rebel groups.[16] This proxy-war has spilled over into other parts of the region, notably Somalia,

[9] Elmi and Barise, 'The Somali Conflict: Root Causes, Obstacles, and Peace-Building Strategies', 39-42.

[10] Abdi Ismail Samatar, 'The Production of Somali Conflict and the Role of Internal and External Actors', in *The Horn of Africa: Intra-State and Inter-State Conflicts and Security,* edited by Redie Bereketeab, (London: Pluto Press, 2013).

[11] Ingiriis, 'From Al-Itihaad to Al-Shabaab: how the Ethiopian intervention and the "War on Terror" exacerbated the conflict in Somalia', 12.

[12] Abdi Ismail Samatar, 'Ethiopian Invasion of Somalia, US Warlordism and AU Shame', *Review of African Political Economy* 34, no. 111, (2007); Bjørn Møller, 'The Somali Conflict: The Role of External Actors', *DIIS Report,* 2009: 03. https://www.econstor.eu/bitstream/10419/59871/1/592906116.pdf

[13] Kidist Mulugeta, *The Role of Regional Powers in the Field of Peace and Security: The Case of Ethiopia,* Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Report, 2014. library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/aethiopien/10879.pdf

[14] Sally Healy, *Lost Opportunities in the Horn of Africa: How Conflicts Connect and Peace Agreements Unravel*, Chatham House, 2008: 17.

[15] Sally Healy and Martin Plaut, *Ethiopia and Eritrea: Allergic to Persuasion*, London: Chatham House, 2007: 8-9.

[16] Jan Abbink, 'Ethiopia—Eritrea: Proxy Wars and Prospects of Peace in the Horn of Africa', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 21, no. 3 (2003).

and has been a significant source of instability.[17] Michael Woldemariam has also drawn attention to how the no-war no-peace stalemate between the two states was beginning to be undermined due to regional changes and domestic turmoil in Ethiopia.[18]

Ethiopia's relationship with Sudan has barely received any attention.[19] The notable exception has been Doop, who has examined Ethiopia's mediation policies on Sudan's civil wars and highlighted some of the positive consequences of this engagement. Verhoeven has also illustrated the complementarities of the two economies and the potential for economic integration.[20] The construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) brought new attention to the strategic importance of this bilateral relationship after a long period of neglect. Notable in this regard is Cascao and Nicol's study that examined the evolving cooperation between Khartoum and Addis Ababa on the hydro-politics of the Nile and the centrality of Sudan for realizing Ethiopia's development aspirations on the Nile.[21] Other analysts have simply assumed a continuity in the historic rivalry and treated the two states as enemies.[22]

IGAD has been an important diplomatic site for Ethiopia's regional rivalry management efforts. Most of the perceptions on Ethiopia's diplomacy in IGAD have centred on its alleged dominating role in the institution. Kidist, for example states, that: 'Ethiopia also plays a leading role within IGAD and is widely perceived to single-handedly dominate

[17] Daniel R. Mekonnen and Paulos Tesfagiorgis, 'The causes and consequences of the Eritrean-Ethiopian border conflict,' in *Regional Security in the post-Cold War Horn of Africa*, edited by Roba Sharamo and Berouk Mesfin, (ISS Monograph 178, 2011).

[18] Michael Woldemariam, '"No War, No Peace" in a Region in Flux: Crisis, Escalation, and Possibility in the Eritrea-Ethiopia Rivalry', *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 12, no. 3, (2018).

[19] See anthologies on Horn of Africa: Kidane Mengisteab and Redie Bereketeab (eds), *Regional Integration, Identity & Citizenship in the Greater Horn of Africa,* (Suffolk: James Currey, 2012); Roba Sharamo and Berouk Mesfin, (eds.), *Regional Security in the post-Cold War Horn of Africa*, (ISS Monograph 178, 2011).

[20] Harry Verhoeven, *Black Gold for Blue Gold? Sudan's Oil, Ethiopia's Water and Regional Integration*, Chatham House Briefing Paper, 2011. http://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/19482_0611bp_verhoeven.pdf.

[21] Ana Elisa Cascão, and Alan Nicol, 'Sudan, «Kingmaker» in a New Nile Hydropolitics: Negotiating Water and Hydraulic Infrastructure to Expand Large-Scale Irrigation', in *Land and Hydropolitics in the Nile River Basin*, edited by Emil Sandstrom, Anders Jagerskog, Terje Oestigaard, (New York: Routledged, 2016).

[22] Kidane Mengeab and Redie Bereketeab, (eds.) *Regional Integration, Identity & Citizenship in the Greater Horn of Africa;* Peter Woodward, *The Horn of Africa: Politics and International Relations*, (New York: I.B. Taurus, 2003): 124-125.

the regional organization.'[23] Redie echoes this view, stating that: 'Ethiopia occupies a dominant position in the regional organization. Therefore any discussion, let alone decision that would offend Ethiopia could not be entertained within IGAD'.[24] The view goes as far as claiming that Ethiopia has dictated the voting behaviour of member states; a prime example of this was IGAD's support for Ethiopia's intervention in Somalia in 2007, which was seen more as an Ethiopian imposition, rather than an act of collective security.[25] According to Medhane Tadesse, the EPRDF-led government 'use[s] organizations as a vehicle to pressure and isolate hostile countries'.[26]

These interpretations of Ethiopia's approach to managing rivalries have also led many to conclude that it is driven by hegemonic ambitions. In reference to Ethiopia's relationship with its neighbours, Redie Bereketeab states that: 'Advertently or inadvertently, Ethiopia is sabotaging its capacity for hegemonic stature by its aggressive inclinations toward its neighbours [...] Coercive means of seeking hegemony betray the very essence of moral authority of hegemony.'[27] Healy traces what she interprets as coercive behaviour to Ethiopia's domestic fragility. According to her: 'This vulnerability inevitably impacts on Ethiopia's foreign policy, encouraging hegemonic conduct in the region.'[28]

1.1.2. Peace and Cooperation in the Horn of Africa

Rivalries and enmities have been portrayed as permanent features of the Horn of Africa in most studies of regional politics.[29] As recently as 2016, De Waal warned that the Horn of

[23] Mulugeta, *The Role of Regional Powers in the Field of Peace and Security: The Case of Ethiopia,* 15.

[24] Redie Berekteab, 'Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), A Critical Analysis', in *Regional Integration, Identity & Citizenship in the Greater Horn of Africa*, ed, Kidane Mengisteab and Redie Bereketeab, (Suffolk: James Currey, 2012): 185.

[25] Le Gouriellec, 'Regional power and contested hierarchy: Ethiopia, an "imperfect hegemon" in the Horn of Africa', 1066.

[26] Medhane Tadesse, 'Making sense of Ethiopia's regional influence', in *Understanding Contemporary Ethiopia: monarchy, Revolution and the Legacy of Meles Zenawi*, edited by Gerard Prunier and Eloi Ficquet, (London: Hurst, 2015): 49.

[27] Redie Bereketeab, 'Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD): a critical analysis', 31.

[28] Sally Healy, *Lost opportunities in the Horn of Africa: how conflicts connect and peace agreements unravel*, Horn of Africa Group Report, London: Chatham House, 2008: 17.

[29] See for example: Peter Woodward, *The Horn of Africa: Politics and International Relations*, (New York: I.B. Taurus, 2003); Clapham also draws attention to the broader issue of how scholarship on the Horn of Africa might be 'locked

Africa was on the verge of 'falling apart'.[30] He claimed that 'If the worsening tensions in the Horn of Africa erupt into military conflict, as seems increasingly possible, it wouldn't just be a disaster for the region — it could also be a catastrophe for the global economy.'[31] The conflict dynamic has been seen as static, as Le Gouriellec notes: 'The regional security situation today is practically the same as it was 15 years ago: Somalia remains in crisis; Somaliland is in a state of precarious stability; Sudan and South Sudan, while distinct entities, are still in conflict; and Eritrea remains isolated.'[32] A number of studies that have assessed the overall state of peace and conflict in the region in extensive detail have emphasised the same features and reached similar conclusions. Redie in an anthology on regional politics also emphasized the problem of conflict.[33] An anthology edited by Berouk Mesfin and Roba Sharamo on regional security in the Horn of Africa has 14 chapters that focus on the causes and consequences of conflict, and some of the measures that might be needed to stabilize these conflicts.[34] In this study Berouk for example notes that: 'All in all, in the longer term, turmoil and conflict will continue to threaten large portions of the Horn of Africa, which is shackled to its tangled history.'[35]

Kassahun Berhanu has, like many others, observed that 'The conflicts that unfold in the Horn of Africa are closely interconnected and feed into each other by assuming sub-regional and regional dimensions.' [36] Kassahun, however does not believe that anything positive comes out of these linkages. He notes that: 'Conflicts in the sub-region are increasingly interwoven, making the task of managing and resolving them increasingly

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into specific ways of looking at' the region: Christopher Clapham, 'Can the Horn change?', *International Relations and Diplomacy* 3, no.12 (2015): 819.

[30] Alex de Waal, "Africa's $700 Billion Problem Waiting to Happen," *Foreign Policy.* March 17, 2016. http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/03/17/africas-700-billion-problem-waiting-to-happen-ethiopia-horn-of-africa/

[31] Ibid.

[32] Le Gouriellec, 'Regional power and contested hierarchy: Ethiopia, an "imperfect hegemon" in the Horn of Africa,' 1060.

[33] Redie Bereketeab, (ed.) *The Horn of Africa: Intra-State and Inter-State Conflicts and Security,* (London: Pluto Press, 2013).

[34] Sharamo and Mesfin, *Regional Security in the post-Cold War Horn of Africa*.

[35] Berouk Mesfin, 'The Horn of Africa Security Complex', *Regional Security in the post-Cold War Horn of Africa*, edited by Roba Sharamo and Berouk Mesfin, ISS Monograph 178, (2011): 22.

[36] Kassahun Berhanu, 'Conflicts in the Horn of Africa and Implications for Regional Security,' *The Horn of Africa: Intra-State and Inter-State Conflicts and Security*, edited by Redie Bereketeab, (London: Pluto Press, 2013): 71.

intractable and complex.'[37] Berouk echoes these views: 'In the Horn of Africa, opportunistic alliances had a relative restraining influence, but, equally, gave additional momentum for inter-state conflict.'[38]

The negative accounts of regional stability have been accompanied by reflections on what is needed to end rivalries and thereby stabilize the wider region. These propositions provide some insight into the concepts of peace with which analysts of the Horn have operated. The proposals almost always centre on domestic transformation of states from autocracy to democracy, and/or facilitating social and economic integration across borders. When peace has been imagined, it has therefore often been a liberal democratic peace, or some form of security community. Assessments and prognosis of peace and security in the Horn of Africa tend to harbour a pessimistic view on the role of state diplomacy, and analysts have instead been inclined to place their hopes on the positive role that can be played by the populations of the region.[39] In 2003 Abbink, a long-time observer of the Horn of Africa, made the following claims:

> Strategies to build a more 'lasting peace' include no doubt the gaining of international backing, a structure of inter-state consultations, developing transborder economic co-operation, and building of broad support among one's own national constituency. They will subvert the need to look for armed proxy movements that foment unrest and do the provoking and the fighting. Modes of governance aimed at enhancing human security – in the economic, political and civic sense – seem vital. Institutional reform and democratisation of the polity and cultivation of a more law-based, pluralist system of administration, with the possibility that a regime or a leader may step down after elections or might open up to multiparty participation and compromise politics, would be part of it.[40]

In 2009 Borchgrenvik and Lie had the following prognosis for the region:

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[37] Ibid: 91.

[38] Berouk Mesfin, 'The Horn of Africa Security Complex', 17; Healy also echoes these views: Sally Healy, *Hostage to Conflict: Prospects for Building Regional Economic Cooperation in the Horn of Africa*, Chatham House, 2011: 37-41.

[39] Kidane Mengisteab and Redie Bereketeab *Regional Integration, Identity & Citizenship in the Greater Horn of Africa.*

[40] Abbink, 'Ethiopia—Eritrea: proxy wars and prospects of peace in the Horn of Africa,' 420.

Any durable peace will have to be built on the creation of strong interdependencies among the states, and on development efforts that reach out to the marginalised populations of the Horn of Africa. Given the current characteristics of the region – weak states with limited capacity to include and integrate its population groups living in peripheral areas, the contradicting interests and ideologies of the regimes, the importance of armed insurgent groups, and the shifting alliances between these non-state actors and neighboring states, the vast unmarked borders, etc. – such a state of affairs is a long way off.[41]

The literature on Ethiopian foreign policy and the Horn of Africa regional politics omits important factors. The major gap on Ethiopian foreign policy is the lacuna on cooperation and its diplomatic strategies for managing friends and enemies. Horn of Africa studies in general has also neglected inter-state cooperation patterns and dynamics.

1.1.3. What has Shaped the EPRDF's Foreign Policy?

A major gap in Horn of Africa studies is the lack of an in-depth study of Ethiopia's foreign policy under the EPRDF. This has significantly hampered our understanding of regional politics in the Horn of Africa, given that Ethiopia has been such a central actor in most of the security issues in the region. Those studies of Horn of Africa regional politics that explicitly or indirectly focus on Ethiopia rarely base their analysis on data that shows how the EPRDF define their national interests and security threats.[42] A review of the literature reveals that we do not have sufficient insight into what the long-term objective of the EPRDF was in Somalia, what they sought to achieve with their containment policy in Eritrea, or what motivated their alignment diplomacy towards Sudan. Ethiopia's approach to managing its rivalries is instead often assumed to be a function of its hegemonic aspirations.[43] Claims about Ethiopia's hegemonic self-perception are rarely

[41] Axel Borchgrevink and Jon Harald Sande Lie, 'Regional Conflicts and International Engagement on the Horn of Africa', *NUPI Report,* (2009), 12.

[42] See for example: Ingiriis, 'From Al-Itihaad to Al-Shabaab: how the Ethiopian intervention and the "War on Terror" exacerbated the conflict in Somalia'; Samatar, 'The Production of Somali Conflict and the Role of Internal and External Actors'.

[43] Dustin Dehez, 'Ethiopia – A Hegemon in the Horn of Africa Region?' Paper presented at the BISA Annual Conference, Exeter, UK, 2008. www.open.ac.uk/socialsciences/bisa-africa/confpapers/Dehez-exeter-08.pdf; Le Gouriellec, 'Regional power and contested hierarchy: Ethiopia, an "imperfect hegemon" in the Horn of Africa,' 1060.

supported by evidence of such thinking by the EPRDF but are assumed or inferred by an interpretation of foreign policy action.

Conceptually studies of Ethiopian foreign policy are dominated by either of the following characteristics: one is an ideational approach that emphasises the role of state identity in shaping foreign policy objectives and the other is a Realist overemphasis on coercive and military foreign policy tools.[44] The ideational variations amongst Ethiopian political elites and the role of non-military foreign policy tools have been neglected in these studies.

A function of the focus on state identity in the literature is a tendency to treat the Ethiopian state and its society as a unitary actor. Ingiriis for example sees the EPRDF's Somalia policies merely as a continuation of the policies of Haile Selassie and the Derg. These studies rarely account for the variations amongst Ethiopians in their perceptions of what Ethiopia's foreign policy or role in the region ought to be. This is all the more puzzling when considering the revolutionary nature of the EPRDF and the ideological contradictions between it, its predecessors, and its contemporary opponents. Despite this, foreign policy continuity between the EPRDF and previous regimes and a horizontal homogeneity across parties is often assumed.[45]

Regardless of an extensively formulated ideological framework of a developmental state economic and governance model, there seems to be a refusal to take the ideological orientation of the EPRDF seriously. In a rather explicit formulation of this tendency, Le Gouriellec claims: 'The developmental state established by the Prime Minister was nothing but a means of legitimizing his authority'.[46] All ideology serves the function of legitimizing power, and while the moral dimension and success of the model is debatable, the time, effort and resources invested in the Developmental State indicate that this was

[44] For more on the concept of state identity in IR see: Adel Al Toraifi, *Understanding the role of state identity in foreign policy decision-making: the rise of Saudi-Iranian rapprochement (1997-2009).* PhD thesis, The London School of Economics and Political Science, 2012.

[45] Le Gouriellec, 'Regional power and contested hierarchy: Ethiopia, an "imperfect hegemon" in the Horn of Africa,' 1067; Ingiriis, 'From Al-Itihaad to Al-Shabaab: how the Ethiopian intervention and the "War on Terror" exacerbated the conflict in Somalia.'

[46] Le Gouriellec, 'Regional power and contested hierarchy: Ethiopia, an "imperfect hegemon" in the Horn of Africa', 1066.

an economic model to which the EPRDF was committed. That this is not given more attention is all the more perplexing, considering that the EPRDF produced a white paper in 2002, detailing how its development aspirations were tied to its foreign policy.[47]

Foreign policy choices in this literature are not seen as functions of the structure of international system in a neo-realist fashion, but rather a function of the particular identity of the Ethiopian state. This argument is not explicitly stated in the studies cited in this thesis, but the continuity in behaviour and objectives across regimes that is alluded to, indicates that this is the theoretical framework within which these studies operate. An ideational approach to Ethiopian foreign policy that accounts for the subnational variations in elite belief systems is lacking. Such an approach could help us make sense not only of the change and continuity in Ethiopian foreign policy formulation and practice but also the politics of defining foreign policy objectives.

As the review of the literature has shown, much of the analysis of Ethiopia's rivalry management stresses its exercise of coercive military power. While military force and coercive measures have been important features of Ethiopia's regional interactions, they can only explain a fraction of its regional relations and the dynamics of its rivalries. A problem with the coercion-based accounts is that they seem to take for granted that Ethiopia has sufficient power to militarily or diplomatically coerce its regional rivals without the support of other states in the region. In other words, that Ethiopia is so powerful that it can act autonomously on regional security issues. As this thesis will illustrate, the intervention in Somalia and subsequent containment of the Al Shabaab, the containment and isolation of Sudan in 1993-1998 and Eritrea in 2009-2018 were achieved either in direct collaboration with other states, or at least dependent on the implicit diplomatic support from other states in the region. The role of third parties in these conflicts and its implications for Ethiopia's relative power and strategies must therefore be taken into account. In other words, Ethiopia's alignment diplomacy is essential to understand its rivalry management.

[47] Ethiopia Ministry of Information, *Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and Strategy*, (2002). www.ethiopiaembassy.ru/pages/docs/Foreign_Police_English.pdf

The emphasis on coercion and hegemony has also led to a neglect of the extent to which other foreign policy tools have been applied by Ethiopia to exercise power and manage its rivalries and relationships. In Somalia's federation-making process, for example, Ethiopia's influence in the regional states is attributed to its hegemonic role and coercive capacity. The extent to which Ethiopia had co-opted Somali politicians and rivals by catering to their financial, military and strategic needs has rarely been examined. This would be a very different way of exercising influence than through military coercion. Nor has the extent to which its mediation diplomacy has been a source of influence been taken into consideration. Finally, the preoccupation with conflict has led to a neglect of what strategies Ethiopia employed in transforming its relationship with Sudan; we do not know exactly what foreign policy tools Ethiopia applied in order to build trust and progressively expand the cooperation into different sectors.

1.1.4. Neglect of Regional Cooperation

Analyses of the state of regional peace and conflict in the Horn of Africa have also omitted important developments. There are two related omissions in the analysis of regional affairs. The first is an empirical selection bias in favour of conflict over cooperation.[48] Secondly, there is the problem of neglecting how conflict can generate tactical alignments and collective action that can over time constitute the building blocks of a durable regional peace.

The best example of the neglect of cooperation in Horn of Africa studies is the inadequate attention given to the transformation of Ethiopia's relationship with Sudan. This relationship has transformed from decades of suspicion and proxy warfare to a two decade long period of cooperation in 1998-2018.[49] The cooperation between Ethiopia and the various Somali regional states, notably Somaliland, has also received very little attention; instead, the Ethiopia-Somali relationship has been understood through the lens of the former's relationship with Al Shabaab and UIC. A number of studies dedicated to

[48] See: Clapham, 'Can the Horn change?'

[49] Redie Bereketeab, (ed.) *The Horn of Africa: Intra-State and Inter-State Conflicts and Security,* (London: Pluto Press, 2013).

regional politics have been produced, yet none of them account for these rapprochements and cooperative interactions.[50]

The neglect of cooperation in studies of the Horn may be rooted in the way peace and conflict in this region has been approached. The conceptions of peace, stability and cooperation employed by analysts might have been too narrow to capture important cooperative behaviour. Situations that have been seen as conflict-events are also instances of collective action and cooperation, and if seen as such a different picture emerges of the state of peace and conflict in the Horn of Africa. The containment of Sudan (1993-1998), regional intervention and state-building in Somalia (2006-2017), the containment of Eritrea (2008-2017) and the challenge to Egypt's hydro-hegemony on the Nile in 2011-2017 are four cases of collective regional action that have mostly been interpreted as cases of conflict, and often as Ethiopia's bilateral conflicts. Some of the exceptions to this trend are Healy and Fisher who have drawn some attention to collective regional action in their analysis of regional politics.[51] Nevertheless the extent of cooperation and the drivers of these processes remain underexplored.

This thesis contributes to filling some of these gaps by providing an in-depth study of how the EPRDF conceived of its foreign policy interests in the period 1991-2018. It improves our understanding of Ethiopia's foreign policy by accounting for the role of diplomacy as a rivalry management tool. In relation to Horn of Africa studies it contributes to filling the gap on inter-state cooperation by identifying relationships that have transformed from rivalry to alignments and by drawing attention to cases of collective action.

[50] Sharamo and Mesfin, *Regional Security in the post-Cold War Horn of Africa*; Kidane Mengisteab and Redie Bereketeab, *Regional Integration, Identity & Citizenship in the Greater Horn of Africa.*

[51] Jonathan Fisher, *Mapping "Regional Security" in the Greater Horn of Africa: Between National Interests and Regional Cooperation*, Fredrich Ebert Stiftung, (2014). *https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/aethiopien/10855.pdf; Sally Healy, 'Rethinking State Fragility: Somalia's Neighbours – a Help or a Hindrance?' in Rethinking State Fragility,* London: British Academy, 2015.

1.1.5. Situating the Thesis in the Existing Literature

The focus of this thesis lies at the intersection of two emerging literatures in the study of African politics: illiberal/high modernist state building projects and the ideational drivers of African foreign policies. Outside of African studies it draws on the works of scholars that have examined the impact of the developmental state governance model on foreign policy and international relation in East Asia.

By focusing on the Ethiopian developmental state this thesis builds on a body of literature in African studies that identifies illiberal state-building as a distinct and significant category of statecraft in contemporary Africa. The EPRDF's Ethiopia is for example one of the illiberal state-builder's identified by Jones, Oliveira and Verhoeven.[52] The political economic visions that these regimes were pursuing have been characterized as high-modernist.[53] This thesis draws attention to how some of the ideas identified in this literature also shaped the foreign policy objectives and practice of these states.

Through its focus on orientations as drivers of foreign policy, this study builds on and contributes to a body of literature on ideationally driven foreign policies in Africa. A notable contribution in this literature is Verhoeven and Roesler's study of the Second Congo War. They illustrate how the revolutionary nature of the liberation movements shaped the formulation of their foreign policies. They argue that:

in accounting for revolutionary change, including the liberation of Zaire, we emphasize the social construction of interests and the entwining of ideology and security—Pan-Africanism as not merely a set of quasi- unreachable rhetorical ideals, but as an integral component of what center for operational research liberation movements identify as urgent and actionable in their foreign policies and what trade-offs and options they remain blinded to.[54]

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[52] Will Jones, Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, and Harry Verhoeven, *Africa's Illiberal State-Builders,* RSC Working Paper 89, (Oxford: Refugee Studies Centre, 2013).

[53] Harry Verhoeven, *Water, Civilisation and Power in Sudan: The Political Economy of Military-Islamist State Building,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017); Barnaby Dye, 'The Return of 'High Modernism'? Exploring the Changing Development Paradigm through a Rwandan Case Study of Dam Construction', *Journal of Eastern African Studies,* 10, (2), 2016.

[54] Philip Roessler and Harry Verhoeven, *Why Comrades Go to War: Liberation Politics and the Outbreak of Africa's Deadliest Conflict,* (New York: Oxford university Press, 2016): 16-17.

They explicitly draw attention to how foreign policy objectives or interests are socially constructed and reflect domestic ideologies. The Revolutionary Orientation category that I employ in this thesis is very similar to the category employed by Verhoeven and Roessler. It however differs from their analysis in that the ideological fault-lines that were most critical in shaping the EPRDF's foreign policy were domestic polarization on nationalism rather than trans-national conservative-radical divides.

The impact of liberation struggles and organization on foreign policy has been a recurrent theme in the study of African foreign policies.[55] On South African foreign policy making, for example, Habib's study illustrates how the African National Congress' foreign policy orientation was for many years shaped by its national liberation movement experience and ideology.[56] The liberation movement background in particular influenced the ANC's policies towards Africa in general and in particular its response to the political crisis in Zimbabwe in 2007.[57]

Thirdly, this study also builds on literature that examines the impact of the developmental state on foreign policy in East Asia. Etel Solingen's work features prominently in this literature.[58] Solingen has illustrated how the political economy priorities of political elites in China, Japan and South Korea following the economic devastation of World War II had major implications for their foreign policies and consequently regional stability. She points out that the leaderships in these states responded to the economic crises of the 1950s and 1960s by adopting developmental state governance models. Succeeding with the economic aspirations of the developmental state she argues required stable regional

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[55] Dan Connell, *'The EPLF/PFDJ experience: how it shapes Eritrea's regional strategy', in Eritrea's External Relations: Understanding its Regional Role and Foreign Policy*, (ed.) Richard Reid, (Chatham House: 2009).

[56] Adam Habib, 'South Africa's foreign policy: hegemonic aspirations, neoliberal orientations and global transformation,' *South African Journal of International Affairs*, 16:2, 2009; Another study that illustrates the impact of liberation movement identity on foreign policy is: James Barber, 'The New South Africa's Foreign Policy: Principles and Practice,' *International Affairs,* Vol. 81, No. 5 (2005).

[57] Habib, 'South Africa's foreign policy: hegemonic aspirations, neoliberal orientations and global transformation,' 143-144.

[58] Other studies that fall in this category are: Sulmaan Khan, *Haunted by Chaos: China's Grand Strategy from Mao Zedong to Xi Jinping,* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018, and Deborah Welch Larson, 'Will China be a New Type of Great Power?', *The Chinese Journal of International Politics*, 2015.

and domestic conditions, which consequently led East Asian states to minimize their investments in their militaries and thereby contained arms races and militarized incidents.[59] This thesis however differs from Solingen's analysis in that she sees these foreign policy choices as functions of particular material economic conditions, rather than elite choices rooted in ideational factors.

1.2. Key Concepts

1.2.1. Foreign Policy Orientations as National Role Conceptions

Foreign policy orientations will in this thesis be conceptualized by drawing on to the concept of National Role Conceptions (NRC) as developed by Holsti and elaborated by Hymans.[60] NRCs are sets of interests and strategies that are shared by political elites within states. According to Holsti 'a national role conception includes the policymakers' own definitions of the general kinds of decisions, commitments, rules and actions suitable to their state, and of the functions, if any, their state should perform on a continuing basis in the international system or in subordinate regional system'.[61] The key factor in this definition is temporal continuity: role conceptions are not permanent, but nor are they short-term phenomena like events. They are sets of long-term interests and strategies that provide the normative framework within which states respond to external events and decisions. NRCs are relational in that they situate a collective 'self' in relation to 'others' in a particular international community. This involves, for example, dictating whether it is appropriate for a state to pursue the role of hegemon or isolationism.

There need not be consensus on a particular NRC domestically, instead, as Hymans points out:

[59] Etel Solingen, 'Pax Asiatica versus Bella Levantina: The Foundations of War and Peace in East Asia and the Middle East,' *American Political Science Review,* Vol. 101, Issue 4, 2007: 768.

[60] K. J. Holsti, 'National role conceptions in the study of foreign policy', *International Studies Quarterly* 14, no.3, (1970): 246; Jacques E. C. Hymans, *The Psychology of Nuclear Proliferation: Identity, Emotions and Foreign Policy*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

[61] Holsti, 'National role conceptions in the study of foreign policy', 245-246.

Intellectuals and identity entrepreneurs are constantly developing new national identity conceptions and marketing them to the rest of society. The future national leader will probably be exposed to various such conceptions as a youth and, over time and for various motivations, will draw on these to develop a subjective conception of the nation's identity. Most often, the leader will simply have chosen from among the mainstream conceptions available in society. But sometimes the leader is in fact less an [NRC] consumer than an [NRC] producer.[62]

Foreign policy orientations should therefore be understood as sub-national elite belief systems and consequently also have to be differentiated from state-level identity. The premise is that foreign policy choices are often motivated by normative frameworks (i.e. ideationally driven)[63] and that there is often continuity in foreign policy, and when significant foreign policy change does take place it reflects a change in the NRCs of ruling elites.

Given that rivalries are long-term phenomena, rather than events, a long-term perspective is needed to understand such relationships. The long-term time-horizon of NRCs makes them particularly useful to study the rivalry management strategies of states. The framework of NRC offers a way of understanding foreign policy change, continuity and priorities. Through an inductive examination of foreign policy statements and programs across regimes and political parties, I have identified and categorized three distinct orientations in Ethiopia: Irredentist, Revolutionary, and Developmental State.

While this thesis provides an original typology of Ethiopian foreign policy orientations, the roles and objectives identified in the three orientations are not unique and can be found in other countries with similar institutional and historical backgrounds. While neither history nor institutions are determinants of foreign policy they do however shape the menu of NRCs that are available to political elites. For example, it is unlikely that a group of elites in a state such as Norway – which doesn't have a history of imperialism – would develop a hegemonic role conception such as Turkey's Neo-Ottomanism or Ethiopia's Irredenta.

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[62] Hymans, *The Psychology of Nuclear Proliferation: Identity, Emotions and Foreign Policy,* 19.

[63] For more theoretical analysis on ideationally driven foreign policy making see: Daniel W. Drezner, 'Ideas, Bureaucratic Politics, and the Crafting of Foreign Policy,' *American Journal of Political Science*, 44: 4, 2000.

The literature on East Asian and Turkish foreign policy offer good examples of how the NRC framework can be used to explain change and continuity in foreign policy making. Aras and Gorener employ the concept of NRCs to analyse change and continuity in Turkish foreign policy.[64] Their point of departure is what they see as a shortcoming in the IR literature on identity, which they argue tends to treat 'state identity as monolithic and a product of largely impersonal forces.'[65] What is more important in foreign policy making are the NRCs that are adopted by ruling elites. A focus on NRCs 'assigns the capacity to construct or articulate new role conceptions to the elite, while depersonifying the state.'[66] Through this framework they explain the continuity of the 'Western-oriented, isolationist and passive foreign policy' stance of consecutive Turkish governments during most of the Cold War.[67] The formulation and contestation of this orientation is attributed to the personal agency of Kemal Attaturk, who had formulated the principles and contents of this orientation and then established 'an apparatus of institutional safeguards to prevent any deviation from the established line in years to come.'[68] In the Ethiopian case Meles Zenawi had played a similar role after 2000 when his Developmental State foreign policy orientation assumed a hegemonic role, and its influence continued to linger on for many years after his death.

Foreign policy change in Turkey has also been explained through this framework. A reorientation of Turkish foreign policy came to effect with the military coup in 1980 that made Turgut Ozal President of Turkey. According to Aras and Gorener the military coup provided Ozal with the institutional space to break with the Kemalist orientation and formulate a new role for Turkey in the region.[69] This involved a move away from an exclusively Western orientation to assuming the role of a 'bridge between East and West' (i.e. in essence to move away from an exclusive Western reliance and instead diversify

[64] Bülent Aras and Aylin Gorener, 'National role conceptions and foreign policy orientation: the ideational bases of the Justice and Development Party's foreign policy activism in the Middle East,' *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies,* 12:1, 2010.

[65] Ibid: 74; This is similar to the trend in Ethiopian foreign policy analysis which tends to overlook sub-national variations in foreign policy objectives.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid: 78.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Ibid: 80.

security and trade partners).[70] The new orientation also involved a move away from a passive strategic posture to a more activist policy, which led amongst other things to strong Turkish support for the US during the Gulf War.[71] A third foreign policy reorientation took place with the coming to power of the AKP (Justice and Development Party) in 2002. This involved a more extensive move away from the Kemalist position of 'forced alienation from its own past' to a role conception that emphasized and drew inspiration from the historical and cultural legacies of the Ottoman Empire.'[72] The AKPs reorientation led to the formulation of a more assertive foreign policy than Ozgul's and involved a distinct self-perception of a regional leader in the Middle East and the Islamic world (and has consequently been labeled Neo-Ottomanism).[73] AKP's break with the past also led to prestige-seeking behavior and included practical measures such as establishing diplomatic relations with Hamas, and involvement in mediation processes in the US's conflicts with Syria and Iraq.[74] With the coming to power of the EPRDF in 1991 a similar dispute over how to relate to Ethiopia's imperial past became a central theme in foreign policy debates.[75] Just like in Turkey, contrasting elite views on Ethiopia's Imperial past shaped their positions on the appropriateness of status seeking and regional hegemony.[76]

A striking similarity to Ethiopia's Developmental State orientation can be found in China's foreign policy under Deng Xiaoping. Deborah Welch Larsen uses the NRC framework to explain foreign policy change in China under Deng Xiaoping. She argues that the conception of China as a poor country was an important driver of the re-orientation of China's foreign policy during this period, and points out that 'Unfavorable social comparisons between the PRC and Hong Kong, Japan, and Western Europe provided the stimulus for the emphasis on economic modernization rather than class

[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibid: 79.

[72] Ibid: 82.

[73] For an in-depth study on Neo-Ottomanism see: Gabriella Ozel Volfova, *Turkey's Middle Eastern Endeavors: Discourses and Practices of Neo-Ottomanism under the AKP*, (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

[74] Aras and Gorener, 'National Role Conceptions and Foreign Policy Orientation: the Ideational Bases of the Justice and Development Party's Foreign Policy Activism in the Middle East,' 86-87.

[75] See chapter two

[76] For an application of the NRC framework to analyse liberal democracies see: Alexandra Sakaki, *Japan and Germany as Regional Actors Evaluating Change and Continuity after the Cold War,* (London: Routledge, 2013).

struggle, as under Mao.'[77] This was based on a historical image of China as a 'great nation' as well as a relational comparison of its current economic state with other great nation, which resulted in the conclusion that economic development had to be prioritized in both domestic and foreign policy. Prioritizing economic development led to a de-prioritization of arms race and territorial disputes with neighboring states like Japan.[78]

Foreign policy orientations are normative guidelines and aspirations from which some degree of deviation is common. For example, despite a commitment to prioritize economic development Deng Xiaoping militarily attacked Vietnam in 1979. Khan makes sense of this deviation as follows: 'for all the rationalizations that would follow, the simplest explanation was probably the truest: Deng had made a mistake. Even the best of grand strategists have a hard time sticking to grand strategy unwaveringly. Being human, they behave inconsistently, yield to policy impulses far removed from what they planned to do.'[79]

Foreign policy orientations should therefore be understood as aspirations and strategic and normative frameworks that guide foreign policy decisions and practice. This means that there will almost inevitably be some degree of mismatch between aspiration and practice. The analytical utility of focusing on a particular orientation depends on the degree to which it explains behavior. We should therefore ask how much behavior it explains rather than judge it by the extent to which there is a perfect fit between aspiration and action. For example, China's invasion of Vietnam did not lead Khan to conclude that Deng Xiaoping's foreign policy orientation was not useful to understand Chinese foreign policy behavior.

Delineating the political and temporal scope of foreign policy orientations is also a problem. Given that they rarely are legally codified policies or institutions, dating the

[77] Deborah Welch Larson, 'Will China be a New Type of Great Power?', *The Chinese Journal of International Politics*, 2015: 334; A debate over whether to think in terms of class struggle versus a developmental state approach was also taking place in the TPLF in 2000. See chapter two for details.

[78] Sulmaan Khan, *Haunted by Chaos: China's Grand Strategy from Mao Zedong to Xi Jinping,* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018): 137.

[79] Ibid: 162-163; While Khan is focusing on grand strategy in this study, the concept is similar to foreign policy orientations and the explanation relevant to understand behavioural deviations from foreign policy objectives.

beginning and end orientations is challenging. Deng's deviation from his strategic aspirations during the invasion of Vietnam while pursuing an 'economy first' policy towards other neighbors such as Japan also illustrates that a government might follow a particular orientation towards one state or region and another towards others.

These challenges all apply to the case studies in this thesis. Consequently, while I have periodized the time frame into the Revolutionary, Irredenta and Developmental State periods, these are periods when a particular orientation was dominant rather than the exclusive framework through which foreign policy was made. The three orientations were at particular junctions either formally adopted as government strategies or at the very least the dominant framework for thinking about foreign policy. They were however either challenged by external exigencies that made it difficult to pursue the aspirations or contested by the public or politicians within the government – both of which at different points led to either temporary deviations or a long-term reorientation of foreign policy.

1.2.2. Rivalries and Alignments

Rivalry

The focus of this thesis is on how Ethiopia has managed its rivalries. To gain an understanding of the particular challenges that rivalries pose we first of all need to have an idea of what types of relationships they are. Colaresi, Rasler and Thompson define rivalries as 'relationships in which decision-makers have singled out other states as distinctive competitors and enemies posing some actual or potential military threat.'[80] The categorization of other states as enemies is a social-psychological process of interpreting 'intentions of others based on earlier behavior and forecasts about the future behavior of these other actors.'[81] Past aggressive behaviour comes to define the image of the contender and serves as a 'pull-of the past' that leads policy makers to conclude that the rival holds fundamentally hostile intentions, which in turn lead to an expectation of and a preparation for conflict. These relationships are, according to Vasquez, primarily driven by actor-centred rather than stakes-based calculations and strategies; that is, it is primarily the identity of the contender, rather than the value of stakes at hand that drive foreign

[80] Colaresi, Rasler, and Thompson, *Strategic Rivalries in World Politics: Position, Space and Conflict Escalation*, 3.

[81] Ibid: 27.

policy making.[82] Rivals are therefore often willing to take actions that come at a high cost if they believe their contenders will incur a bigger cost. The case-study chapters will illustrate that a 'pull of the past' and expectations of hostile actions shaped the EPRDF's relationships with Eritrea, Sudan and Somalia during their rivalries. These perceptions were however limited to particular individuals and groups, such as Eritrea's Isaias Afwerki, Sudan's Hassan al Turabi, and hardliners amongst Somalia's Islamists, rather than the nations they belonged to.

Alignment

The concept of alignment as opposed to rivalry has not been well developed. International alliances, which have received a great deal of academic attention, are often interchangeably used with alignment, but they are different phenomena.[83] According to Osgood alliances are: 'a formal agreement that pledges states to co-operate in using their military resources against a specific state or states and usually obligates one or more of the signatories to use force, or to consider (unilaterally or in consultation with allies) the use of force in specified circumstances.'[84] The formal dimension has behavioural and analytical implications. Behaviourally, the scope and nature of the commitments are clearly formulated and codified. Analytically, it is relatively straightforward to identify their scope. This makes them a different phenomenon from informal alignments. Barnett and Levy define an alignment as 'a relationship between two or more states that involves mutual expectations of some degree of policy coordination on security issues under certain conditions in the future.'[85] Ward clarifies the differences between formal alliances and the phenomenon of alignment by pointing out the following: 'Alignment is not signified by formal treaties, but is delineated by a variety of behavioural actions. It is a more extensive concept than alliance since it does not focus solely upon the military dimension of international politics. Degrees of alignments in political, economic, military, and cultural spheres present a multifaceted sculpture of national and supranational

[82] John A. Vasquez, "Distinguishing Rivals That Go to War from Those That Do Not: A Quantitative Comparative Case Study of the Two Paths to War." *International Studies Quarterly,* Vol. 40, No. 4, (1996).

[83] Thomas Wilkins, '*'Alignment'*, not *'alliance'* – the shifting paradigm of international security cooperation: toward a conceptual taxonomy of alignment,' *Review of International Studies,* Volume 38*,* Issue 1, *(*2012): 56.

[84] Glenn Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, (New York: Cornell University Press, 1997): 6.

[85] Michael N. Barnett and Jack S. Levy, "Domestic Sources of Alliances and Alignments: The Case of Egypt, 1962-73," *International Organization* 45, No. 3, (1991): 3.

postures.'[86] Successful rivalry management can ideally lead to a transformation of a conflict relationship into an alignment. In addition to the presence or absence of a rivalry, it is therefore useful to identify the third relationship outcome: alignment. Alignments also have strategic implications for rivalries. Given that a key feature of an alignment relationship is: 'mutual expectations of policy coordination on security issues,'[87] in a context like the Horn of Africa, where states are simultaneously engaged in multiple rivalries, a state's ability to transform a rivalry into an alignment may mean that it potentially attains additional strategic leverage in another rivalry.

1.2.3. Rivalry Management Strategies

As shown in the preceding sections, the literature on Ethiopian foreign policy suffers from an overemphasis on military coercion at the expense of other strategies for managing rivalries. This thesis identifies three coercive and non-coercive diplomatic strategies that Ethiopia has employed in its rivalry management processes. What all these strategies have in common is that they are non-military and dependent on persuading and appealing to the interests of other actors.

Coercive Isolation

Coercive isolation is a strategy that 'seeks to reverse the moral hazard by an opponent's alliance ties, restraining or pressuring the opponent by reducing its expectations of allied support.'[88] The premise of coercive isolation is that state power has an important social (multilateral) dimension, the implication being that power hierarchies and rivalries should not be studied as a dyadic phenomenon. As Crawford put it: 'Alliances are important parts of national power and condition countries' choices in big ways. When strong allies are available, states are more likely to resist a threatening foe than accommodate it.'[89] Coercive isolation thus seeks to reduce a rival's power by diminishing its access to outside support, and by mobilizing third parties against it. The critical factor in this non-military coercive strategy is that the coercer needs to induce other states into an

[86] Michael D. Ward, *Research Gaps in Alliance Dynamics*, (Denver: University of Denver, 1982): 7.

[87] Barnett and Levy, 'Domestic Sources of Alliances and Alignments: The Case of Egypt, 1962-73,' 3.

[88] Timothy Crawford, "The Strategy of Coercive Isolation" in *The Power to Hurt in International Politics*, (ed.) Kelly M. Greenhill and Peter Krause, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018): 229.

[89] Ibid.

alignment. The implication of this strategy and these premises is that rivalries should not be seen as dyadic interactions, but instead as conflicts embedded in and shaped by a wider community of nations.

Co-optation

Co-optation is a concept usually applied to the study of authoritarian governance and is often seen as a complementary tool to repression. Gerschewski defines co-optation as 'the capacity to tie strategically-relevant actors (or a group of actors) to the regime elite.'[90] The rationale is to persuade an actor '"not to exercise his power to obstruct" and instead to use the resources in line with the ruling elite's demands.'[91] What differentiates co-optation from repression is that it involves concessions and accommodation by the co-opting actor. The co-opted are included into a 'winning coalition', and attain privileges.[92] Co-optation is hierarchical, but there is an element of interdependence, as the co-opted have the power to obstruct if not accommodated. In an international context, such as regional competition for influence in civil wars, the co-opted might also have option of choosing from a number of patrons. There is an important element of choice and autonomy that differentiate it from instances of coercion.

Linkage diplomacy

According to Poast, 'Issue linkage—the simultaneous discussion of two or more issues for joint settlement—is a bargaining tactic used by states to achieve two objectives…First, issue linkage increases the probability of agreement…Second, issue linkage motivates states to remain committed to an agreement.'[93] Linkage is a common practice in diplomacy, but empirically identifying it is nevertheless difficult (unless it is codified in treaties). Linkage is also conceptualized as a bargaining practice in the literature, when tied to particular issues; in this study however I consider it as a form of

[90] Johannes Gerschewski, 'The three pillars of stability: legitimation, repression, and co-optation in autocratic regimes,' in *Democratization*, Vol. 20, No.1, (2013): 22.

[91] Ibid: 22.

[92] Ibid.

[93] Paul Poast, 'Issue Linkage and International Cooperation: An Empirical Investigation', *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 30, no. 3 (2013): 287.

relationship building, that is, a practice in which states make concessions on particular issues in order generate diplomatic capital[94] that is leveraged at a later stage.

1.3. Argument in Brief

This thesis argues that Ethiopia's rivalry management strategies under the EPRDF were shaped by its foreign policy orientations. There have been three distinct approaches to managing rivalries in Ethiopia in 1991-2018: Ethiopia Irredenta, the Revolutionary and the Developmental State orientations, which led to distinct strategies and outcomes. Ethiopia Irredenta was a foreign policy orientation rooted in the imperial history and identity of the Ethiopian state. It had two distinct and core foreign policy priorities: territorial revisionism and the pursuit of status. These foreign policy interests led to rivalry management strategies that primarily relied on military force and pursued a victor's peace. Coercive and non-coercive diplomatic means were seen as ineffective. And the orientation did not have a strategy for pursing cooperation. It was only applied briefly during the Ethiopia-Eritrea war, but was however the foreign policy orientation adhered to by many of the opposition groups.

When the EPRDF came to power in 1991, they brought with them a Revolutionary foreign policy orientation, which corresponded to their domestic revolution within Ethiopia. This orientation was primarily focused on dismantling Ethiopia Irredenta and its values. It attributed the problem of regional conflict to the belligerence and siege mentality of past Ethiopian regimes, and concluded that peaceful regional relations would follow suit as a consequence of the EPRDF-revolution. This foreign policy orientation did not have concrete objectives or policy priorities. Because the Revolutionary orientation did not anticipate hostility from its neighbours, it did not have a rivalry management strategy. This led to measures such as the demobilization of much of the armed forces, including the air force. This orientation also took regional cooperation for granted and thus did not have any strategic approach to develop cooperation with neighbouring countries. This resulted in the pursuit of swift economic integration and political cooperation on terms that disproportionately favoured neighbouring states. A

[94] Rebecca Adler-Nissen, 'The Diplomacy of Opting Out: A Bourdieudian Approach to National Integration Strategies', in *Journal of Common Market Studies,* Vol. 46, (2008): 670.

consequence of this orientation was an Ethiopian inability to appreciate the incompatibility of its foreign policy interests with those of its neighbours. This inability to take the necessary precautionary measures resulted in military conflict and rivalry with Sudan and Somalia in 1995 and 1996, and with Eritrea in 1998. The Eritrea war led to the decline of the Revolutionary orientation and reversion to the Irredenta. During this period, some EPRDF members and opposition parties put territorial revisionism and attaining access to the sea through military force back on the political agenda.

In 2002 the EPRDF adopted a developmental state economic model and formulated a corresponding Developmental State foreign policy orientation, which was an alternative to both the Irredenta and Revolutionary orientations. As opposed to the Irredenta, it wasn't characterized by a siege mentality, but as opposed to the Revolutionary orientation it did recognize that the Horn of Africa was a source of security threat. It also maintained its opposition to the core values of the Irredenta, i.e. status seeking and territorial revisionism. Its point of departure was that despite its historical achievements, Ethiopia was in 2002 a politically and economically fragile state, and that overcoming this poverty was an existential challenge that had to be prioritized. From the premise of fragility and the imperative of economic development two strategic principles were derived: strategic restraint and the active pursuit of development cooperation and capital. Strategic restraint centred on the imperative of avoiding military confrontations and minimizing the defence budget and the role of the military to a deterrence function. The rationale of strategic restraint under the Developmental State was rivalry management that did not compromise domestic economic interests. This consequently made diplomatic strategies such as co-optation and coercive isolation the preferred rivalry management strategies. The other key feature of the Developmental State orientation was an active pursuit of development cooperation. As opposed to the Revolutionary orientation, the Developmental State orientation problematized regional cooperation and didn't take it for granted. The strategic approach to managing cooperation was to apply linkage-diplomacy.

The Developmental State foreign policy orientation led to distinct strategies towards Eritrea, Somalia and Sudan. These emanated from strategic restraint and an active pursuit of development cooperation but recognised the unique challenges that each case posed. In Somalia, strategic restraint led the EPRDF to primarily rely on the tools of co-optation

and alignments to manage rivalries and insecurity. Through co-optation Ethiopia gradually developed an extensive network of allies amongst Somalia's political elites, which it then used to influence election processes in the transitional state-building initiatives. Through alignments with other regional and global actors, Ethiopia managed to attain diplomatic legitimacy and financial support for its military interventions as well as orchestrate political settlements. In relation to Sudan, the rapprochement was in place when the Developmental State orientation was instituted, and the objective became therefore to deepen the alignment and pursue development cooperation. For this purpose, the EPRDF relied on linkage-diplomacy, whereby they adopted a favourable and cooperative stance on issues such as international mediation, security cooperation and territorial demarcation, which were subsequently used to deepen the alignment. This culminated in Sudan's support for the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam on the Nile.

Ethiopia's developmental state governance model counter-intuitively had the biggest impact on foreign policy towards Eritrea – the country with which it had the greatest potential for development cooperation but nonetheless no economic relations in this period. It is in relation to Eritrea that all the values, premises and objectives of the Irredenta orientation were the most paramount and imperative – territorial revisionism, the utility of military force and the need to restore wounded national pride. The Developmental State manifested itself in this case through strategic restraint – that is the decision to not settle the political stalemate and boundary dispute after 2000 through military force, despite having the capacity to do so. It was in relation to Eritrea that selling the notion of strategic restraint to the public was the most challenging. Strategic restraint towards Eritrea led to an alternative rivalry management strategy of pursuing regime or policy change through a long-term diplomatic strategy of coercive isolation. Isolation required diplomatic overtures and actions towards IGAD and the West to persuade them that Asmara was a collective threat and that punitive measures were needed to contain it.

Ethiopia's rivalries decreased while its alignments increased and deepened during the Developmental State period. Ethiopia's relationship with Djibouti and Sudan transformed from rivalry to alignment, while its relationship with various Somali actors developed from rivalry to a negative peace based on security interdependence. In the process it also

deepened its cooperation with Kenya and Uganda. Three instances of collective action and cooperation are identified in these case-studies.

The broader implications of these findings is that Ethiopian foreign policy making has been driven by ideational factors. However, instead of focusing on state-level identity, which has been the trend in the literature on Ethiopian foreign policy, the key to understanding Ethiopian foreign policy lies in unpacking sub-national variations in elite-belief systems, which shape the formulation of foreign policy objectives, roles and strategies.

Figure 1. Foreign Policy Orientations and Strategies for Rivalry Management

	Military force	Cooperation	Non-coercive rivalry management	Rivalry management through coercive diplomacy
Irredenta	Arms build-up/ Victor's peace	No strategy	Considered ineffective	Considered ineffective
Revolutionary	No anticipation of threat/ Demobilization of armed forces	Taken for granted/ Indiscriminate accommodation	No anticipation of threat	No anticipation of threat
Developmental State	Strategic restraint/ Deterrence	Linkage diplomacy	Co-optation	Coercive isolation

1.4. Methodology

The primary case selection criterion was identifying states from the Horn of Africa that had been engaged in a state of rivalry with Ethiopia. Ethiopia was in a rivalry with Sudan in 1993-1998, Ethiopia fought a war followed by a rivalry with Eritrea in 1998-2018, and was also engaged in a rivalry with various Somali groups throughout the period. Ethiopia's conflict with these states has not been disputed in the literature. The only other state with which Ethiopia had a rivalry in IGAD was Djibouti, but this was limited to a

competition for influence in Somalia and is therefore covered in the Somalia chapter. All three case-studies also exhibit a variation in the outcome and provide an opportunity to examine transitions from rivalry to alignment. All three cases also involve regionalized conflicts and therefore provide an opportunity to gain insight into the broader state of peace and conflict in the Horn of Africa region.

This dissertation relies on process tracing to identify foreign policy interests, strategies and outcomes. Process tracing is understood here as 'an analytic tool for drawing descriptive and causal inferences from diagnostic pieces of evidence, often understood as part of a temporal sequence of events or phenomena.'[95] According to Collier, 'process tracing can make decisive contributions to diverse research objectives, including: (a) identifying novel political and social phenomena and systematically describing them.'[96] It is thus relevant for the purposes of this thesis. The data employed were primarily field-interviews, US diplomatic cables, Ethiopian government documents, and secondary sources. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in Ethiopia, Somaliland, Kenya, and the U.S. in 2015-2016 and in 2017. Through these trips I conducted 40 interviews. I also utilized 14 interviews conducted in Ethiopia and Somalia in 2013-2014 before I commenced this PhD research. Two of these interviews were conducted by staff-members at the International Law and Policy Institute. I conducted the remaining 12 interviews on field-trips as a researcher for the institute. In sampling interview subjects, I employed a non-probability sampling method, as this was best suited for the purpose of process tracing, my primary analytical tool. Tynsey points out that 'The aim with process tracing is not to draw a representative sample of a larger population of political actors that can be used as the basis to make generalisation about the full population, but to draw a sample that includes the most important political players that have participated in the political events being studied. Consequently, random sampling runs against the logic of the process tracing method, as it creates a risk of excluding important respondents from the sample purely by chance.'[97] Interviewees were identified through a snowballing sampling method. The purpose was to gain access to key individuals, with direct involvement or

[95] David Collier, "Understanding Process Tracing." *Political Science and Politics,* Vol. 44, No 4, (2011): 824.

[96] Ibid.

[97] Osi Tansey, 'Process Tracing and Elite Interviewing: A Case for Non-probability Sampling' in *Political Science and Politics,* Vol. 40, No. 4 (2007): 2**.**

proximity to foreign policy decision-making. In Ethiopia semi-structured interviews were conducted with diplomats in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, National Intelligence and Security Services, EPRDF officials, and officials from the Armed Forces in Harar and Jigjiga. Through these interviews I hoped to get an insight into foreign policy decision-making processes and organizational politics within the state. From these interviews I gained an understanding of the various foreign policy stances the Ethiopian state has assumed and the diplomatic tools applied. I also gained an insight into the justification and rationale of these policies, and the anticipation and long-term plans of these measures. About half of the interviewees wanted anonymity, which was respected (to provide context, some indication of their official position has been noted in the footnotes). In Somaliland I also had the opportunity to participate in a three-day summit between the Ethiopian and Somaliland governments on 28.2.2016-3.6.2016. This gave me the opportunity to observe firsthand negotiations between the two governments.

My background as an Ethiopian, from the Tigrayan ethnic group (which is associated with the dominant TPLF party), and my professional association to the Ethiopian International Institute for Peace and Development (an Ethiopian government agency) had an impact on the field-work in Ethiopia. My own positionality as both an Ethiopian insider and a diaspora outsider meant that I was neither completely an outsider nor an insider in Ethiopian society. Flores draws attention to the problematic aspect of an insider-outsider binary, and suggests that we should instead adopt 'a more constructivist perspective that recognizes a broader range or continuum of researcher– subject relationships, influenced by the numerous, fluid identities of, both, researchers and research participants themselves.'[98] Chavez's notion of an indigenous-outsider offers one way out of the binary.[99]

The perspective of the indigenous-outsider has unique methodological advantages. As an indigenous-outsider access to informants may be attained with more ease than as an outsider, but access still needs to be negotiated. An indigenous-outsider is also by

[98] David Flores, 'Standing in the Middle: Insider/Outsider Positionality While Conducting Qualitative Research with Opposing Military Veteran Political Groups' *SAGE Research Methods Cases Part 2*, (London: SAGE. 2018): 2.
[99] Christina Chavez, 'Conceptualizing from the Inside: Advantages, Complications, and Demands on Insider Positionality,' *The Qualitative Report,* 13(3), (2008). https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol13/iss3/9

definition someone who possesses significant knowledge about the society before assuming the research.[100] According to Bailey et al this intimate knowledge means that such individuals have a unique ability to 'ask meaningful questions and read non-verbal cues,' and 'project a more truthful, authentic understanding of the culture under study'.[101] This intimate knowledge according to Flores also means that insiders are better positioned to engage in inductive theorizing.[102]

A full or partial insider identity also carries with it the increased chance of bias and inability to remain detached from the politics of the subject matter. Lack of objectivity and distance means that there is 'increased risk of the researcher making assumptions based on their prior knowledge and/or experience.'[103] Bias may lead the researcher to project their 'own views onto participants, or the data analysis.'[104] The problem of bias is not limited to insider research but is particularly acute in such instances due to the proximity of the researcher to the cultural and political context, and thus needs to be managed.

Bias cannot be fully eliminated, but I tried to contain the problem by adopting a reflexive approach and through triangulation. The triangulation technique I employed was to rely on multiple methodologies, which involves utilizing 'more than one type of qualitative data collection procedure.'[105] I triangulated the interview data by utilizing additional sources such as media, US diplomatic cables and secondary academic sources. These additional sources provided alternative interpretations and voices to the narrative.

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[100] Melanie J. Greene 'On the Inside Looking In: Methodological Insights and Challenges in Conducting Qualitative Insider Research', *The Qualitative Report*, 19(29), (2014): 2. https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol19/iss29/3.

[101] Merriam, S. A., Johnson-Bailey, J., Lee, M.-Y., Kee, Y., Ntseane, G., & Muhamad, M. quoted in Greene, 'On the Inside Looking In: Methodological Insights and Challenges in Conducting Qualitative Insider Research,' 3.

[102] David Flores, 'Standing in the Middle: Insider/Outsider Positionality While Conducting Qualitative Research With Opposing Military Veteran Political Groups'.

[103] Greene, 'On the Inside Looking In: Methodological Insights and Challenges in Conducting Qualitative Insider Research,' 4.

[104] Ibid.

[105] Rebecca S. Natow. "The Use of Triangulation in Qualitative Studies Employing Elite Interviews." *Qualitative Research*, (2019): 2.

I relied on direct quotes by the interview subjects as much as possible in order to let the interviewees speak for themselves. When making the decision to use direct quotes or not I differentiated between statements that conveyed interpretations of political interests or a rationalization of policies (i.e. statements that explain why they adopted particular policies) from statements that conveyed information about what happened during particular events. In the latter category I concluded that the interpretation of the interviewee was less relevant for my analysis than in the former.

There is no standard definition of reflexivity, but according to Van den Hoonaard, 'self-reflexivity involves the researchers taking into account his or her own consciousness' and its impact on the research.[106] The reflexive process can focus on many aspects of the identity and interactions between the interviewer and interviewees such as asymmetric power relations and harm caused by the researcher on the environment. In this research my focus was primarily on how my prior knowledge and identity could shape the data gathering and analysis process. Conscious of my status as an Ethiopian diaspora, I critically interrogated my prior-assumptions throughout the research-process.

Reflexivity shaped the research process in at least two ways. Firstly, one function of adopting a reflexive approach was that I changed my framework and focus a number of times during the process. Initially I came into the PhD program with the view that Ethiopia was a regional hegemon and sought to examine what effects its hegemony had had on regional politics and stability. An examination of the available data in year-one of the PhD program led me to conclude that the Ethiopia did not possesses sufficient relative material power to be considered a hegemon, and that my assumptions were empirically unfounded. The data I had gathered throughout the field-work also led me abandon two other assumptions that I had been operating with: that military power and coercion had been the most important Ethiopian foreign policy tools and that ideology had not been a central driver of Ethiopian foreign policy. A reflexive approach made me amendable to change some of my perspectives after interacting with new data rather than impose my assumptions on the data and analysis.

[106] Quoted in Greene, 'On the Inside Looking In: Methodological Insights and Challenges in Conducting Qualitative Insider Research,' 9.

Secondly, reflexivity led made to me approach the institutional context and actors during the field-work in a conscious way. The political culture and autocratic conditions of the Ethiopian state significantly shaped the field-research and analysis. The most important feature of Ethiopian political culture and institutions in this regard was the hierarchical nature of the Ethiopian state. The political culture of the modern Ethiopian state has significantly been shaped by the cultural legacy of the Abyssinian Empire. According to Tronvoll and Vaughn this political culture:

> emphasises a strict hierarchical understanding of society, where each member's socio-political position and status is clearly defined and understood. Social and political interaction and behaviour are guided by an elaborate set of norms and rules, which establish socio-political order on the basis of a rigid system of deference and sanction…The pattern of social interaction in Ethiopia hence sustains a strictly hierarchical stratification of society, where one is constrained, by a largely invisible but rigid system of collective sanctions, to obey the 'orders from above.[107]

Clapham echoes these views in his observations of the political culture in Ethiopia by stating that: 'Social order depended on a visible hierarchy of rule, in which unlimited deference was paid to those above one, and any criticism of one's leaders (unless veiled in the most respectful forms) was equated with defiance of their authority.'[108] This culture of hierarchy and obedience not only continued under the EPRDF but attained ideological justification and an institutional manifestation through democratic centralism – a structure in which decisions are first freely discussed and voted on by the political leadership, and then implemented without questioning by the party and state structure.[109]

Foreign policy orientations are reflections of domestic power structures and, this feature of Ethiopian political culture therefore significantly shaped my strategy for data gathering and analysis. A number of individuals in government may disagree with the dominant line of thought, but the institutional condition would rarely allow officials to challenge

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[107] Sarah Vaughan and Kjetil Tronvoll, *The Culture of Power in Contemporary Ethiopian Political Life*. Stockholm: Sida, 2003: 33-34; YeshtilaWondemeneh Bekele, Darley Jose Kjosavik and Nadarajah Shanmugaratnam, 'State-Society Relations in Ethiopia: A Political-Economy Perspective of the Post-1991 Order', *Social Sciences,* 5, 48, (2016).

[108] Christopher Clapham, 'Peace in the Horn of Africa,' in Richmond, Oliver P., Pogodda, Sandra, Ramović, Jasmin (Eds.) The *Palgrave Handbook of Disciplinary and Regional Approaches to Peace*, (London: Plgrave, 2016): 328.

[109] Jean-Nicolas Bach 'Abyotawi democracy: neither revolutionary nor democratic, a critical review of EPRDF's conception of revolutionary democracy in post-1991 Ethiopia,' *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 5:4, (2011).

decisions made by the leadership. The few occasions this has happened it has reflected deeper fractures and power struggles in the party-structure and has been followed up by a restructuring of the party. In the time-frame of this thesis, the only occasion an ideological contestation of the leadership's decision occurred was in 1998-2000 over the war with Eritrea. After Meles Zenawi's passing in 2012 there was behind the scenes a political contestation of the dominant discourse and official policies of the state, which reflected fractures in the central government. The instances of foreign policy contestation were limited to policy on Eritrea in 1998-2000 and 2013-2018.

Because of this my objective during the fieldwork was to understand the official or dominant discourse when there was one, and the politics behind the two instances of policy contestation. In other words, during the periods of hegemony by one group or individual (1991-1998 and 2001-2012) I was trying to understand the details and dynamics of the hegemonic orientation, but during the periods where there was an absence of hegemony I was trying to understand the politics of the contestation. The implication was that the positionality of the interviewees was more important during the periods of contestation, because they had more agency, but less during the hegemonic periods because of the concentration of power and hierarchy. During periods where one group was hegemonic decision-making processes were opaque and it was difficult to attain insights into what the roles of various officials were in the processes.

For this reason, the selection of interviewees in particular but the data in general were deliberately biased towards the powerful and status quo actors in Ethiopia. The interview samples are not intended to be representative of the average perception in the EPRDF, but the official and dominant lines of thought. There were broadly two categories of actors amongst the Ethiopian interviewees: the first category were individuals that had in the past or were currently serving as politically appointed officials and high-ranking military officials and the second category were mid-level military officials and diplomats.

The first category could provide important insights into the political and ideological rationale of the different orientations and particular policies, but more importantly the politics of foreign policy contestation and institutional rivalry within the state, (i.e. during the periods in which there was contestation). Due to their high-ranks and proximity to power they could provide more frank personal assessments of policies. One group of

officials were those that were forced out of office after the TPLF split in 2000. This included Abebe Teklehaimanot, Mulugeta Gebrehiwot Berhe and Tewolde Woldemariam. They provided insights on both the strategic thinking behind the policies as well the domestic politics of foreign policy until the split in 2000. They were all TPLF veterans but critical of Meles' Eritrea policy as well as the hegemonic power that he accumulated after the war. Mesfin Amare also falls in a similar category as he was pressured to retire from the army after the 2000 split but was however allowed to continue in a civilian capacity in the government. While his official title was a liaison officer to Eritrean opposition groups, in practice his job was to coordinate all Eritrea related policies of the government and despite being pushed out of the military by Meles Zenawi maintained good working relations with him until the latter's death in 2012. After Meles' death his views on foreign policy and Eritrea in particular aligned more with the National Intelligence and Sebhat Nega's factions than with the military. Yohannes Gebremeskel is another interviewee that was demoted from his position in the military. He was military intelligence chief until 2009 and then demoted to head the Peacekeeping College, he was until then a close ally of Meles Zenawi. He was later promoted to head the UNIFSA peacekeeping mission in Abiye (2013-2014). Yohannes could provide insight into both strategic dimensions of Ethiopia's foreign policy making as well as the institutional variations in perspectives on foreign policy that emerged after Meles Zenawi's death in 2012. Former Minister of Information Bereket Simon and Foreign Minister Tedros Adhanom were both Meles loyalists but were outside of the post-Meles institutional rivalry between the national intelligence and military. Sebhat Nega was the most influential politicians amongst my interviewees, and one of the most powerful figures in the EPRDF. He was Meles Zenawi's mentor and ally until 2010 when he too was side-lined by Meles. Sebhat was – due to his powerful position in the party – in a position to provide frank assessments of politics in the EPRDF. Leencoo Lata differed from the rest of the respondents in that he was not a member of the EPRDF, but through his leadership role in the Oromo Liberation Front he had engaged extensively with both the EPRDF and EPLF and could provide an outsider perspective on their relationship. He was forced into exile by the EPRDF in 1992.

The second category of officials was composed of diplomats and mid-level military officials. Interviewees in this category for the most part required anonymity. Six of the most senior amongst these did not require it. Of these the most senior and influential was

Tekeda Alemu, who was Ethiopia's State Minister of Foreign Affairs (1991-2011) and then Ambassador to the UN (2011-2017). Together with Daniel Yifru, (diplomat in the Ministry of Foreign in the 1990s) they could provide some insight on the gaps in perceptions and values between the EPRDF and the diplomatic corps during the dominance of the Revolutionary orientation in the 1990s. Major General Berhe Tesfay, Colonel Addisalem, and Ambassdor Fisseha Shawl and Abdulaziz Ahmed could provide useful information about how Ethiopia managed relations with particular actors and threats, but the information often revolved around the tactical dimension and gave insights into how the different foreign policy orientations shaped responses to particular events. These individuals along with the anonymous interviews were constrained by their positions as civil servants and – with the exception of one interviewee – were never able discuss the domestic politics of foreign policy making. This group was particularly difficult to interview. It was difficult to understand their boundaries in terms of what they were comfortable to talk about, and initially I did not get the information I was expecting. After a few interviews I changed my strategy to focus the interview questions almost explicitly on politically 'safe' issues such as events outside of Ethiopia, the substance of bilateral agreements and the official perspective on regional actors. This meant that I did not attain information about the domestic and institutional politics of foreign policy making that I initially was expecting from this group, but that I nevertheless attained information that became very useful for building the analytical narratives of this thesis.

The third category of interviewees was composed of Somali politicians. Field research for the Somalia chapter was conducted in Somaliland in 28.2.2016-6.3.2016 and Kenya in 9.6.2016-21.6.2016. From these 14 interviews I hoped to gain an insight into the nature of the interaction between the Ethiopian government and Somali political actors. As opposed to the Ethiopian interviewees, the Somali respondents were willing to answer all my questions without reservation. This category included politicians, civil servants and civil society actors from Jubaland, Puntland, Mogadishu, Hargeisa, Berbera and Sool Sanaag and Cayn. Interviewees in Hargeisa were composed mostly of SNM veterans and members of the Issaq clan (Abdi Yusuf Duale, Aden Musa, Abdillahi Mohamed Duale and Yusuf Ibrahim), with the exception of former Foreign Minister Mohamed Omar. These interviewees all had in common that they all had very favorable views of Ethiopia and were opposed to the Salafist groups in Somaliland politics. I did not get a chance to interview members of this movement.

From the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) in Mogadishu Hussein Abdi Halane, Awale Kulane, Ahmed Abdisalam and Abdirahman Aynte could provide insights into the mode of interaction between the Ethiopian government and Somali actors, but all had a history of close alignment with the Ethiopian government. My interview with former President of Puntland, Abdiweli Mohamed Ali, yielded little new or useful information as he was still in office at the time of the interview and a close ally of Ethiopia. Vice President of Puntland Abdulkader Haji Mohamed, despite serving in an official capacity, was able to provide insights into the politics between Jubaland and FGS and Jubaland perspectives on Ethiopia. Hussain Kassim and Abdikarim Mohamed could provide interesting perspectives on both politics in the Somali Regional State (SRS) and in general how Ethiopia exercised power in Somalia, due to their positions as employees of the SRS administration and IGAD, respectively. My interviewees from southern Somalia were mostly from the Darod clan family. Ali Issa and Mohamed Saleh from the Sol, Sanaag and Cayn area stood out amongst the interviewees in that as Khatumoo state activists and politicians they had been at odds with Ethiopia most of their political careers. Counterintuitively their perspectives corroborated the accounts given by other Somali interviewees about how Ethiopia exercised power. The interviewees all belonged to political circles that were allied with Ethiopia, and thus this is a biased sample.

A handful of interviewees from other countries were also included in the thesis. Interviews with former US Ambassador David Shinn and the Eritrean ELF veteran Hussein Khalifa provided frank and useful insights into their organizations interactions with Ethiopian officials. Both perspectives could be characterized as sympathetic yet critical. Two interviews with a serving (anonymous) CIA officer and Sudanese Ambassador Daffa-Alla Elhag Ali Osman yielded little useful information for the research. Due to their positions as serving officials they were hesitant to delve deep into the politics of Ethiopian-Sudanese and US-Ethiopian relations.

Official government documents were also central in this study. The Revolutionary and Developmental State foreign policy orientations were identified and analysed based on two Ethiopian white papers from 1996 and 2002. The white paper from 1996 was accessed through the archives in the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and to the best

of my knowledge has not been studied before. The white paper from 2002 was available online. These official documents were complemented with interviews and secondary sources. Because of these official documents, it was fairly straightforward to establish the substance and boundaries of these two orientations. The Irredenta orientation does not have an official formulation and I therefore had to construct it myself through inductive analysis. This was based on arguments made by its critics (i.e. EPRDF) and its proponents; these debates mostly revolved around certain key normative disputes. The case-study chapters draw on all the sources mentioned above, but also utilize US diplomatic cables extensively.

US diplomatic cables leaked by Wikileaks constituted a significant source of data in this thesis. A number of methodological concerns have been raised by some academics regarding the use of leaked cables, the two prominent ones include: reliability of the information and potential bias.[110] Michael however draws attention to how these concerns are not unique to leaked documents and therefore exaggerated. As with all documents and evidence it is necessary to carefully and critically vet the information provided by comparing it to other sources of information. But in the case of WikiLeaks regional experts and journalists familiar with leaked documents from the New York Times, The Guardian and the Times have already vetted significant portions of the cables.[111]

Wikileaks does not publish all their documents, but rather selects the documents and what portions it publishes introducing a serious problem of bias in the information made available.[112] But this is again not unique to leaked documents; quantitative datasets and archives are often composed of incomplete and curated information. Michael therefore argues that:

while leaked information may not be of perfect quality, and may be incomplete or even biased in coverage, there is no reason to expect that leaked information is in these respects any worse than the commonplace data sources researchers rely upon on a daily

[110] Gabriel J. Michael 'Who's Afraid of WikiLeaks? Missed Opportunities in Political Science Research', *Review of Policy Research,* Vol. 32, No 2, (2015): 178.

[111] Ibid.

[112] Ibid.

basis. We should not necessarily be especially suspicious of leaked information simply because it has been leaked. That said, it is incumbent upon researchers to recognize the limitations common to all research involving documents.[113]

One such limitation we should be aware of is 'the "institutional and America-centric bubble" the writers of diplomatic cables inhabit'.[114] The bias and particular perspective that the diplomatic cables represent were in this thesis not only recognized but sought after. WikiLeaks provided an additional perspective on key diplomatic and political processes, which was used to triangulate the interview data. The America-centric bias was a useful outsider perspective on the behaviour of Ethiopia and its regional allies and rivals. Moreover given that the US is a major global power and the most influential external actor in the Horn of Africa during this period, the leaks also provide a good source of insight on the role of the international community in Horn of Africa politics. This was a useful complementary perspective to official Ethiopian and Somali perspectives as well as media and academic analysis. In general leaked data are no different than traditional diplomatic cables made available by governments, the only difference is that it allows us 'leapfrog the traditional 30 years processes.'[115]

1.5. Structure of Thesis

This thesis comprises of six chapters, including an introduction and a conclusion. The three case-study states are different, and thus each case-study chapter has a specific theme, but all address the question of how foreign policy orientations impact rivalry management. Chapter two analyses Ethiopia's three foreign policy orientations. This constitutes the explanatory framework of the thesis and accounts for the factors that explain the success and failures in rivalry management. It begins with an analysis of the Irredenta orientation, and then it accounts for the Revolutionary orientation and finally examines the Developmental State orientation. The chapter describes the interests and strategies of each orientation as well as their institutional and organizational underpinnings.

[113] Ibid.

[114] Ibid: 179.

[115] Ibid.

The third chapter examines the evolution of Ethiopia's foreign policy towards Somalia. The distinct theme of this chapter is rivalry management in the context of a collapsed state, and the use of co-optation as a tactic. It begins with a brief account of the Revolutionary orientation, which in the case of Somalia manifested itself through non-intervention and cordial relations. This condition of relative peace collapsed with the first Islamist confrontation in 1995-1996, when the Al Ittihad Al Islamiya (AIAI) conducted attacks on civilian targets in Ethiopia, leading the latter to conduct its first intervention to dismantle the base of the Islamists. Ethiopia's actions generated anti-Ethiopian nationalist discourse and escalated its regional rivalries. The chapter then illustrates how Ethiopia relied on the tactic of co-optation to manage regional competition, and to control or sabotage state-building processes in Somalia under the Developmental State orientation in 2000 and 2004. The emergence of the UIC in 2006, the second Ethiopian military intervention and the limitations of strategic restraint is then examined. Finally, this chapter accounts for how Ethiopia used co-optation and regional alignments to facilitate a regional political settlement on Somalia in 2008, how this led to a gradual de-escalation of regional competition for influence in Somalia, and how this affected the subsequent federation-making process.

The fourth chapter accounts for Ethiopia's policy towards Eritrea. The distinct theme of this case-study was the challenge of managing an ambiguous post-partition relationship and containing strong irredentist demands from within Ethiopia. The EPRDF were convinced that the partition would be short-lived and that Eritrea would reunite with Ethiopia at a later stage. They therefore pursued a swift economic integration plan with Eritrea under the Revolutionary orientation. This led to economically accommodative measures and security policies based on solidarity and trust rather than strategic self-interest. The chapter then accounts how this orientation came to a sudden end with the border war in 1998, and how this led to a resurgence of the Irredenta orientation during the war. The last part of the chapter is dedicated to the management of the rivalry under the Developmental State. Ethiopia managed this rivalry primarily through coercive isolation. The chapter illustrates that while Eritrea had the upper hand in the proxy-war, Ethiopia's long-term strategy of coercive isolation through diplomatic engagement with global and regional actors led to UN sanctions and isolation of Eritrea from 2009 onwards. It concludes by examining the limitations of coercive isolation and the domestic

calls for policy change from 2015, and how this culminated in Prime Minister Abiy's decision to demarcate the border, and the rivalry de-escalation that followed.

The fifth chapter examines Ethiopia's relations with Sudan. This is the only case-study with substantial economic development cooperation. The chapter first accounts for the brief peace under the Revolutionary orientation. It then accounts for the rivalry that emerged in reaction to Hassan al Turabi's Islamist project in 1993, which escalated with the assassination attempt on Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in 1995. It then accounts for how the rivalry began to de-escalate with the Eritrea-Ethiopia war in 1998. The final part of the chapter accounts for how Ethiopia deepened the alignment under the Developmental State by applying linkage diplomacy in various sectors such as security cooperation and mediation processes, to build trust and generate diplomatic capital, which finally culminated in Sudan's support for the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) in 2011 (a hydroelectric dam project on the River Nile with a 6,000 MW electricity generating capacity).

The conclusion sums up the findings of the thesis and draws attention to three issues. It argues that an insight into foreign policy orientations is central to understand Ethiopia's rivalry management strategies. Secondly, it shows that diplomatic means of security management have been central under the Developmental State orientation. It then accounts for the different functions that co-optation, linkage-diplomacy and coercive isolation have played. Thirdly, it draws attention to how this has resulted in relative and security-interdependence across the region. Finally, it concludes by pointing to areas of further research.

Chapter 2: Ethiopia's Foreign Policy Orientations

2.1. Introduction

This chapter analyses Ethiopia's foreign policy orientations and the domestic institutions and organizations upholding them. Three distinct foreign policy orientations are identified in this period (1991-2018): Ethiopia Irredenta, the Revolutionary and Developmental State orientations. These categories are analytical constructs that I have differentiated based on my own observations and analysis. The agents that I associate with these orientations do not necessarily self-identify with the labels that I use. The categorization is based on observed continuities in policies over time. Orientations are sets of objectives and aspirations, and therefore have to be differentiated from actions. The primary purpose of this chapter is to account for foreign policy objectives, while the case-study chapters will account for the concrete actions and strategies that these led to. These orientations constitute the explanatory framework of the thesis, based on which the initiation, escalation and de-escalation of Ethiopia's regional rivalries will be explained.

The chapter begins by accounting for the orientation of Ethiopia Irredenta. The core priorities of this orientation were redeeming territory that was considered to be Ethiopian by historical right and the pursuit of status in international affairs. It was characterized by a historically rooted siege mentality, and strategically saw military power as the best foreign policy tool. The unique interests that the Irredenta sought to pursue can be attributed to the historical legacy of empire in Ethiopia, which have been embedded in a number of public institutions. Particular historical narratives, myths and conceptions of Ethiopian nationhood were embedded in institutions such as the Orthodox Church and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This orientation was never formally adopted as state policy under the EPRDF, but it was the view of foreign policy most Ethiopian opposition groups adhered to, and it therefore remained a consistent challenge to the incumbent's foreign policy.

In the second section I account for the Revolutionary orientation (which was dominant in 1991-1998). When the EPRDF came to power in 1991, they sought to overturn Ethiopia

Irredenta. They were convinced that regional conflict in the Horn of Africa could be attributed to the belligerence and siege mentality of past Ethiopian regimes. Consequently, they reached the conclusion that with the domestic revolution in Ethiopia, a transformation of regional relations would naturally follow suit. Because of this the Revolutionary orientation of the EPRDF had the distinct characteristic of a very optimistic view of the prospects for regional cooperation. This led to policies such as a substantial reduction in military spending and personnel, and policies of unilateral accommodation of neighbouring states. This strategy was motivated primarily by the EPRDF's desire to distance itself from the policies of its predecessors. In this way, the Revolutionary orientation was highly shaped by the ideational and institutional legacies of the TPLF's liberation-war against the Derg.

In the final section of this chapter I examine the Developmental State orientation. Ethiopia's conflicts with Somalia and Sudan in 1995 and 1996 and finally war with Eritrea in 1998 culminated in the decline of the Revolutionary orientation and a brief reversion to the Irredenta. A dispute over the management of the war led to a split in the TPLF, following the war with Eritrea. Meles Zenawi who emerged victorious from the power struggle formulated the Developmental State orientation as a third alternative to the Irredenta and Revolutionary orientations. This foreign policy maintained its opposition to the Irredenta, but differed from the Revolutionary orientation in that it formulated a clear foreign policy objective and vision for Ethiopia. The Developmental State orientation's point of departure was that Ethiopia was a fragile and underdeveloped state, which consequently ought to prioritize escaping this condition. From the new national interest of a singular focus on the pursuit of economic development, two principles were derived: an active pursuit of capital and economic cooperation and secondly a strategic restraint, that is, refraining as much as possible, from engaging in military conflict that could come at the expense of economic development. The latter involved investing just enough in military power to maintain a deterrent capacity.

2.2. The Irredentist Foreign Policy Orientation

2.2.1. A Legacy of Imperialism

Understanding Ethiopia Irredenta requires understanding the type of state that Ethiopia was. The modern Ethiopian state differs from most of colonial Africa due to its historical roots in an ancient empire state. There is a significant degree of institutional and cultural continuity between a number of different pre-modern empires and the modern Ethiopian state. One of the earliest of these states was the Axumite Empire (founded in approximately 100 AD and collapsed in 940), which at its peak controlled the Red Sea trading routes and colonized parts of modern day Yemen. The Axumite Empire adopted Christianity in the 4th Century, which served as an important arm of the state. It served three critical purposes: first, it legitimized state power; secondly, it served to provide a common framework for a geographically and ethnically diverse people; and thirdly, it served the purpose of historical continuity by acting as an institutional memory.

Ethiopia's long continual history and experience of statecraft and diplomacy became a crucial comparative advantage for Ethiopian emperors during the Scramble for Africa in the 19th Century, when the current state-system in the Horn of Africa was formed. Emperor Menelik's ascendancy to power in 1889 led to an expansion of the Ethiopian Empire that resulted in 'more than quintupling the area under Ethiopian control, and perhaps tripling or quadrupling its population.'[116] After Menelik's victory over Italy in 1896, Ethiopia gained formal recognition by European imperial powers as a political entity. Menelik then skilfully took advantage of the rivalry between Britain and France to sign border treaties with Italy, France and Britain and consolidate his new empire-state. While Menelik gained control over new territories he had to recognize Italian sovereignty over Eritrea. Menelik and Haile Selassie attempted to forge a nation out of this multi-ethnic empire by assimilating its peoples into their Abyssinian culture.

In 1974 Ethiopia experienced a socialist revolution that overthrew the monarchy, eliminated the aristocracy and subordinated the Orthodox Church, but it chose however to retain the assimilationist nationalist discourse and project. The officials of the Derg (the Communist junta that came to power) were products of the empire-state, and could only

[116] Christopher Clapham, *The Horn of Africa: State Formation and Decay* (London: Hurst, 2017)

detach themselves partly from their background. Clapham described this tension between revolution and tradition as the following:

The rulers of revolutionary Ethiopia display an instructive ambiguity towards their country's impressive historical record. On the one hand, the two millennia or so prior to 1974 are dismissed as a period of unenlightened and exploitative feudalism, further marred in the twentieth century by capitalistic elements. On the other hand, they constantly look back to this same past for sources of national pride and identity, especially in combatting foreign foes.[117]

2.2.2. Foreign Policy Objectives: Territory, Status and Military Force

The foreign policy orientation of Ethiopia Irredenta was rooted in the history of imperialism and tradition of statehood described in the preceding section. It had three central elements: a unique notion of territoriality, status, and military power. Irredentism had a long history in Ethiopia. About the relationship the Abyssinian Empire had with territory Marcus notes that 'The Christians [Abyssinians] never forgot that their rulers held sway over a much larger state, and Ethiopia Irredenta was an idea dunned into the heads of prince and peasant alike.'[118] This foreign policy orientation had a conception of sovereignty in which territoriality was highly valued. It was also driven by a historically rooted idea that Ethiopia had sovereign rights over a particular territory, including access to the sea, which preceded and overruled colonial boundaries, and it thus contradicted the OAU's uti possidetis principle on state boundaries in Africa. The primary objective of this Irredenta since the beginning of the 20th century has been Eritrea and access to the Red Sea. The foreign policy programmes of most opposition parties since 1991 have displayed different variations of the same irredentist theme. For example, during parliamentary election debates in 2010 and 2015, an issue consistently brought up by the opposition was that of Eritrea's secession and the loss of access to the sea. Lidetu Ayalew from EDP (Ethiopian Democratic Party) for example argued that 'your [EPRDF's] history of acting against the national interest has a long history before the war over Badme. It began when you sided with the EPLF and accused Ethiopia of

[117] Christopher Clapham, *Transformation and Continuity in Revolutionary Ethiopia*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1988): 19.

[118] Marcus employs this concept in relation to imperial expansion in the Middle Ages, but it is rooted in the same historical imagination and thus applicable to modern times as well. See: Harold G. Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia,* (University of California Press: London, 1994): 38.

colonialism…And when you assumed power you supported Eritrea's secession and was the first state to recognize their independence.'[119] There was however a variation in the stance on Eritrea's secession by the opposition. One group, which includes AENM (All Ethiopian National Movement) and EDP, did not accept the legitimacy of Eritrea's secession, while another group, such as the MEDREK coalition, recognized the legitimacy of the partition but disagreed on the terms of the partition. For example, MEDREK, while wanting to annex the Eritrean port of Assab into Ethiopia, did not question Eritrea's right to self-determination.[120] The opposition groups were also critical of Ethiopia's willingness to cede territory to Sudan during the demarcation process in 2007.[121] Former EPRDF/TPLF officials who reverted back to this line of thought include former Defence Minister, Siye Abraha and Chief of the Air Force, Abebe Teklehaymanot.[122] The frontiers of the imaginations of the Irredenta have varied over time but have in general been expansive. In the 19th century for example Emperor Menelik laid claims to both Sudan and parts of Uganda in a letter circulated to European rulers in which he declared: 'I shall endeavour, if God grants me life and strength, to re-establish the ancient frontiers of Ethiopia, as far as Khartoum and up to the Nyanza Lake, with the country of the Gallas.'[123]

The importance of prestige as a national interest was another foreign policy objective that differentiated the EPRDF's Developmental State and Revolutionary orientations from that of the Irredenta. Political opposition parties such as AENM and the Blue Party accorded high value to Ethiopia's historical legacy and status, which according to them had been lost. During the 2015 parliamentary election debates, for example, the AENM's intervention made a reference to Ethiopia's role in the founding of the OAU and the League of Nations, as evidence of the high status Ethiopia had amongst the world's nations – a status they believed had been lost.[124] While they did not suggest particular

[119] EBC, 'Ethiopian Election 2010', April 9, 2010. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YCMJ78nyi8c.

[120] Ibid.

[121] Ibid.

[122] Abebe T. Kahsay, 'Ethiopia's Sovereign Right of Access to the Sea under International Law' MA diss. Georgia University. 2007; Fifine Tribune, 'Seye Abraha Trashes Zenawi's Foreign Policy,' April 10, 2010, http://gadaa.com/oduu/3287/2010/04/10/ethiopia-seye-abraha-trashes-zenawis-foreign-policy/

[123] Ben Knighton, 'Christian enculturation in Karamoja, Uganda,' (PhD. diss, Durham University, 1998): 125

[124] EBC, 'Ethiopian Political Parties Debate for Election 2015', March 18, 2015. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G6Uw8Z0Xwg4

policies for gaining more 'prestige' in international affairs, they differed from the EPRDF on whether this should be considered an important objective worth investing in. Ethiopia's entitlement to a unique and prestigious position in the community of nations was based on the long history of the nation and its past achievements. The state's legitimacy was based on a myth of 3000 years of statehood. The medieval national epic Kebre Negast (Glory of the Kings) captures the essence of this idea of the Ethiopian nation. In this epic the son of biblical Queen Sheba and King Solomon founded the Solomonic dynasty in Ethiopia. Through this linage the Ethiopian nation was not only on par with other great empires in the world but held a central position in this exclusive group of nations. Levine points out that the 'Kebre Negast repeatedly compares Ethiopia with Judah…but whenever the comparison is made Ethiopia seems the fairer.'[125]

This self-image as a unique nation had implications for the way its surrounding region was conceived, according to Levine: 'It declares this nation superior to all nations…It thus provides a mandate for the Ethiopian Kingdom to expand its dominion in the name of the Lord of Hosts.'[126] Clapham describes the relationship between this sense of manifest destiny and regional policy as the following:

'The historical mission of Ethiopian statehood was, as far as possible, to subdue this unruly periphery, while seeking to control the trade routes that—leading south and west from the Red Sea coast between Massawa and the Gulf of Tadjoura—linked it to the international economy. In the process, the representatives of the central Ethiopian state developed an ideology or manifest destiny that legitimized their right to govern the periphery in terms of empire and Christianity.'[127]

This national narrative of manifest destiny combined mythologies such as Solomonic lineage with real historical narratives such as the achievements of the Axumite Empire, its early adoption of Christianity as a state religion, and the victory over European colonialism in 1896. The claim to uniqueness and manifest destiny was often encouraged by external actors that reiterated these narratives of Ethiopia by amongst other things

[125] Donald Levine, *Greater Ethiopia*: *The Evolution of a Multi-ethnic Society,* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2000): 101-104.

[126] Ibid: 106

[127] Christopher Clapham, 'The Foreign Policies of Ethiopia and Eritrea' in *African Foreign Policies*, (ed.) Stephen Wright, (New York: Routledge, 1998): 85.

portraying it as the leader of the black world. Chief amongst these is the Pan-Africanist movement and other black liberation movements in the Americas and elsewhere. An outcome of this was the choice of Addis Ababa as the headquarters of the OAU. Through these external voices Ethiopia's self-image was echoed back and reaffirmed to many Ethiopians.[128]

The Abyssinian empire state was a Christian state with a history of multiple traumatic encounters with the Islamic world, which were ingrained in the identity of the state.[129] For example, in their diplomatic relations with Great Britain during the 19th century, Ethiopian emperors would frequently appeal to Christian solidarity with Britain as well as the common threat from the Islamic 'other' such as Egypt.[130] The notion of Ethiopia as a Christian Island in a sea of Islam was engrained in the Irredenta and contributed to a siege mentality. This siege mentality was a feature of both the monarchical and socialist regimes. Amare described this feature of the Derg's regional policies as the following: 'The present Marxist leaders, like their predecessors, believe that Ethiopia is uncomfortably surrounded by several unfriendly states, whose inhabitants share more differences than similarities, and whose relationships have largely been characterized by mutual suspicion and fierce hostility.'[131]

A consequence of both the perpetual expansionist irredentism and the siege mentality was the value accorded to military power. Consequently, military might had been glorified[132] and seen as a central tool of foreign policy that warranted significant investments. Ethiopian emperors were also military men whose prestige and legitimacy to a great extent depended on their military valour and success.[133] This traditional value attached

[128] A notable example is the Rastafari movement, which saw Haile Selassie as a divine figure and Ethiopia as a holy land.

[129] In the 16th century the Abyssianin Empire was sacked by the troops of the Somali Muslim Ahmed Gragn

[130] Edward Ullendorff and Abraham Demoz, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (1969)
135-142

[131] Amare Tekle, 'The Determinants of the Foreign Policy of Revolutionary Ethiopia', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (1989): 482

[132] Kjetil Tronvoll, *War and the Politics of Identity in Ethiopia: Making Enemies and Friends in the Horn of Africa*, (Oxford: James Currey, 2009)

[133] Berouk Mesfin, 'The Role of Military Power in Ethiopia's National Security (1974-1991)', (MA diss., Addis Ababa University, 2002): 61

military might was not only continued but even intensified during the Derg.[134] According to Berouk Mesfin:

These preoccupations and experiences gave birth to patterns of thought and of reacting to all external challenges which equated national security with military over-insurance. Thus, the regime devoted large amounts of scarce government expenditure and energy to recruit, train and arm an enormous military force, and to maintain access to dependable sources of weapons as well as its strategic relationship with the Soviet Union, which provided until 1990 around US $ 13 billion in military assistance (DoA, 1991). This policy was aimed at creating a marked numerical imbalance and weaponry discrepancy in favor of Ethiopia vis-à-vis its neighboring states.[135]

The value accorded to military force and valour was a trans-temporal phenomenon deeply rooted in the identity of the Abyssinian elite. These values, according to Tronvoll: 'still finds resonance in Ethiopia today, as expressed by Admassou Gebeyihu, chairman of the opposition party EDP: "War has always been part of Ethiopian history. No matter where the war was fought, in Adwa, in Jimma or elsewhere, people from all groups participated to fight for Ethiopia".'[136]

Ethiopia Irredenta's approach to rivalry management therefore centred on military force, and consequently the investment in arms build-up and achieving military supremacy as the appropriate strategy. The pursuit of a victor's peace was also seen as the morally appropriate and strategically sound alternative to settle disputes.

2.3. The Revolutionary Orientation

2.3.1. The EPRDF Revolution in Ethiopia

The ethno-national and Marxist-Leninist liberation movement, TPLF, was established in 1975, a year after the Ethiopian revolution. While the TPLF shared the socialist ideology of the newly established revolutionary regime, they differed on what was known as the national question.[137] While the Derg wanted to continue the assimilationist nationalist

[134] Ibid: 51.

[135] Ibid: 57.

[136] Tronvoll, *War and the Politics of Identity in Ethiopia: Making Enemies and Friends in the Horn of Africa,* 205

[137] Aregawi Berhe, 'The Origins of the Tigray People's Liberation Front', *African Affairs* 103, no. 413 (2004): 574

programme, the TPLF like other ethno-national groups such as Oromo Liberation Front defined the Ethiopian state as a 'prison house of nations'. The TPLF supported Eritrea's right to secession and for a brief period in 1976 also had a programme of secession for the Tigray region (though this was quickly dropped).[138] The TPLF initially only aspired to liberate Tigray from the control of the Derg, but expanded their objective to taking control of the Ethiopian state in the late 1980s.[139] For this purpose they established the EPRDF front in 1989.[140] During their insurgency the TPLF allied with Somalia, Egypt and Sudan, and received important strategic support particularly from the latter. After 17 years of guerrilla warfare, the EPRDF managed to topple the Derg and take control over the Ethiopian state in May 1991.

Once in power, the primary purpose of the EPRDF's revolution became restructuring the Ethiopian state from a unitary state into an ethno-national federation. This was a formidable strategic task as significant portions of the overall population were adherents of the assimilationist unitary nationalism of the Derg. Between 1991 and 1995 the EPRDF mobilized a significant portion of the intelligentsia and political elites in a nation-wide debate on federalism, which culminated in the constitutional referendum that transformed the state in 1995 into a multi-national federation, which guaranteed the right to self-determination up to secession. The election for the constitutional assembly in 1994 was marred by intimidation and described by international observers as 'unfair because the EPRDF dominance prevented the free expression of choice', leading many opposition candidates to boycott the process.[141] While the idea of multi-national federalism had many adherents in Ethiopia, the manner in which it was instituted in 1995 lead to a significant legitimacy deficit from the outset.

The TPLF in particular also faced the challenge of having the militarily most powerful organization, but representing an ethnic group that constituted no more than six per cent

[138] Ibid: 591.

[139] John Young, *Peasant Revolution in Ethiopia: The Tigray People's Liberation Front, 1975-1991,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997): 166.

[140] Medhane Tadesse and John Young. 'TPLF: Reform or Decline?' *Review of African Political Economy,* Vol. 30, no. 97, (2003): 389.

[141] Lovise Aalen, *Ethnic federalism in a dominant party state: The Ethiopian experience 1991-2000*, CMI Report, (2002): 8

of the overall population. To deal with this challenge it had after 1989 engineered the creation of ethnic based parties that were supposedly representative of other major ethnic groups, but were in fact subordinates of the TPLF.[142] This put them on a direct collision course with opposition groups such as the OLF and ONLF, which had initially been part of the transitional government, but in 1992 and 1994 had been forcefully ousted by the TPLF. Genuine democratic competition was therefore not part of the EPRDF revolution.

Political decision-making in the new state that the EPRDF built was also significantly shaped by the TPLF's political organization during the revolutionary war. Parallel to the state apparatus were more influential party structures. The two main institutional legacies were vanguardism and democratic centralism.[143] As a governance model, democratic centralism, reserved decision-making authority to the executive committee composed of 36 people, who were themselves elected by a central committee of 180 members from the four constitutive parties.[144] The crucial aspects of this power structure were its hierarchical and collective features. Meles Zenawi, despite being the head of government, was – at least in relation to his peers in the TPLF – only first amongst equals, rather than the omnipresent leader that he became in the final years of his life. This power structure had important implications for the making of foreign policy, as was most clearly evident during the Eritrea war, when Meles' power was checked and his policy preferences at times even rejected by the executive committee.[145] The vanguardist ideology led the collective leadership of the TPLF/EPRDF to self-identify as the most politically conscious and intellectually capable section of society. This conferred on them both the moral authority of being the authentic representatives of a particular class, and the confidence that came with the conviction that one's policies were 'scientific'. A former TPLF leader, Aregawi Berhe, describes the principle as follows: 'The theory of the vanguard allows no room for participation of the sector outside the ruling party, which

[142] Lovise Aalen, *The Politics of Ethnicity in Ethiopia: Actors, Power and Mobilisation under Ethnic Federalism,* (Leiden: Brill, 2011): 33-34

[143] Aregawi Berhe, 'A Political History of the Tigray People's Liberation Front (1975-1991): Revolt, Ideology and Mobilisation in Ethiopia' (Ph.D. diss., Vrije University Amsterdam, 2011): 9

[144] Addis Standard, 'EPRDF begins decisive congress in which reelecting PM Abiy is the least of its worries,' October 3, 2018.
http://addisstandard.com/news-eprdf-begins-decisive-congress-reelecting-pm-abiy-least-worries/

[145] Tadesse and Young. "TPLF: Reform or Decline?" 390

has the role of monopolistic decision-maker for the masses, the civic movements and opposition organizations.'[146] The vanguard was also expected to push through policies even when they were unpopular.[147] Once the vanguard leadership had discussed, voted and decided on a particular policy it was to be implemented without any hesitation or opposition from any part of the system.

2.3.2. The Revolutionary Foreign Policy Orientation

The EPRDF's ascendancy to power also redefined Ethiopia's role in the Horn of Africa. A revolutionary foreign policy was formulated, corresponding to the domestic revolution. The Revolutionary orientation guided the EPRDF's regional policies in the period 1991-1998.[148] Its core ideas were formulated in an official foreign policy white paper entitled, the 'Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia's Foreign Policy'.[149] The white paper provides insights into both concrete policies towards particular states as well as the broader perceptions and values that guided the EPRDF in this period. I refer to the EPRDF's orientation towards the region in this period as the Revolutionary orientation. This was not a label employed by EPRDF party officials, while my informants in the diplomatic corps used the term 'open-door policy' to denote the shift in foreign policy orientation that accompanied EPRDF rule in 1991. Revolutionary is more descriptive of the orientation's aims than 'open-door policy,' and is therefore employed in this thesis.

The EPRDF's Revolutionary orientation white paper was primarily a polemic against its predecessors, and virtually all policies were rationalized in opposition to the Derg's policies. A desire to break with the past was therefore the primary driver behind their foreign policy orientation. Its core policies were non-alignment in global affairs and non-interference in the affairs of its neighbours. The orientation did not problematize regional cooperation and maintained an optimistic view for its prospects. Security threats were

[146] Berhe, 'A Political History of the Tigray People's Liberation Front (1975-1991): Revolt, Ideology and Mobilisation in Ethiopia,' 378.

[147] Sebhat Nega: Executive Director of Ethiopian International Institute for International Peace and Development and first Chairman of the TPLF, interview with author March 19, 2014

[148] It ceased to guide policy towards Somalia and Sudan in 1996

[149] Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia's Foreign Policy,* (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia), October 13, 1996.

framed as general conditions, such as that posed by civil wars, rather than naming concrete actors deemed to have hostile intentions.

In relation to global alliances, the strategy states that 'past governments were busy siding with various international powers and blocks at the expense of the national interest and sovereignty.'[150] Consequently the conclusion was reached that alliances and foreign relations should, instead of universal ideologies and global rivalries, be driven by particular domestic needs. The unipolar post-Cold War international political system potentially was considered to pose a challenge to Ethiopia's sovereignty, as the white paper states that the 'winners of the Cold War are on many occasions trying to impose their political views and programs on other countries', implicitly referring to the liberalizing mission of the USA at the time.[151]

In regional relations the basis for formulating policy was yet again a rejection of the past. By systematically presenting their policy choices as the opposite to that of past governments, whose failure was emphasised, the EPRDF argued that their new orientation would reverse the course of history. According to the EPRDF, past Ethiopian foreign policies were based on the idea that the country was surrounded by enemies, which, they claimed led to many regional conflicts.[152] EPRDF would instead pursue a policy that promoted the political and economic integration of the region.[153] This understanding led to a downplaying of the importance of security threats, and secondly framed potential threats as general conditions rather than emanating from particular hostile actors. The main challenging conditions were: Ethiopia's lack of access to the sea; the geographic location of the Horn and its tendency to attract intervention from external actors; and civil war in Somalia and Sudan and the potential intervention of external actors.[154] These insecurities were deemed an obstacle to tourism and investments from outside the region and ought to be managed multilaterally through IGAD.[155] Bilateral relations with neighbouring countries would also be managed through a policy of non-

[150] Ibid.

[151] Ibid.

[152] Ibid: Par. 62.

[153] Ibid: Par. 63.

[154] Ibid: Par. 164.

[155] Ibid: Par. 165-166.

interference. The strategy states that as opposed to past governments who 'engaged in extensive proxy-warfare against neighbouring states, by providing arms, strategic and financial support to rebel groups', the foreign relations of the EPRDF will be driven by the principles of mutual respect for sovereignty and non-interference.[156]

The deeply optimistic view of the prospects for peace in the Horn of Africa was rooted in the fact that the EPRDF came to power in 1991 genuinely convinced that the sole cause of regional disorder was the belligerent attitudes of past Ethiopian governments. In their view there were no real conflicts of interest between Ethiopia and its neighbours. When the various Ethiopian nationalities were given the opportunity to exercise self-determination, they would have no reason to ally with foreign rivals and as there would be no provocations by Ethiopia, neighbouring countries would moreover have no reason for belligerent actions.

The Revolutionary orientation's approach to regional cooperation had two features: an understanding of the region as interdependent and an optimistic view about the prospects for cooperation. About interdependence it asserts that: 'Ethiopia's peace cannot be seen individually from the peace of the region... Due to the settlement patterns in the region, negative or positive conditions arising in one state are likely to have implications for other states.'[157] While interdependence could be a source of threat as well as benefits, the EPRDF chose to emphasise the potential for mutual benefits of shared resources like trans-boundary water resources.[158] The strategy's assessment of the prospects for regional cooperation was positive and optimistic.

The Revolutionary orientation had no rivalry management strategy because it did not anticipate security threats. Regional cooperation was also taken for granted and not problematized, and thus concrete strategies for promoting cooperation was not formulated. This led to measures such as a policy of visa-free entrance into Ethiopia for citizens of neighbouring countries, despite this policy not being reciprocated). According to one diplomat, it was through the policy of visa-free travel that some of the Sudanese

[156] Ibid.

[157] Ibid: Par. 79 and Par: 123-125.

[158] Ibid: Par. 123.

who partook in the assassination attempt on President Mubarak in 1995 made their way into Ethiopia.[159] The free access to Ethiopian markets, financial services and other benefits that Eritreans continued to enjoy after the formal secession in 1991, on a par with Ethiopian citizens, was another manifestation of this Revolutionary orientation. The most significant measure however was Ethiopia's demobilization of much of its armed forces after 1991.[160] This was an indication of the fact that regional threats were not anticipated meant that military defence was not prioritized.

2.4. The Developmental State Foreign Policy Orientation

2.4.1. Background Context to Foreign Policy Change

Contrary to the expectations of the EPRDF under the Revolutionary orientation, Ethiopia faced aggression from Somalia and Sudan in 1995 and 1996, and from Eritrea in 1998. By the time the war with Eritrea ended, the failure of the Revolutionary orientation was recognized by the EPRDF. While no one defended this policy after the war, there was however no agreement on what ought to replace it.

The EPRDF leadership's inability to anticipate the war, their unpreparedness and mismanagement led to a conflict in the TPLF, which culminated in a spilt of the party in 2001 into a group led by Meles Zenawi and another led by Siye Abraha and Tewolde Woldemariam.[161] The conflict in the TPLF centred on Meles' leadership and management of the war. As commander in chief, Meles had taken a very controversial decision to agree to a mediated settlement after having won the war in 2000; the dissent process was in many ways therefore a trial of Meles' leadership. Moreover, while the dissent was a power struggle between two groups of TPLF officials, the divisions were also along ideological lines. During the Central Committee (CC) meeting in 2000 when Meles

[159] Anonymous (No. 18): Ethiopian diplomat, former Head of Africa Directorate in Ministry of Foreign Affairs, interview with author June 28, 2016. The diplomat is retired. He doesn't have a background in the EPRDF's liberation war against the Derg. He was critical of the EPRDF's Revolutionary orientation.

[160] Mulugeta Gebrehiwot Berhe, 'The Ethiopian post-transition security sector reform experience: building a national army from a revolutionary democratic army', *African Security Review,* Vol 26, No.2, (2017).

[161] Paulos Milkias, 'Ethiopia, The TPLF and Roots of the 2001 Political Tremor'. *International Conference on African Development Archives*, (August 1, 2001): 7. http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/africancenter_icad_archive/4

presented his charge of Bonapartism against others in the TPLF leadership, 'four Politburo members prepared their own presentations which expressed concern about the influence of foreign powers in Ethiopia, proposed to assess the merits of the idea of class reconciliation over class struggle, and to define what the nature of the proletarian party in Ethiopia ought to be.'[162] The dissenting group walked out of the CC meeting and Meles had them suspended from the TPLF. They later issued a statement claiming that the root of the conflict lay in the management of the Eritrea war.[163] Meles on the other hand claimed that the dismissals were part of a renewal process (*Tehadesso* in Amharic). In July-August 2001 Meles arranged a set of meetings in the EPRDF in which the following decisions were reached:

First, it was resolved that the EPRDF, in origin a coalition of peasants, workers and revolutionary intelligentsia, would now open its ranks to the national bourgeoisie. Second, it was decided that the country would be integrated into the global economy (*Renewal*, November 2001). In a related move, the EPRDF endorsed a clear statement in favour of capitalism, thereby resolving abiding tension and confusion within the movement.[164]

According to Medhane and Young, the personal role of Meles was central to these ideological changes:

It is clear that the dissidents would not have swallowed such notions, and it is unlikely the majority of EPRDF delegates would have endorsed them, were the dissidents in attendance at these meetings. Approval was possible because Meles had assumed a dominant position in the leadership of the EPRDF, and the cadres had nowhere to turn. The dissidents maintain that Meles' extensive international contacts led him to turn against his commitment to revolutionary ideals.[165]

The dissent process was therefore more than a personal power struggle. The consistency of Meles' stance on the war with Eritrea and the theoretically cohesive programme that was quickly formulated, indicate two things: firstly, it is likely that Meles was driven by ideological concerns of which he was deeply convinced (given the high political cost of these contrarian ideas). Secondly, they were gradually being developed over many years

[162] Tadesse and Young, "TPLF: Reform or Decline?", 390.

[163] Ibid: 391.

[164] Ibid: 392; *Renewal* is a magazine published by the EPRDF.

[165] Ibid.

before the crisis, rather than swiftly formulated after the power struggle. Meles had his rivals in the TPLF imprisoned after the dissent process and consolidated power in the EPRDF, and began the process of moving Ethiopia towards a developmental state economic model.[166]

2.4.2. The Developmental State Economic Model

The EPRDF derived their concept of the developmental state from the experiences of the East Asian economic development trajectories during the Cold War.[167] These have been described as a third way between the liberal model of the US and the command economy of the USSR. The Developmental State model is essentially a state that intervenes extensively in the economy, allocates resources, and creates incentives that may run counter to market forces, in order to stimulate growth, particularly in the industrial sector.[168] The purpose of state intervention is not to eliminate or compete with the private sector, but to direct it in a particular desired course. The developmental state is explicitly political, and is not conceptualized only as an effective way of stimulating economic growth. One of its key political dimensions is that 'the legitimacy of the state' is 'derived from its record in economic development'.[169] Secondly, it 'gives its first priority to development and treats as secondary other goals, like regulation, social welfare, or equality.'[170]

The EPRDF's adoption of a developmental state model was an outcome of a gradual learning process throughout the 1990s. The first decade of the EPRDF's tenure was in addition to political consolidation also characterized by ideological adaptation. The Cold War was won by the US, and the EPRDF's Marxism-Leninism was at odds with the global order of the day. While they reluctantly embraced political and economic liberalism in 1991, the desire of the Bretton Woods institutions to impose structural adjustment measures on Ethiopia became too difficult for the EPRDF to accept. The

[166] Alex de Waal; 'The theory and practice of Meles Zenawi,' *African Affairs* 112, no. 446, (2013): 152.

[167] Jostein Hauge and Ha-Joon Chang, "The concept of a 'developmental state' in Ethiopia", 2018: 2. Unpublished working paper, forthcoming in Fantu Cheru, Christopher Cramer and Arkebe Oqubay (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the Ethiopian Economy.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

[168] Ibid: 3-4.

[169] Ibid: 4.

[170] Ibid

ruling party however did not have a clear ideological alternative in the 1990s, according to Meles:

While I cannot say that we had an alternative to the neo-liberal reforms that the IMF and World Bank wanted us to introduce, we have never been comfortable with it from the very beginning. Our initial reaction was in effect to conduct a rear-guard battle of delaying and preventing the introduction of reforms that would reduce the state to the proverbial night watchman without presenting an adequately articulated alternative. [...] By the late 90s, our thinking as a ruling party was evolving in the direction of elaborating an alternative development paradigm that we have called democratic developmentalism. This was a rather slow and painful process. Painful because the full articulation of the paradigm with all its policy implications was one of the key causes of the most serious split in the history of the ruling party that took place in 2000-2001.[171]

The alternative model to neoliberalism that Meles and the EPRDF ended up pursuing was a developmental state economic model. Some of the key features of this model were: state autonomy from particular interest groups, centralized decision-making power, and active state involvement in the economy.[172] In Ethiopia state intervention in the economy in the form of investments was primarily focused on: communications networks, human capital-formation and hydro-electricity.[173] Meles described his understanding of the developmental state model as the following:

Essentially, the concept hangs on the prudent combination of market forces and state intervention, where the state plays a leading role not only in providing infrastructure and basic services, but also in providing the right conducive environment for the development of productive and manufacturing capacities. For sure, the experience of a number of East Asian countries supports the validity of our approach.[174]

The objectives of the developmental state were as much political as they were economical. Its grand objective was to structurally transform the Ethiopian economy from a primarily agricultural based economy to one wherein manufacturing held a substantial

[171] Meles Zenawi quoted in Dereje Feyissa, 'Aid Negotiation: the Uneasy "Partnership" between EPRDF and the Donors,' *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 5 no.4, (2011): 796

[172] These were ideological aspirations rather than empirical realities.

[173] Christopher Clapham, 'The Ethiopian developmental state,' *Third World Quarterly*, 39:6, (2017).

[174] Meles Zenawi quoted in Jostein Hauge and Ha-Joon Chang, "The concept of a 'developmental state' in Ethiopia", 7

share of GDP and employment. The class differentiation that would result from this, it was believed, would set the stage for class-based political mobilization and a constructive democratic competition. Reaching the status of middle-income country was seen as the threshold for structural transformation, an objective that was framed as an existential challenge.

These transformational objectives required long-term central planning, for which purpose strategic five-year plans such as the Plan for an Accelerated and Sustained End to Poverty (PASDEP) in 2005, and the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) I in 2010 and GTP II in 2015 were formulated. In economic policy the Developmental State led to a movement away from prioritizing 'collectivized agricultural approaches' to 'a new emphasis on individual (and often richer) "model" farmers.'[175]

One of the three investment areas of the developmental state had direct implications for Ethiopia's regional relations. Developing hydro-electric power required active support from neighbouring countries as it could potentially impact their supply of water. The clearest example of this is the GERD, which would to have an impact on Egypt and Sudan's water supply through the Nile. The diplomatic support of Sudan was crucial for pursuing this objective. Another less publicized case was the Gibe III dam, which reduced the water of Lake Turkana in Kenya, leading one Kenyan MP to advocate military action against Ethiopia.[176] In this case too, strong bilateral relations were essential to avert a diplomatic crisis and possibly regional and international condemnation.

2.4.3. The Developmental State Foreign Policy White Paper

The Guiding Principles

Published in 2002, the *Foreign Affairs and National Policy Strategy's* point of departure was a recognition of the fact that the Ethiopian state found 'itself in a state of abject poverty and backwardness' and that its survival depended on the 'attainment of speedy

[175] Sarah Vaughan, 'Revolutionary Democratic State-building: Party, State and People in the EPRDF's Ethiopia,' *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 5:4, (2011): 631.

[176] Capitalfm, 'Ethiopia dam causes Kenya water shortage: rights group', February 14, 2017. https://www.capitalfm.co.ke/news/2017/02/ethiopia-dam-causes-kenya-water-shortage-rights-group/

economic development, democratization and peace'.[177] National security issues other than survival, it argued, could only be relevant once survival was ensured. Foreign policy objectives had to serve and be subordinated to the most basic domestic needs of Ethiopian society.

The strategy established three basic principles that were to serve as the foundations of Ethiopia's diplomatic engagement and national security. These were, in other words, the new national interests of the Ethiopian state. The first principle was '[economic] development and the building of a democratic system as a basis for policy'.[178] Primacy was given to development, which was defined as a life free from poverty, disease and ignorance. These objectives were however seen as interdependent. It claimed that it was the 'development and democratization agenda that ensures peace.'[179] And by declaring that: 'Bringing about people-centered rapid development and ensuring democracy and good governance are what our national interest is all about',[180] it explicitly defined the national interest in economic developmental terms.

'National pride and prestige' was the second principle (a distinction between the two was not made and they were used interchangeably).[181] The meaning of pride and prestige was not taken for granted, and the conceptions of these values were provided in opposition to those of the traditional Irredenta. The strategy declared that some 'label countries as hostile or friendly depending on how others have edified or wounded our national pride or prestige', while others claim that prestige is not an objective states should invest in, and finally some argue that countries that give too much emphasis to pride and prestige were 'those living in past glories but desperate about the future'.[182] Ethiopia had many things to be proud of, amongst them, was its long history of civilization and ability to protect its independence in the face Western Imperialism. Despite these past achievements, the EPRDF's view was that the state of Ethiopia currently 'trails far behind in the long list of

[177] Ethiopia Ministry of Information, *Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and Strategy*, (November 2002): 1.

[178] Ibid.

[179] Ibid: 8.

[180] Ibid.

[181] Ibid: 9.

[182] Ibid.

countries when it comes to development'.[183] This state of underdevelopment, poverty and lack of democracy and good governance were the most significant sources of national humiliation. And the final source of humiliation was Ethiopians' inability to cooperate and forge a 'common belief in our national destiny'.[184] In other words, thinking about national pride was meaningless without a minimum level of domestic stability and self-sufficiency. The EPRDF make an analogy with the history of Japan to illustrate how a 'humiliated' nation can regain its dignity by transforming itself internally.

The third principle or interest that was to serve as the basis of the EPRDF's foreign and national security was that of active engagement in the processes of globalization. The pursuit of development and democracy cannot be conceptualized outside the regional and global context. Due to the economic interconnectedness of the members of the international community, it concluded that 'It is impossible to operate outside of this context'.[185] Globalization however was not deemed fair, as the world's nations could be divided into the two categories of 'producers or aid recipients'.[186] Ethiopia's grand objective had therefore to be to graduate from the category of aid recipient to producer. To climb the ladder of the global division of labour, an active participation in the processes of globalization was a necessity. The opportunities provided by globalization had to be taken advantage of and the constraints it generates resisted.

Despite listing three principles, there was in fact only one national interest formulated in the strategy and that was economic development. This is because the second principle, which was prestige, was considered a function of economic development and could not be conceived of differently or separated from the first principle. The third principle of active participation in globalization was also not an intrinsic value, but rather an instrumental policy motivated by the pursuit of economic development. Despite its obvious ideological differences with Western liberalism, the EPRDF did not advocate distancing itself from the West, nor did it propose an isolationist or a confrontational policy. Instead, it sought a strategic engagement focused on the priority of attaining capital.

[183] Ibid.

[184] Ibid: 10

[185] Ibid: 19.

[186] Ibid.

From these principles, six strategies (thought they were referred to as objectives) were derived: 'devoting the prime focus to activities at home, economic-centred strategy, minimizing threats based on proper analysis, reducing vulnerability to threats, building a reliable defence capability and building strong implementation capacity'.[187] The strategies very much reflect the principles, and constitute different ways of pursuing the objective of economic development. For example, the defence strategy reflected the national interest, in that its primary purpose was to uphold deterrence and defensive capabilities. Defence spending was therefore to be symbiotic with economic growth, in this way, over time economic development was expected to lead to a growth in defence capabilities.

Policy towards the Horn of Africa

Based on the normative and strategic premises described above, the strategy systematically evaluated the value and nature of Ethiopia's most important bilateral relations, and formulated objectives to be pursued in relation to these states. Its neighbouring countries were naturally given the most attention. The strategy therefore begins by analysing the Horn of Africa region as a whole, and what it considered its key features. The EPRDF's orientation towards the Horn of Africa was premised on the idea that the states in the region were historically and culturally connected as well as politically interdependent. Ethiopia's landlocked condition was in particular considered by default to make it interdependent with its neighbours, and served as a natural incentive for integration. In general however, the orientation towards the region was characterized by a lack of interest. It reflected a pessimistic view of the possibility of any gain coming from the region and consequently focused primarily on a desire to avoid conflict. There was a belief or acknowledgment that regional relations have, for good and bad, been particularly intimate, and because of this history, the EPRDF claimed 'there is a risk of being guided by emotion in assessing the value of our neighbors'.[188] It consequently prescribed a dispassionate approach to analysing the significance of its regional relations.

Neighbouring countries were seen as unlikely sources of capital and investment in the near to medium-term, and thus also of little relevance to Ethiopia's development

[187] Ibid: 23.

[188] Ibid: 57.

agenda.[189] With regards to democratization, the possibility of any assistance, technical or otherwise, emanating from the region was seen as unlikely. On the other hand, if successfully realized, Ethiopia's development and democratization was assumed to have a positive impact on the region. Given Ethiopia's landlocked status, it considers the daunting scenario that Ethiopia's neighbours could collectively deny Ethiopia access to the sea. While its neighbours had little capacity to inflict harm upon Ethiopia at the time, due to their political and economic weakness, it was considered that this situation was not permanent and that as these countries grow, they could possibly in the future become a source of danger to Ethiopia's security. Despite these considerations, instead of a policy of containing their development, the EPRDF reached the conclusion that it was imperative that their 'policy should focus on developing a culture of dealing with contradictions through discussion and negotiation while reducing our vulnerability to danger and to address security threats appropriately.'[190]

2.4.4. Strategic Restraint and Rivalry Management

Ethiopia's approach to rivalry management under the Developmental State foreign policy orientation was shaped by two principles: strategic restraint, and the active pursuit of economic development cooperation. As we have seen in the preceding section economic development not only became a priority, but also a standard against which the value of all policies and actions was measured against. Restraint is a function of this prioritization. While the EPRDF do not use the term strategic restraint, the EPRDF's security policy under the Developmental State can be conceptualized as such. In essence what the white paper is promoting is a restraint from relying on military force to manage threats and rivalries. This was a strategic choice because Ethiopia could in the in the short-term pursue its objectives militarily, as it had the power to do so. As the case study chapters will illustrate for example, during the Eritrea war Ethiopia had broken through the lines of the Eritrean forces in 2000 and had the option of pursuing a victor's peace, that is, acquire new territory and take measures to dismantle the Eritrean army. During the subsequent rivalry, it also had the means to settle the conflict through military force. In relation to Sudan, it could also take advantage of Sudan's internal weakness to pursue a border demarcation on more favourable terms. Restraint was motivated by political and

[189] Ibid.

[190] Ibid: 63.

economic concerns and priorities rather than a pacifist stance. The 2002 white paper, and indeed Meles himself, remained agnostic to the moral dimensions of territorial revisionism or pursuing interests through military force; Meles' main concern were the implications such endeavours would have for the economy and Ethiopia's fragile condition. An important manifestation of restraint was limiting the defence budget, not to the low level under the Revolutionary orientation, but to a level sufficient to maintain a deterrent capacity. While strategic restraint involved avoiding inter-state military confrontation, it did not involve avoiding coercion as such. Hence, it led to a management of rivalries through other and mostly diplomatic means, notably, co-optation and coercive isolation.

2.5. Conclusion

This chapter has illustrated that there have been different foreign policy orientations in Ethiopia under the EPRDF. The variations in orientations, particularly between the Irredenta on the one hand, and the Revolutionary and Developmental State on the other hand, relate to different understandings of the Ethiopian nation's history and what role it should assume in regional relations. In other words, they constitute different role conceptions of Ethiopia in the Horn of Africa. The chapter has demonstrated that there are variations in sub-national elite belief systems in Ethiopia (both across time and across groups). This means that a state-identity analytical framework is inadequate to understand the drivers of Ethiopia's foreign policy. What is important to note in the context of this thesis is that the orientations also shape rivalry management strategies by influencing who and for what reason the Ethiopian government is likely to see as friend or foe, what objectives they will pursue in the region (and how this will relate to other states in the region), and what foreign policy tools it will apply to manage regional relations.

Understanding the EPRDF's foreign policy requires understanding its domestic political project, which in turn requires understanding what it was fighting against, i.e. Ethiopia Irredenta. The value attached to territory and the particular understanding of Ethiopia's frontiers were the most important feature of the Irredenta. An application of this aspect of the orientation would automatically put Ethiopia at odds with a number of its neighbours and the continental inter-state system. The Irredenta also conceived of Ethiopia as an ancient nation, which by virtue of its history deserved a notable place in the community

of nations. This also had implications for rivalry management. For example, the chapter on Eritrea will illustrate how the border war with Eritrea was interpreted through an emotive lens and seen as compromising the nation's status. Consequently, military force and a pursuing a victor's peace were not simply means to territorial and other material ends, but also a manner of restoring the wounded collective pride. The importance of the issue of status in Ethiopian society is exemplified by the EPRDF feeling the need to justify not pursuing prestige in the 2002 white paper. And Ethiopia's supposed lack of prestige was a critique brought up by opposition groups during parliamentary election debates in 2010. The common perception of an Ethiopian state characterized by a siege mentality, hegemonic aspirations, and thus status seeking are appropriate descriptions of the Irredenta orientation, which only some Ethiopian political parties adhere to.

It was this foreign policy orientation that the EPRDF opposed in 1991. Foreign policy was then seen through the lens of the domestic revolutionary programme. The Revolutionary orientation's point of departure was that Ethiopian belligerence had been the root cause of regional conflict in the past. The belligerence was itself deemed to be a function of the values of past Ethiopian regimes, which led to the conclusion that a foreign policy orientation that was the mirror opposite of the past would lead to cordial regional relations. Apart from an optimistic view of the potential for regional peace and rejecting the past, the Revolutionary orientation did not formulate a coherent vision based on concrete values or strategies. In an effort to pursue a different path from the Irredenta's siege mentality and belligerence, the EPRDF engaged in unilateral and indiscriminate accommodation of neighbouring states and demobilized their armed forces. A foreign policy shaped by the domestic revolutionary dispositions led to miscalculations and conflict with Sudan (1995), Somalia (1996), and Eritrea (1998).

When the Revolutionary orientation collapsed in 1998, the readily available alternative that most people fell back on – including most members of the EPRDF – was the traditional orientation of Ethiopia Irredenta. While much of the EPRDF relapsed back to the Irredenta foreign policy after the Eritrea war, Meles Zenawi formulated the Developmental State foreign policy as a third alternative. This orientation differed from the Revolutionary orientation in that distancing oneself from past regimes was not the sole motivating factor, while it differed from the Irredenta in that territory, prestige and military force were de-prioritized. The new national interest would prioritize economic

development, which meant that the external relations of the state would focus exclusively on attaining capital from abroad and minimizing aggression and instability emanating from the region. In this sense the state had no inherent, historical or ideological friends or enemies, and the value of each bilateral relationship was assessed according to its implications for this one national interest.

The Developmental State orientation that emerged in 2002 was not a radical departure from the Revolutionary orientation but rather an improvement. Instead of reverting back to the Irredenta, as many of his colleagues in the EPRDF did, Meles sought to amend its flaws. The first and crucial flaw that needed to be addressed was the Revolutionary orientation's premise that the fall of the Derg had automatically eliminated the core contradictions amongst the states of the Horn of Africa. Instead Ethiopia had to expect and prepare for any eventuality in the region. The Horn of Africa was a source of danger, but it was deemed that a reversion to the siege mentality of the past was also not desirable. The second flaw that had to be addressed was the lack of clear priorities and objectives in the Revolutionary orientation. The outcome was a foreign policy orientation that was composed of two guiding principles: strategic restraint and the active pursuit of development cooperation.

The Ethiopian Developmental State policy can be traced back to Meles (though he had a small group of followers from the outset, he was the one who formulated and made it state policy). While the agency of an individual was critical initially, significant efforts were made to make this mode of thought hegemonic in society[191] and the Foreign Service. By making the strategy's principles a reference point for the justification of any foreign policy and diplomatic action, it has to some extent succeeded and the continuation of its hegemony after Meles is also testimony to its success through its ability to outlive its architect.

This chapter has examined the differences between the Irredenta, Revolutionary and Developmental State orientations. In the case-study chapters I will examine how these orientations shaped Ethiopia's foreign policy strategies towards Somalia, Eritrea and

[191] Alex de Waal, *The Real Politics of the Horn of Africa, Money, War and the Business of Power*. (Malden, Mass.: Polity Press, 2015)

Sudan. The Revolutionary orientation led to incapacity to anticipate conflicts with Sudan in 1995 and Somalia in 1996, and Eritrea in 1998. Ethiopia Irredenta became a dominant orientation during the war with Eritrea and remained the key alternative foreign policy orientation promoted by opposition parties. The Developmental State orientation mostly manifested itself through strategic restraint in the Horn of Africa. With regard to Eritrea and Somalia, the diplomatic rivalry management strategies of coercive isolation and co-optation were relied upon, while Sudan was the only case-study in which the objective of development cooperation made significant progress.

Chapter 3: Ethiopia's Somalia Policy

3.1. Introduction

The ascendance to power of the EPRDF in 1991 coincided with the collapse of the Somali state. The absence of a centralized government generated a number of strategic, normative and legal challenges for the Ethiopian government. One challenge was posed by the plethora of political authorities and the volatility in their formation, expansion and regular demise. This meant that Ethiopia had to pursue multiple foreign relations towards one territorial entity with groups that were often engaged in conflicts with each other. The conflicts were between, amongst others, secessionists, Islamists and nationalists. Strategic cooperation with one actor was almost inevitably bound to offend another. The absence of a centralized government also meant that non-state actors could conduct attacks on Ethiopia from Somali territories without a government on the Somali side to prevent such attacks or to be held responsible once they had taken place. Finally, in the context of regional rivalries collapsed states create a security dilemma, where the influence of one state equals the insecurity of the rival state.

Somaliland and the Somali Regional State of Ethiopia (SRS) assumed distinctive unique roles in Ethiopia's Somalia policy. The former was a *de facto* independent state and the latter *de jure* part of Ethiopia. The ethnic and geographic proximity and historical linkages to Somalia led the SRS to get entangled into the politics of Somalia. There was a symbiotic relationship between the level of stability in SRS and that in Somalia. The EPRDF had therefore to harmonise its policies towards both its SRS and Somalia. Somaliland on the other hand was *de jure* part of Somalia, but nevertheless did not follow the same political trajectory. For Ethiopia, it served as a practical buffer-zone before developing buffer-zones had become a policy, and was also the only Somali entity with which Ethiopia had any developmental engagement. Somaliland's pursuit of secession was also the biggest reason for the collapse of the Greater Somalia irredentist nationalism. On the other hand, its pursuit of independence constituted a strategic challenge: by recognizing Somaliland, Addis Ababa risked losing the rest of Somalia; and by not doing so it risked alienating Somaliland. All of this necessitated a careful balancing act.

Despite the tendency to portray the conflicts between Ethiopia and various Somali actors under the EPRDF as part of a perennial rivalry, and the relationship as static, this relationship has in fact exhibited significant variations in stability and amity/hostility, which were driven by the different foreign policy orientations that Ethiopia pursued.

This chapter begins by accounting for the first phase of the relationship, when the EPRDF was guided by its Revolutionary foreign policy orientation. During this phase, it did not see any Somali group as a threat, nor did it see the influence of other regional states as a source of threat. Ethiopia had relatively cordial relations with all Somali political organizations. The EPRDF engaged in some mediation efforts, but its attitude towards Somalia was mostly characterized by disinterest. The outcome of this was a condition of negative peace in 1991-1996. Most Somali political groups, both clan factions and warlords, had cordial relations with Ethiopia. The only exception was the Islamist group, Al Ittihad Al Islamiya (AIAI), whose desire to establish an Islamic State in the Horn of Africa made its policies incompatible with Ethiopia's. In pursuit of this aim, the AIAI engaged in terror attacks on civilian targets across Ethiopia in 1995/96, which led the EPRDF to retaliate by conducting a military operation inside Somalia to dismantle the armed group's base.

After the intervention the Revolutionary Orientation would no longer be the primary factor shaping the EPRDF's policy towards Somalia and a new phase in policy towards Somalia would be initiated, where policy was made in an ad-hoc fashion and in response to external conditions rather than a strategic foreign policy orientation. In response to the AIAI's actions, Ethiopia formulated a buffer-zone policy of arming Somali groups on the border to contain Ethiopia's rivals. In relation to state-building they adopted a building-block strategy, which involved establishing smaller political entities that could come together and build a state-structure.

When the Developmental State orientation was formally adopted in 2002 Ethiopia had three primary objectives: to ensure that no hostile Somali group assumed control over the state-building process; to contain the influence of regional rivals; and to construct a viable political order in Somalia. It was imperative that these objectives be achieved without Ethiopia being drawn into a direct military confrontation with Somali or regional rivals. The stakes of regional rivalries were significantly higher during the first decade of the

Developmental State than in the years that preceded it. The principle of strategic restraint was therefore an important influence on Ethiopia's policy. Consequently, Ethiopia pursued its objectives primarily through the strategies of co-optation and alignment diplomacy. Through effective co-optation measures, Ethiopia managed to mobilize a proxy-force that contained and sabotaged a state-building initiative dominated by Djibouti and Egypt, known as the Transitional National Government, in 2000. Ethiopia also co-opted a number of Somali clan leaders and politicians, and succeeded in installing its allies into leadership positions in the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in 2004. Its co-optation diplomacy had however left too many regional and Somali actors dissatisfied, and Ethiopia's ally, the TFG, was confronted with an existential threat by the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) and regional rivals in 2006.

The rise of the UIC demonstrated the conditions under which strategic restraint and non-conventional military and diplomatic means were deemed ineffective by Ethiopia. The use of co-optation, proxy-warfare and diplomatic efforts to mobilize an international peace-keeping force to save the TFG all failed. This culminated in an Ethiopian military intervention in 2006 to dismantle the UIC. This military intervention illustrated that Ethiopia was willing to deviate from the aspirations and objectives of the Developmental State orientations and use military force when diplomatic means were insufficient to contain its rivals.

In 2008, however, the trajectory of Ethiopia's engagement would yet again change, and a new phase characterized by rivalry de-escalation and stability based on security interdependence would be initiated. In this phase, the Developmental State's diplomatic tools such as alignment and co-optation would yet again become Ethiopia's primary foreign policy tools.

The process of transformation in 2008 was initiated by a rapprochement between Ethiopia and Djibouti, which provided the right geopolitical conditions for a political settlement between the TFG and the Islamist opposition. The settlement paved the way for the Somali federation-making process that began in 2011. Between 2011 and 2018, Ethiopia successfully managed to reduce the influence of Eritrea – its main regional rival. It also managed to expand its network of allies, strengthen its buffer-zones and make significant progress in realizing the building-block approach to state-building. By 2018 Ethiopia had

initiated substantial development cooperation with Somaliland; it was in the process of utilizing the Berbera port, and the similar utilization of ports in southern Somalia was being negotiated with the Federal Government of Somalia. The transition from the Revolutionary to the Developmental State foreign policy orientation was critical in bringing about stabilization in Somalia. But the impact was not immediate; instead, the fruits of the orientation manifested themselves incrementally.

This chapter contributes to our understanding of Ethiopian and Somali foreign policies by drawing attention to the problem of taking the nation-state as the primary unit of analysis or explanatory factor when studying rivalry interactions amongst Somali and Ethiopian actors. The empirical material and analysis presented here demonstrates the necessity and analytical utility of capturing sub-national ideational variations amongst political actors tp understand rivalry dynamics.

3.2. The Revolutionary Orientation: 1991-1996

Somali-Ethiopian relations was not under the EPRDF's rule characterized by the continuation of a perennial nationalist rivalry that both the EPRDF and their Somali counterparts inherited from their predecessors, contrary to the widespread perceptions in the literature. The negative peace that lasted for half decade has been largely neglected, and if taken into consideration has important implications for how we interpret and understand rivalries between Somalis and Ethiopians.

The influence of the Revolutionary orientation on Ethiopia's Somalia policy was short-lived (1991-1996). During this phase, the EPRDF was not accused of conducting military incursions into Somalia, or providing partisan support to particular political factions, nor were there any signs of overt competition for influence with other states. Instead, Ethiopia's engagement in Somalia was limited to participation in multilateral mediation efforts.

The EPRDF began mediating in the Somali civil war as soon as it assumed power in 1991. A number of mediation initiatives were also taken by Kenya and Djibouti. In June 1991, Djibouti, with the support of Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Italy, hosted the first

reconciliation meeting for the different Somali factions.[192] The Mogadishu-based warlord, Ali Mahdi, was elected interim President by six organizations that participated in the conference, an outcome which another warlord, Farah Aideed, rejected. In 1993 Ethiopia hosted a UN-sponsored conference in Addis Ababa in which 15 Somali factions participated, including Ali Mahdi and Aideed, where an agreement was reached to end hostilities and establish a transitional government.[193] The deal failed to have any impact on the conflict in Somalia, as the factions of Ali Mahdi and Aideed fought throughout the period. Warlord factions based in Mogadishu dominated all these negotiations. Ethiopia and Djibouti's mediation efforts showed no sign of antagonizing each-other or any other regional actor. Another central feature of the EPRDF's engagement with Somalia in this period was that it had no clear strategic purpose with policy priorities and objectives. Somalia's lack of centralized government was not identified with concrete security threats, and consequently there was no need to control peace processes or contain anyone.

The Revolutionary foreign policy orientation was accompanied by an opening of political space in Ethiopian politics in general, as well as in the Somali region. The Somalis of Ethiopia, like other major ethno-national groups, were establishing their own state. The new federal arrangement promised each nation the right to self-government and self-determination up to secession. The new Somali state that emerged included the Ogaden and additional territories. The first few years of EPRDF rule were therefore years of relative optimism. Both Islamist parties such as the Al Ittihad Al Islamiya (AIAI) and the ONLF were allowed to operate as legal parties. The ONLF won a majority in the 1992 elections, and its co-founder Abdillahi Mohamed Saadi became the first President of the new Somali Regional State.[194] This cooperation did not last for long however, as the ONLF and the EPRDF had divergent plans for the future. The ONLF took the promises of the constitution more seriously than the EPRDF, and in 1994 demanded a referendum on self-determination – a demand that the EPRDF found unacceptable.[195] The dispute led the

[192] Ken Menkhaus, 'Diplomacy in a failed state', *Accord,* No: 21, (2010).

[193] USIP, 'Addis Ababa Agreement concluded at the first session of the Conference on National Reconciliation in Somalia', March 27, 1993.
http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/file/resources/collections/peace_agreements/somalia_03271993.pdf

[194] Tobias Hagmann, *Talking Peace in the Ogaden: The search for an end to conflict in the Somali Regional State in Ethiopia,* Rift Valley Institute, (2014): 19.

[195] Ibid.

ONLF to resume its insurgency and the EPRDF to support the newly established Ethiopian Somali Democratic League (ESDL), which was at the time dominated by non-Ogadeni Somalis.

3.3. Suspending the Revolutionary Orientation: 1996-2002

In 1996 the Islamist group AIAI conducted a number of terrorist attacks on civilian targets in Ethiopia, to which Ethiopia reacted by conducting a small military invasion of Somalia to dismantle AIAI bases. This marked the beginning of the decline of the Revolutionary orientation towards Somalia. What ensued was a six-year period where policy towards Somalia was made, not according to a broad foreign policy orientation, but on an ad hoc basis and in a reactive manner. The two major policies that were formulated in this period were: the policy of constructing buffer-zones along the border with Somalia to contain hostile groups like AIAI and secondly, a building-block approach to state building in Somalia which was identified as the preferred strategy.

3.3.1. The Islamist Challenge

The one Somali group with which the EPRDF had inherently incompatible interests was the transnational Islamist AIAI. The EPRDF's policy towards this group consisted initially of tolerance and a desire to find a modus vivendi, but gradually evolved into one of military confrontation. This confrontation would set in motion a chain reaction that would culminate in the initiation of a wider Somali nationalist backlash against Ethiopia and escalate regional rivalry dynamics. While there were several Islamist organizations operating in the SRS and Somalia in the 1990s, such as Al Islah, Al Tabliq, and Al Takfir,[196] AIAI would emerge as the most influential of these groups. AIAI was formed through the merger of two Islamist factions in 1984. Its leadership included al Afghani, Hassan Abdullah al Turki, Sheikh Ali Warsame and Hassan Dahir Aweys (several of these had fought in Afghanistan, had links with Al Qaeda, and would later assume leadership positions in the UIC and Al Shabab).[197] AIAI had representatives in Djibouti,

[196] Andre Le Sage, 'Prospects for Al Itihad & Islamist Radicalism in Somalia', *Review of African Political Economy,* Vol. 28, No. 89, (2001): 473.

[197] Stanford.edu, 'Al Ittihad Al Islamiya,' June 18, 2016. http://web.stanford.edu/group/mappingmilitants/cgi-bin/groups/view/99

Uganda, Sudan, Kenya, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, UK, Italy and Sweden.[198] AIAI, like Siad Barre, did not recognize the legitimacy of the borders of the region, they also disapproved of secular nationalism as a legitimate political principle, aspiring instead to construct an Islamic State in the Horn of Africa. This made them fundamentally different from the warlords, clan-factions or any other actor in Somalia, as they had objectives inherently incompatible with both Ethiopia and the continental principle of maintaining colonial boundaries.

Islamists in the Ethiopian Somali Regional State (SRS) were initially not only tolerated, but even allowed to participate in regional elections. AIAI participated in the political process but also built up a militia, and maintained their connections with the Somali AIAI branch, which eventually led to a confrontation with the EPRDF. In 1994 both the EPRDF and SRS administration engaged the Ethiopian AIAI branch and tried to persuade them to hand in their weapons and relinquish their ties with the other branches of AIAI.[199] The diplomatic engagements failed, and AIAI instead significantly escalated their operations in Ethiopia between May 1995 and February 1996.[200] It claimed responsibility for terrorist attacks on civilian targets in Dire Dawa and Addis Ababa on at least four different occasions that left more than a dozen people dead.[201] Finally in July 1996 they conducted an assassination attempt on Ethiopia's Minister of Transportation and Communication, Abdul Mejid Hassan (an ethnic Somali).[202]

After these attacks, radical Islamism had come to be identified by the EPRDF as a serious regional threat that warranted an immediate solution (AIAI's links to Sudan amplified this threat perception).[203] Ethiopia responded with a military operation against AIAI's base in the border-town of Luuq in Somalia in August 1996, that drove the members out of the town and dismantled the base.[204] The operation led to the discovery of documents

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[198] Ibid.

[199] International Crisis Group, *Somalia's Islamists*, (2005): 9. https://www.crisisgroup.org/file/2317/download?token=H4eqeVpm

[200] Ibid: 8-9.

[201] Stanford.edu, 'Al Ittihad Al Islamiya,'

[202] Ibid.

[203] US Embassy Addis Ababa, subject: *Allah in Ethiopia, Mostly Quiet on the Islamic Front*, April 1, 1997.

[204] Ibid; Ken Menkhaus, 'Political Islam in Somalia.' http://www.somali-jna.org/downloads/Menkhaus%20-%20Political%20Islam%20in%20Somalia.pdf

'detailing al-Ittihad's external contacts, including Sudanese funding and training'.[205] This event was a turning-point in the EPRDF's relationship with Somalia, as it marked the decline of the influence of the Revolutionary orientation on foreign policy, and by 1996 clear threats were identified, and priorities and a corresponding containment strategy formulated. According to a US diplomatic cable:

A stateless Somalia poses the greatest long-term security threat to Ethiopia and to the stability of the region. Meles fears that Somalia may become a base and a safe haven for international terrorists, criminals and drug traffickers, especially as the welcome mat for such groups is withdrawn from more traditional locations. The Prime Minister has warned that Al-Ittihad has become 'a trojan horse for types terrorist groups' and that some governments are underestimating Al-Ittihad because they view it as a purely Somali endeavour.'[206]

The AIAI was a regional force operating in both Ethiopia and Somalia. The end of the democratic experiment in in the SRS, the war against the ONLF and AIAI, and the declining influence of the Revolutionary orientation on foreign policy towards Somalia, took place around the same time and were linked.

3.3.2. Buffer-Zone and Building-Block Strategies

In addition to the dismantling of the AIAI base, Ethiopia formulated a long-term containment strategy of developing buffer-zones in Somalia.[207] A buffer-zone strategy however necessitated the establishment of patron-client relations. Clan-based militias and administrations would emerge as Ethiopia's preferred allies in this regard, serving the twin purposes of acting as buffer-zones against hostile actors, as well as components of a building-block approach to state-building, which became Ethiopia's permanent stance on state-building in Somalia.[208] The basis of the building-block was that local administrations would be formed in different parts of Somalia, and then come together to

[205] Matt Bryden, 'No Quick Fixes: Coming to Terms with Terrorism, Islam, and Statelessness in Somalia,' *Journal of Conflict Studies,* Vol. 23, No: 2. https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/jcs/article/view/215/373

[206]US Embassy in Addis Ababa, Subject: 'Allah in Ethiopia: Mostly Quiet on the Islamic Front', April 1, 1997.

[207] Seyoum Mesfin & Abdeta Dribssa Beyene, 'The Practicalities of Living with Failed States', *Daedalus,* Vol. 147, Issue 1. (2018): 133-4.

[208] Matt Bryden, 'New Hope for Somalia? The Building Block Approach', *Review of African Political Economy,* Vol 26, no. 79 (1999): 134.

form a nation-state. These policies were not ideologically driven, but rather reactive adaptations to changing external circumstances. According to one Ethiopian diplomat, they developed relations with: 'Puntland and Abdulahi Yusuf, the Rahanweyn resistance, the Marehan and SNF, General Gebay in Juba…[because they] wanted to use these organizations to reach people and create security.'[209]

Ethiopia's support to the Rahanweyn Resistance Army (RRA) was one of the earliest and most consequential cases of active measures to establish new buffer-zones. Various Darod and Hawiye militias had been conducting raids into the Bay and Bakool region since the state collapsed in 1991. General Farah Aideed had been conducting notoriously violent and predatory incursions into this region, which in 1995 led to the establishment of the clan faction Rahanweyn Resistance Army (RRA).[210] The RRA began attaining financial and military support and training from Ethiopia after the 1996 confrontation with AIAI.[211] With Ethiopian help, the RRA took over the regional capital and other key towns from Aideed's forces in 1998 and 1999.[212] After these victories, the RRA went on to establish a clan-based administration in these territories. While Ethiopia's policy was initially motivated by the desire to contain AIAI, after 1998 it was also meant to serve as a buffer-zone against the OLF and ONLF. According to one RRA member: 'We managed to relate with Ethiopia. The reason was that Oromo fighters were supported by Caydiid. They came from Eritrea to Hobbyo, in order to enter and attack Western Ethiopia. So Ethiopia supported us in our fight against the Oromo. They gave us military equipment and other things, and that's how we managed to continue fighting.'[213]

In the northeast, the buffer-zone and building-block strategies would be pursued through alignment with the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF).[214] The SSDF, which was established during the Somali Civil War, was reconstituted in 1991 to act as a vehicle for

[209] Fisseha Shawl: Ethiopian diplomat stationed in Mogadishu and Ambassador to South Sudan 2016, interview with author, July 27, 2015.

[210] Jutta Bakonyi, 'Authority and administration beyond the state: local governance in southern Somalia, 1995–2006,' *Journal of East African Studies,* 7: 2, (2013): 277.

[211] Ibid.

[212] Ibid.

[213] Ibid: 278.

[214] Fisseha Shawl: Ethiopian diplomat stationed in Mogadishu and Ambassador to South Sudan 2016, interview with author, July 27, 2015. Fisseha is a career diplomat from the Amhara region who has worked mostly in the Horn of Africa region.

Majerteen clan interests in the midst of the chaos of the civil war.[215] Abdullahi Yusuf returned from Ethiopia, where he had been held as a prisoner of war since the 1980s, and assumed leadership of the Puntland regional administration in 1998. The formation of Puntland administration was a gradual and locally led process. Ethiopia provided some military support to the administration and mediated disputes amongst its leadership, but the main impetus would come from within the region. The SSDF leadership was on several occasions plunged into violent conflicts that were contained mainly by the mediation of clan elders. The failure of the numerous peace-making initiatives and deepening divisions between different clans led clan leaders, civil society and SSDF to convene a conference in 1998, which led to the formation of the Puntland regional administration. Puntland favoured the building-block approach to state-building, and became the principal agent of this model. Puntland as opposed to Somaliland posed no major strategic dilemma to Ethiopia, as it did not seek independence. And as opposed to the Hawiye warlords in Mogadishu, Ethiopia's policy of creating buffer-zones along the border did not negatively affect their position in the balance of power in Somalia, and thus Ethiopia and Puntland's interests in Somali state-building overlapped in a very fundamental way.

In the northwest, a buffer-zone was already in place several years before it had been recognized as an imperative. Somaliland was formed with no Ethiopian involvement in 1991. After the Barre regime's collapse, the SNM gained control of Somaliland through a dual strategy of militarily subjugating rivals and engaging the major clans in political dialogue. The political dialogue took the form of about 39 clan conferences in 1991-1997, culminating in the constitutional referendum in 2001. These conferences laid the foundations for Somaliland statehood.

3.3.3. The Nationalist Backlash and Proxy-War

Ethiopia's policies of promoting the building-block approach, and creating buffer-zones as a strategy for containing insecurity from Somalia, put it directly at odds with Mogadishu-based warlords who claimed sovereignty over all of Somalia. This had two

[215] Puntland Development Research Centre*, The Search for Peace: The Puntland Experience: A Bottom-up Approach to Peace and State-building*: 12.

dimensions: buffer-zones disrupted local balances of power and territorial claims, while the building-block approach skewed the balance of power on a national level away from Mogadishu to the peripheries. The conflict was therefore rooted in the conflicting strategic interests of the EPRDF and particular Somali sub-national actors.

The first actor to be negatively affected by the buffer-zone strategy was General Farah Aideed, who in 1996 was trying to establish himself as the President of Somalia. Ethiopia's support for the RRA deprived Aideed of vital sources of financial income, and frustrated his efforts to attain control of southern Somalia.[216] A diplomatic conflict between Aideed and Ethiopia followed, and complicated the latter's peace mediation efforts in Somalia. At the same time as Ethiopia began pursuing a buffer-zone strategy, it also took the initiative in another mediation process in the Ethiopian town of Sodere. While the UN had led previous conferences, the Sodere talks in 1996 were organized and chaired by Ethiopia. 41 Somali leaders from 26 political and armed groups participated in these talks, which culminated in the establishment of a National Salvation Council and an Executive Committee.[217] Hussein Aideed – General Farah Aideed's son, who had taken over the leadership – however boycotted the talks. Aideed demanded that the other participants recognize him as President before any talks could be initiated.[218] In the lead up to the talks, Ethiopia had accused Aideed of cooperating with AIAI, while Aideed accused Ethiopia of military incursions into Somalia and arming his rivals.[219] The EPRDF however did not understand these measures as the genesis of a nationalist backlash. According to one ambassador who was involved in the process: 'during Sodere, almost everybody was involved except Aideed…Ethiopia was not really seen as a rival. This is not to say that there weren't any irredentist sentiments.'[220] Rather than seeing the hostility

[216] Jutta Bakonyi, 'Authority and administration beyond the state: local governance in southern Somalia, 1995–2006': 277.

[217] UNSC, 'Letter dated 8 January 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations Addressed to the President of the Security Council', January 8, 1997. file:///X:/Downloads/SO_970301%20Sodere%20Declaration.pdf

[218] Nina J. Fitzgerald, *Somalia: Issues, History, and Bibliography,* (New York: Nova Publishers: 2002).

[219]BBC News, 'Somali Faction Leaders Accuse Ethiopia of Meddling', August 2, 1998. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/144069.stm.

[220] Tekeda Alemu: Ethiopia's State Minister of Foreign Affairs (1991-2011) and Ambassador to the UN (2011-2017), interview with author, April 28, 2016.

as a function of the buffer-zone policy, they saw it as part of a lingering Greater Somalia nationalism.

Opposition from Aideed and other Somali factions encouraged Egypt to arrange a competing peace initiative in 1997, which rendered the Sodere process a failure. Ethiopia's reaction to Egypt's sabotage of the Sodere talks was to respond in kind by supporting the Darod-dominated Somali Patriotic Movement and SSDF groups, which walked out of the Cairo talks and sabotaged its legitimacy.[221] While containing AIAI had been Addis Ababa's primary motive for intervening in Somalia until 1997, its support for particular groups after the Cairo conference was also motivated by containing regional rivals. By 1998 both Ali Mahdi and Aideed were officially accusing Ethiopia of interfering in Somali affairs.[222]

The nationalist backlash in Somalia was soon accompanied by a new regional factor. The border war with Eritrea in 1998 led to its entrance in the Somali conflict on the side of other actors opposed to Ethiopia. It created a new and significant momentum for Ethiopian rebel groups, ONLF and OLF, as well as warlords in Somalia who from then on had access to a patron with a vested interest in building up the capacity of any anti-Ethiopian agent in Somalia. Cooperation between Eritrea, Hussein Aideed, ONLF, and OLF proved to be very effective, as rebel activity by the latter began to increase in 1999.[223] Within a year of the border-war, hundreds of OLF soldiers were seen arriving in the Shabelle region of Somalia escorted by Aideed.[224] Eritrean support to Ethiopian and Somali groups seems to have been much more extensive and coordinated than support from Egypt in previous years. Ethiopia's response was, according to former Foreign Minister Seyoum Mesfin and diplomat Abdeta Beyene, to launch 'a second military intervention in 1998, following Eritrea's effort in collaboration with a Baidoa-based Somali warlord and former U.S. Marine veteran of Operation Desert Storm, Hussein Aideed, and involving the Oromo Liberation Front and the ONLF to open a second front

[221] Warsan Cismaan Saalax and Abdulaziz Ali Ibrahim, 'Somali peace agreements,' *Accord*, No 21, (2010): 32.

[222] BBC News, 'Somali Faction Leaders Accuse Ethiopia of Meddling' August 2, 1998. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/144069.stm.

[223] Patrick Gilkes 'The Somali Connection', BBC, July 23, 1999. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/special_report/1999/07/99/battle_in_the_horn/399898.stm

[224] BBC News, 'Oromo forces 'on the move' in Somalia', July 12, 1999. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/392488.stm

against it.'[225] The conflicts in Somalia and SRS had a symbiotic relationship: the ONLF benefitted from insecurity in Somalia, and Ethiopia's Somali adversaries gained strategic advantage from conflict in the SRS. At this stage, the Ethiopian Federal Government had no strategy for containing conflict in the SRS, and consequently the SRS complicated its engagement with Somalia.

3.4. The Developmental State Orientation, State-Building and Influence through Co-optation

By 2000 the security landscape in Somalia had significantly transformed for Ethiopia. In addition to the Islamist threat, Somalia had also become a frontier in Ethiopia's war with Eritrea. International state-building initiatives in Somalia were also approached by Ethiopia as a zero-sum competition for influence. When the Developmental State orientation was formally adopted as foreign policy in 2002, the EPRDF chose to continue the building block and buffer zone policies adopted in the 1996-2002 period, when the EPRDF's Somalia policy was made in the absence of a broader foreign policy orientation. The building block policy was maintained because it was in line with the long-term aspiration of the Developmental State orientation of building political order in Somalia in order to pursue development cooperation, particularly on the use of Somali ports. The buffer-zone policy was also maintained because it was a effective strategy for preventing Somali rivals from crossing into Ethiopia. Co-optation was the strategy through which both these objectives were pursued under the Developmental State. Through co-optation Ethiopia would contain regional and Somali rivals and most importantly influence who attained power in the various state-building processes. Co-optation became more institutionalized under the Developmental State orientation. While it had been a military matter in the past, for example, when Ethiopia reached out to the RRA, under the Developmental State, Somali elites and networks from the SRS and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would play more active roles in these processes.[226] During this period it

[225] Mesfin & Beyene, 'The Practicalities of Living with Failed States,' 134.

[226] Abdulaziz Ahmed: Ethiopian diplomat involved in the Ethiopian missions in the TFG and liaising with Somali politicians, interview with author, October 30, 2015. Abdulaziz is a Somali-Ethiopian career diplomat who was personally involved both in the peace processes as well as served as a diplomat in the Ethiopian Embassy in Mogadishu. During the interview he shied away from discussing the domestic politics of foreign policy in Ethiopia, and mainly focused on the tactical dimension of Ethiopia's engagement with Somali actors.

was not just an ad hoc response, but tied to the grand strategic objective of keeping military related costs, both political and financial, to a minimum.

3.4.1. The 2002 Foreign Policy White Paper

The 2002 Foreign Policy White Paper has rarely been factored-in the literature on Ethiopia's Somalia policy. This strategic document however provides important insights into how the EPRDF thought about Somalia and demonstrates how ideology was a major driver of their foreign policy. The EPRDF's policy towards Somalia took as its point of departure an analysis of the conflictual history of the two states, which included two wars. The expansionist policies generated by the Greater Somalia idea were identified as one source of the irredentist nationalism of past Somali governments and the Ethiopia-Somalia rivalry.[227] The problem was reinforced by the conflict between Ethiopian Somalis and previous Ethiopian governments, who by denying Somali's of their ethno-cultural rights provided the government in Mogadishu with allies inside Ethiopia for its expansionist policies.[228] The problem was further exacerbated, according to the EPRDF, by the Ethiopian government's policy of fuelling clan tensions inside Somalia, rather than responding to the legitimate demands of the Ethiopian Somalis. The EPRDF pointed out that, since their ascendancy to power, two significant changes had taken place: Somalia had been stateless for a decade while Ethiopia had adopted a new a 'constitution in which peoples' rights are guaranteed is being implemented.'[229] In their view, neither the internal problem of Somali grievances nor the external problem of an expansionist Somali state were any longer present. While the Greater Somalia idea was considered to be out-dated and no longer a security threat, the collapse of the Somali state was now itself a source of danger. The anarchy in Somalia had allowed religious extremism and terrorist groups to use Somalia as a safe-haven, and as a launching pad for operations against Ethiopia. Somalia, for obvious reasons, was also deemed as an unlikely source of investment and as a destination for Ethiopian exports. Somalia's ports on the other hand were considered as a potential source of mutual beneficial economic cooperation, if Somalia stabilized.

[227] Ethiopia Ministry of Information, *Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and Strategy,* 73.

[228] Ibid.

[229] Ibid: 74.

In what seemed to be a reference to adherents of Ethiopia Irredenta, the white paper stated that some Ethiopians feared that a united and peaceful Somalia would possibly reignite the expansionist Greater Somalia ideology. A revival of the Greater Somalia idea was according to the Developmental State orientation not to be feared, and much like its approach to domestic ethnic-relations, it saw potential pitfalls in Somali-Ethiopian relations as emanating mostly from economic underdevelopment; it consequently concluded that incentives engendered by economic development and interdependence would lead to sustainable peace. The white paper states the following: 'By creating strong relations between the two countries regarding the use of ports and rivers, commerce, culture and so on, and seeing to it that the two peoples are benefiting from this, one could be sure that the peoples would resist activities designed to harm the relations that are proving to be so beneficial to them.'[230]

Economic development in Somalia could only be realized if it was preceded by peace and democracy. While it was in Ethiopia's interest for this to take place, only Somalis could make it happen. Until stability came to Somalia, the EPRDF's policy would be limited to minimizing the threat that emanated from Somalia through three strategies. The first was a policy of creating buffer-zones by supporting those areas in Somalia, such as Somaliland and Puntland, where there was already some level of stability to maintain the peace and combat terrorism.[231] This would not include recognizing Somaliland's independence, however, as this would aggravate tensions with other parts of Somalia. The second policy involved protecting the long border shared with Somalia from terrorist actors who might emanate from there. The third strategy involved collaborating with the international community and the Somali people to neutralize threats within Somalia.

3.4.2. Containment of the Transitional National Government

When both the Sodere and Cairo initiatives failed, Djibouti made a third attempt at reconciling Somali factions by arranging the Arta conference in April 2000. Arta constituted a departure from previous efforts in its inclusion of civilian elements. Nearly 2000 Somalis from the business community, clan elders and political factions took part in

[230] Ibid: 78.

[231] Ibid: 81.

the talks hosted by Djiboutian President Guelleh.[232] A 250 member Transitional National Assembly (TNA) was elected, which went on to elect Abdikassim Sallad Hassan as President, and Ali Khalif Galaydh as Prime Minister. The main controversy around this initiative was that individuals associated with AIAI assumed official positions in the TNA. Addis Ababa considered Abdikassim a 'difficult person' and an agent of Egypt.[233] While Abdikassim's Islamist connections made him unpopular amongst many Somalis, notably the establishments in Puntland and Somaliland and the warlords, Ethiopia's opposition to the TNA fuelled the perception of a sinister Ethiopian policy aimed at preventing Somalia from recovering from civil war.[234]

While Ethiopia took part in the Arta process as an observer alongside other states, it also made its opposition to the TNA official. It accused the TNA of having 'links to terrorists', and said that it would not recognize it until it relinquished those ties and became more inclusive.[235] Ethiopia also resorted yet again to the old policy of containment by supporting a rival initiative, the Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council (SRRC). The SRRC coalition was established in March 2001 in Addis Ababa,[236] and was led by Hussein Aideed, who had switched sides and become an ally of Ethiopia.[237] The SRRC managed to effectively sabotage the TNA, which after three years of its founding only managed to control small sections of Mogadishu. Both the strategies of buffer zones and sabotage had the unintended effects of fuelling an anti-Ethiopian nationalist discourse amongst Somalis. By 2000, the regional dimension and high stakes of state-building in Somalia had become evident. Ethiopia interpreted the Cairo and Arta initiatives not as Somali initiatives, but as strategic measures by its rivals. As a senior government official

[232] Danish Immigration Service, *Report on Minority Groups in Somalia,* 21.9.2000. 10. https://www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/1412772/470_1161683683_somalianov2000.pdf

[233] Anonymous (No. 12): Ethiopian diplomat Director General on African Affairs, October 30, 2015.

[234] Anonymous (No. 12): Ethiopian diplomat Director General on African Affairs, interview with author, October 30, 2015. The diplomat was a early career diplomat, from the SNNP Regional State of Ethiopia, and who worked closely with the State Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time.

[235]IRIN News, 'Envoy denies interference in Somalia', February 28, 2002. http://www.irinnews.org/report/30519/ethiopia-envoy-denies-interference-somalia

[236] AFP, 'Somali warlords form common front, call for national conference', March 22, 2001. http://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/somali-warlords-form-common-front-call-national-conference

[237] Ken Menkhaus, 'Somalia: a Situation Analysis and Trend Assessment', August 11, 2003. http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/3f7c235f4.pdf

described it: 'Arta was a solo job…Djibouti thought Ethiopia had weakened'.[238] The Arta process came at a very critical time for Ethiopia, as it was engaged in a war with Eritrea and facing a growing insurgency at home. Ethiopia's choice for managing the conflict with Djibouti, Egypt and Eritrea was to act with restraint, avoid direct confrontation and instead compete for influence through co-optation and contain threats through proxies. One diplomat described their stance as the following: 'Djibouti, Kenya and Ethiopia had their own vision…We agreed to disagree on Somalia with neighbouring states'.[239]

Ethiopia's strategy of containment through proxies effectively rendered the TNG a failure, and through effective co-optation it would also succeed in attaining control over the next state-building initiative, the Transitional Federal Government (TFG). This initiative coincided with the formal transition to the Developmental State foreign policy orientation.

3.4.3. Controlling the Transitional Federal Government

The failure of the TNG made it apparent that regional rivalries had come to pose a fundamental threat to state-building in Somalia, and this issue was on the agenda of an IGAD summit in Khartoum in January 2002.[240] The deliberations at the summit illustrated the divisions amongst IGAD member states. Djibouti drew attention to the challenges posed by these divisions, and made subtle accusations against member states of supporting warlords, calling into question the legitimacy of the TNG and establishing competing initiatives – indirectly referring to the role of Ethiopia and the SRRC.[241] Kenya's decision to host a meeting by the TNG's opponents was also scrutinized.[242] It was decided at the summit that a new mediation conference should be arranged in the

[238] Anonymous: Ethiopian senior career diplomat, interview with author, April 28, 2016.

[239] Fisseha Shawl: Ethiopian diplomat stationed in Mogadishu and Ambassador to South Sudan 2016, interview with author, July 27, 2015

[240] IGAD, 'Proceedings of the 9th Summit of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), 10 - 11 January 2002, Khartoum, Republic of Sudan.' January 11, 2002. https://issafrica.s3.amazonaws.com/site/uploads/9THSUMMITFINALREPORT.PDF

[241] Ibid.

[242] Ibid.

Kenyan city of Eldoret by the frontline states, Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti, and under the coordination of President Moi.[243]

The Eldoret process differed from the previous initiatives since it was hosted by Kenya, which had a less partisan track-record than Djibouti and Ethiopia. This meant that Ethiopia and Djibouti had to compete to shape the procedural aspects of the negotiations in their favour. Questions of how many participants were to be chosen and based on what criteria were the main issues in contention.[244]

Djibouti and Ethiopia's competition for allocating the highest number of positions to their clients complicated the process and led to a dozen revisions of the formula.[245] Egypt was formally excluded from the process as it was not an IGAD member, but was nevertheless active behind the scenes, and worked alongside Djibouti to promote the influence of its Somali allies in the conference. Ethiopia understood the process as a regional conflict for dominance, according to one Ethiopian diplomat who took part in the process: 'Djibouti, Arab states, and Egypt tried to create proxies' in Somalia.[246] They furthermore felt that 'The West tried to please the Arabs' during Eldoret, leaving Ethiopia with few allies during this conference.[247]

One important difference between the participants was their stance on whether the allocation formula should be based on clan membership or armed factions. Both the SRRC and TNG favoured the latter as clan representation would have marginalized their influence in favour of clan elders.[248] In the first instance, a factional representation formula was adopted that divided 262 seats between 16 factions and 100 seats for civil society actors. The make-up of the new assembly was believed to have disproportionately favoured the Ethiopia-backed SRRC, which led to the formation of an anti-Ethiopian group of warlords called the G-8. The G-8 threatened to take military

[243] International Crisis Group, *Salvaging Somalia's Chance For Peace*, December 9, 2002: 3. https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/somalia/salvaging-somalias-chance-peace

[244] Ibid: 4.

[245] International Crisis Group, *Salvaging Somalia's Chance For Peace,* 5.

[246] Abdulaziz Ahmed: Ethiopian diplomat involved in the Ethiopian missions in the TFG and liaising with Somali politicians, interview with author, October 30, 2015

[247] Ibid.

[248] International Crisis Group, 'Salvaging Somalia's Chance For Peace', December 9, 2002: 4-5

action if the make-up of the assembly did not change.[249] As progress became difficult due to conflicts over representation, in November 2002, the formula was changed to the clan-based 4.5 formula,[250] which allocated seats equally to the four major clans, with minorities receiving half as many seats as the major clans. Ali Mahdi Muhammad was one of the faction leaders who decided to leave the Eldoret talks in 2002, citing Ethiopia's rigging of the talks in favour of its groups, by wanting 'more than half of the seats to be allocated to the SRRC, which it backs'.[251] Djibouti also made the same accusation and ended up pulling out of the talks in September 2003, only to later re-join the talks after Kenyan and Ethiopian mediators rejected Djibouti's criticism of bias in the conference.[252]

The adoption of the 4.5 formula paved the way for Ethiopia's ability to influence the selection of the Transitional Federal Assembly (TFA). According to an Ethiopian official who took part in the process, 'a parliament of 275 members representing all clans' was elected, and '200 of these from different clans had good relations with Ethiopia.'[253] This was achieved in part by using Ethiopian-Somali government officials and clan leaders based in the SRS to co-opt the delegates.[254] Control of the TFA paved the way for engineering the election of an Ethiopian ally, Abdullahi Yusuf, as interim President of the Transitional Federal Government in October 2004, which amongst other things declared that the building-block approach and federalism would be adopted as a framework for state-building.[255] The Islamists from AIAI and al-Islah that had been influential in the TNG were marginalized.

Abdullahi Yusuf proved to be a very divisive figure. Within the newly established TFG, he was early on seen as having dictatorial tendencies and side stepping the charter he helped install. Abdullahi's close relations with Ethiopia and his call for the deployment of

[249] IRIN News, 'Faction leaders "threatened with arrest"', November 11, 2002. http://www.irinnews.org/ar/node/204621

[250] International Crisis Group, 'Salvaging Somalia's Chance For Peace: 5

[251] BBC News, 'Somali warlord quits peace talks', November 18, 2002. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/2488171.stm

[252] International Crisis Group, 'Biting the Somali Bullet', May 4, 2003. https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/somalia/biting-somali-bullet

[253] Abdulaziz Ahmed: Ethiopian diplomat involved in the Ethiopian missions in the TFG and liaising with Somali politicians, interview with author, October 30, 2015.

[254] Ibid.

[255] International Crisis Group, *Somalia: Continuation of War by Other Means?* December 21, 2004: 13. https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/somalia/somalia-continuation-war-other-means

an international peacekeeping force made him unpopular outside the TFG. Aside from the Islamists, some of Yusuf's own cabinet members also opposed the deployment of peacekeeping troops. One Somali MP publicly declared: 'We do not want peacekeepers because our militia can provide security if we train them and provide an atmosphere of government.'[256] Instead of building a broad support base in Somalia, he wanted to coerce his way in by using an international force. His call for international intervention was therefore seen as a way of getting others to disarm other factions for him.

The TFG was an incoherent assembly of clan-based political and armed groups. They were not able to establish themselves in Mogadishu, and instead established temporary bases in Jowahar and then Baidoa in 2005/06. Abdullahi Yusuf's rule was heavily criticized for clan-nepotism that favoured his Darod/Majerteen clan. This had the effect of alienating the Hawiye clans that dominated much of southern Somalia.

Ethiopia had during the Eldoret conference succeeded in pushing through its preferred group and leader to dominate the TFG and assume the role of President. This however led the dissatisfied regional states to resort to the same containment strategies of developing new or tightening existing patron-client relations with dissatisfied Somali groups. As one Ethiopian diplomat described it: 'because the TFG was with us, other regional rivals had to mobilize alternatively'.[257] As opposed to the past, dissatisfied regional states did not immediately initiate an alternative peace process to the TFG (as in the Cairo process in 1997), but nevertheless supported groups that refused to recognize the TFG's legitimacy.

In accordance with the Developmental State orientation Ethiopia had through co-optation managed to sabotage the state-making efforts of its regional and Somali rivals in the TNG, and succeeded in installing its allies or co-optees in the top leadership positions in the TFG in 2004. It had managed to contain its rivals without resorting to military force.

[256] BBC News, 'Exiled MPs return home to Somalia', February 2, 2005. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/4229345.stm

[257] Tekeda Alemu: Ethiopia's State Minister of Foreign Affairs (1991-2011) and Ambassador to the UN (2011-2017), interview with author, April 28, 2016.

3.5. The Second Islamist Confrontation and the Deviation from the Developmental State

Through co-optation and strategic restraint Ethiopia had managed to contain the influence of its regional rivals and expand its network of Somali allies. As noted in the previous section, however, the influence of Ethiopia's regional rivals remained extensive and its co-optation diplomacy had fuelled anti-Ethiopian Somali nationalism. The rise of the Union of Islamic Courts in Mogadishu and their effective spread across southern Somalia in 2005-2006 posed a threat that could not be managed solely through co-optation and diplomatic means. A neglected factor in the analysis of the EPRDF's conflict with the UIC is the fact they tried to manage the UIC threat through proxy-war, diplomatic negotiations and by mobilizing the international community (US and AU) (i.e. essentially an effort to outsource the task of rivalry management). When all these diplomatic efforts failed, the EPRDF departed from their policy of strategic restraint, and conducted a unilateral military intervention to save the TFG and dismantle the UIC. It is to be recalled that the Developmental State's strategic restraint was not motivated by a pacifist stance, but instead driven by the view that conventional military confrontation was detrimental to economic development. The EPRDF's reaction to the UIC expansion illustrates some of the circumstances under which they were willing to deviate from their developmental priorities.

3.5.1. The Challenge from the Union of Islamic Courts

Ethiopia had succeeded in attaining control over the TFG through co-optation, but had however failed in the bigger objective of building a viable political order in Somalia. Ethiopia's relationship with the TFG and Abdullahi Yusuf's clan-nepotism had fuelled the growing anti-Ethiopian nationalist rhetoric even further. The remnants of the Islamists who had been fighting Ethiopia in the 1990s found a fertile ground in the Hawiye alienation that Abdullahi Yusuf had been fomenting, which would culminate in a second Ethiopia-Islamist confrontation. This illustrates the potential pitfall of a strategy of co-optation in a condition of civil war: the co-opter gets bogged down in the conflicts of the co-opted.

Ethiopia's operations against the AIAI in 1996 had led to the disbanding of the organization, and many of its members and leaders regrouped and took up leading roles in Mogadishu's Islamic courts. The first Islamic courts were established in north Mogadishu in 1994 by clerics from the Abgal sub-clan of the Hawiye.[258] According to Barnes and Hassan, 'the establishment of the Islamic Courts was not so much an Islamist imperative as a response to the need for some means of upholding law and order.'[259] Former AIAI members who had come to occupy important roles in the courts introduced the ideological elements. The new UIC also combined their militias to forge a common military force. Barnes and Harun describe this as the first 'non-warlord and pan-Hawiye military force'.[260]

In 2000, the Islamic Courts of Mogadishu that had previously operated independently of each other began coordinating their activities under a common council, and became the Union of Islamic Courts. Until 2003 the courts had been limited to South Mogadishu, this however changed when Sheikh Sharif Ahmed was able to re-establish the courts in north Mogadishu. The UIC then began to spread to areas outside Mogadishu such as Lower Shabelle. This expansion was however conditioned by clan demographics and relations, as the area was inhabited by a Hawiye sub-clan.

The growing power and expansion of the UIC led them into a zero-sum confrontation with the warlords of Mogadishu. This confrontation gained momentum in 2005, signified by a number of public assassinations of both UIC officials and warlords. The UIC blamed the US and its Somali agents, while the warlords blamed the Islamists and established the Alliance for Restoration of Peace and Counter Terrorism (ARPC) with Ethiopian support.[261] The recurrent assassinations of Islamists contributed to the emergence of Al Shabaab.[262]

The confrontation ended with the UIC taking over all of Mogadishu. Their ability to provide order and stability in the capital made them popular amongst the inhabitants, and

[258] Ibid.

[259] Cedric Barnes & Harun Hassan, 'The Rise and Fall of Mogadishu's Islamic Courts', *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 1: 2, (2007): 152.

[260] Ibid: 153.

[261] Marcus Hoehne, 'Counter-terrorism in Somalia, or: how external interferences helped to produce militant Islamism', December 17, 2009. http://hornofafrica.ssrc.org/somalia/

[262] Ibid.

they had in the process also secured a stable and extensive source of human and financial resources. As opposed to their predatory predecessors, the warlords, they not only collected taxes, but also provided public services, re-opened the Mogadishu Airport and rehabilitated public properties. The political order that the Islamists provided was a strict implementation of the Sharia, which included harsh physical punishments for the breach of many laws, as well as the banning of the popular stimulant khat and watching sports on TV.[263]

Once the warlords were defeated and Mogadishu was under their control, the UIC turned their attention towards the TFG and conquering territory across Somalia. Between June and December 2006, the UIC would gradually expand in southern Somalia and take over strategic towns and regions like Kismayo (September), Mudug (August), and move towards Baidoa in November.

3.5.2. Escalation in Regional Rivalry

The escalation in the confrontation between the TFG and UIC was symbiotic with the escalation in regional rivalries, and contributed to Ethiopia's decision to deviate from its policy of strategic restraint in December 2006. The protagonists, cleavages and patronages in the regional competition over state-building in Somalia mostly remained the same during the escalation. Ethiopia was more or less alone, while Eritrea, Djibouti and Egypt were the primary actors on the other side (including a number of other actors from the Arab world that played secondary roles). By 2006 the stakes and intensity of external involvement in Somalia had significantly increased.

The UN Monitoring Group on Somalia reported that Djibouti sent medical equipment and military uniforms to UIC in July 2006.[264] Egypt, Libya and Eritrea coordinated their efforts to open a military training camp in Hilweyene in Somalia.[265] They also agreed on a division of labour, whereby Egypt and Eritrea would provide military personnel and

[263] BBC News, 'Somali Islamists stage execution', September 22, 2006. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/5369958.stm

[264] UN Security Council, 'Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia pursuant to Security Council resolution 1676 (2006),' November 22, 2006: 10. https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7b65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7d/SOMALIA%20S%202006%20913.pdf.

[265] Ibid.

Libya take care of the funding.[266] Iran and Saudi Arabia were also accused of supporting the UIC in mid-2006.[267]

The most extensive intervention and support came from Eritrea, which throughout 2006 'provided at least 28 separate consignments of arms, ammunition and military equipment'.[268] In addition to material support, 2000 Eritreans as well as senior military officials are said to have been sent to train and fight along UIC members, while 500 UIC fighters were flown to Eritrea for training. Eritrea also coordinated its activities with those of ONLF, OLF and UIC to conduct attacks inside Ethiopia.[269] According to the UNMGS 'on 8 July 2006 a shipment of arms transported by camels and donkeys, and under the escort of 70 members of ICU along with 160 ONLF fighters, entered Ethiopia through the Abudwaq district, Galgaduud region, Somalia'.[270]

3.5.3. Ethiopia's Response

A critical part of the EPRDF's response to the UIC was the steps taken before the military intervention. This illustrates that the EPRDF exhausted all available options, and tried to manage this challenge in accordance with their strategic priorities, before eventually settling for the military alternative. In other words, unilateral military force was not the preferred or first choice. To counter the Islamist offensive, Ethiopia initially applied a strategy of containment through proxy forces, engaged in diplomatic negotiations and lobbied the international community for the deployment of an international peace-keeping force before intervening militarily. All of these measures, including military intervention, had the following strategic purpose: tilting the military balance in favour of the TFG in order to isolate the most radical elements in the UIC, and then facilitate a political settlement between the TFG and UIC. In other words, the deviation from strategic restraint was intended to be a temporary measure intended to create the necessary conditions to resume a rivalry management through diplomatic means.

[266] Ibid.

[267] Ibid: 40.

[268] Ibid: 11.

[269] Ibid: 11-15.

[270] Ibid: 12.

Containment by Proxy

Ethiopia's first reaction to the emergence of the UIC was containment by proxy through its buffer-zones and ad-hoc support to warlords based in Mogadishu. The first measure was support to the ARPC coalition of warlords in Mogadishu. It also increased its support to its buffer-zone allies (Puntland, Somaliland, RRA and TFG). The UNMGS reported extensive military support being provided to the TFG, Puntland, various clan militias in Hirran, Galkayo and Galgaduud, and warlords such as Mohamed Dheeere and Mohamed Qanyare during 2006.[271] In addition to weapons and ammunition, the Ethiopian government provided training and had significant military presence in Baidoa from mid-2006.

Containment by proxy proved however to be an inefficient strategy against the UIC. Gradually all of Ethiopia's proxies in southern Somalia were either defeated or on the verge of defeat by the end of 2006. US diplomatic cables claim that Meles attributed the TFG's military weakness to the fact that it was composed of a variety of clan factions and politicians, which were held together only through continuous negotiations between President Abdullahi Yusuf and the different clans.[272] A dominant clan was an effective mobilizing factor, as exemplified by Somaliland and Puntland, but the TFG lacked such a mobilizing tool. It faced the constant danger of fragmentation due to group and individual defections. Many clan-based organizations that were allied to it had to constantly change or at least consider changing allegiances in order to ensure that they were on the winning side of the conflict and thereby also their own survival.

Diplomatic Engagement

Ethiopia later tried to engage the UIC through diplomatic means, when it became apparent that this was a formidable force. Through diplomacy Ethiopia hoped to divide the UIC and isolate the radical jihadi elements, and engage the elements of the union that they thought were motivated by clan considerations. In terms of clan constituency, they

[271] Ibid: 19-20.

[272] US Embassy in Addis Ababa, Subject: 'The Islamist Battle for Baidoa and Beyond,' November 2, 2006.

saw the 'UIC initially as an expression of clan grievances…[due to] a Habir Gedir hegemony'.[273]

The UIC and TFG were engaged in Arab League sponsored negotiations in Khartoum in June 2006.[274] One of the things they agreed on in Khartoum on June 22 was a cessation of hostilities, for the UIC to not attack Baidoa and to halt its expansion, and that no foreign troops would be deployed in Somalia.[275] The parties agreed to meet again on July 15, but failed to do so. Initially, the TFG representatives boycotted the meeting, and a TFG spokesman said: 'They [UIC] have violated the Khartoum agreement by engaging in fighting in Mogadishu and capturing new territory and that is why the government could not go to the meeting at this time.'[276] The TFG added that future talks were possible 'if the UIC proves that they are ready for peace and stop planning for war'.[277] The TFG did not boycott the talks permanently, but chose to signal their frustration by not attending on that date. The UIC for their part claimed that this was an attempt on the part of the TFG 'to derail the talks before they even began'.[278] Both sides displayed not only distrust but also a conviction that the other side wanted to create strategically favourable conditions on the ground, while engaging in talks. One Ethiopian diplomat claimed that the UIC did not take the negotiations seriously as they 'sent boys' as delegates.[279] Ethiopia communicated this dissatisfaction to 'Sheikh Sharif and Robow'.[280] In a meeting held in Khartoum on September 4, they agreed to another cease-fire, and to not allow foreign

[273] Fisseha Shawl: Ethiopian diplomat stationed in Mogadishu and Ambassador to South Sudan 2016, interview with author, July 27, 2015.

[274] Richard Cornwell, *Somali Islamic Militia Defy Truce*, ISS, June 28, 2006. https://www.issafrica.org/iss-today/somali-islamic-militia-defy-truce

[275] Ibid.

[276] IRIN News, 'Somalia: Gov't boycotts peace talks with Islamic group', July 17, 2006. http://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/somalia-govt-boycotts-peace-talks-islamic-group

[277] Ibid.

[278] Ibid.

[279] Tekeda Alemu: Ethiopia's State Minister of Foreign Affairs (1991-2011) and Ambassador to the UN (2011-2017), interview with author, April 28, 2016.

[280] Ibid.

fighters into the country. Despite this agreement, the UIC continued to consolidating their power.[281]

Both parties half-heartedly pursued the diplomatic talks. The UIC were expanding their territorial reach while engaging in talks. The TFG too was also an obstacle to the diplomatic process. Ethiopian diplomats noticed that the TFG did not want a negotiated solution, and Addis Ababa suspected that they didn't want to share their Ethiopian patronage with others. As one diplomat stated: 'The TFG were afraid of ending negotiations in weakness and also sharing Ethiopia's support with the ICU'.[282]

Meles had by October concluded that military confrontation and an Ethiopian intervention were inevitable. According to US diplomatic cables, reaching a modus vivendi through dialogue was the preferred outcome for Addis Ababa, but was rendered unfeasible for the reason that UIC was at the peak of its power, and thus 'fired up by their victories'.[283] According to US diplomatic cables, Meles' assessment of the situation was that the UIC had a significant chance of attaining complete victory over the TFG in southern Somalia, and consequently anticipated that they had no incentive or desire to engage in any serious dialogue and negotiations.[284] He allegedly made an analogy to his own thinking as the head of the TPLF in 1990 when they were approaching Addis Ababa.[285]

Lobbying for an International Peace-keeping Force

Ethiopia was also simultaneously lobbying for the deployment of an international peace-keeping force. The idea was also being pushed by TFG President, Abdullahi Yusuf, who had already in 2004 requested the deployment of an AU peacekeeping force of 20 000

[281] UN Security Council, 'Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia pursuant to Security Council resolution 1676 (2006)'. https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7b65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7d/SOMALIA%20S%202006%20913.pdf.

[282] Fisseha Shawl: Ethiopian diplomat stationed in Mogadishu and Ambassador to South Sudan 2016, interview with author, July 27, 2015.

[283] US Embassy in Addis Ababa, 'The Islamist Battle for Baidoa and Beyond,' November 2, 2006.

[284] Ibid.

[285] Ibid.

troops from Kenya, Ethiopia and Uganda.[286] The AU Peace and Security Commission endorsed a mission under IGAD (IGASOM) in 2005.[287] This was however opposed by some members of the TFG and crucially the US was reluctant, and consequently it never materialized.

Ethiopia continued in June 2006 to request an African peacekeeping force, in which they, according to US diplomatic cables, hoped that they would not have to 'participate in the initial deployment', due to the political capital this would provide the UIC.[288] They warned the US that this measure needed to materialize quickly, as any delay would provide a strategic advantage for the UIC. Other Horn of Africa states were also increasingly in favour of this idea. In an IGAD meeting with international donors in June 2006, US diplomatic cables disclose that IGAD Executive Secretary, Attala Beshir, and the representatives of Sudan, Uganda and Ethiopia called attention to the urgency of an international peace-keeping force in Somalia.[289] They pointed to UIC's radical ideology and how this posed a threat to the entire region.[290]

On December 6 2006, the UNSC unanimously authorized the deployment of the IGASOM peace-keeping mission, composed of troops from non-neighbouring countries. The resolution declared that: 'The Council also stated its intention to consider taking measures against those that sought to prevent or block a peaceful dialogue process, overthrow the Transitional Federal Institutions by force, or take action that further threatens regional stability.'[291] This was however too little too late. By December the military dynamics on the ground had significantly changed and the TFG was facing an imminent and existential threat from the UIC.

Unilateral Military Force

[286] Dawit Yohannes Wondemagegnehu & Daniel Gebreegziabher Kebede, 'AMISOM: charting a new course for African Union peace missions,' African Security Review, 26:2.

[287] US Embassy in Nairobi, 'Assistant Secretary Frazer's Meeting with Somali Parliament Speaker Sharif Hassan Sheikh Aden', June 25, 2006.

[288] US Embassy in Addis Ababa, Subject: 'Ethiopia: A/S Frazer Discusses Somalia and Sudan,' June 26, 2006.

[289] US Embassy in Addis Ababa, Subject: 'IGAD Ambassadors in Ethiopia Discuss Somalia', June 15, 2006.

[290] Ibid.

[291] UN Security Council, 'Security Council Approves African Protection, Training Mission in Somalia, Unanimously Adopting Resolution 1725 (2006)', December 6, 2006. http://www.un.org/press/en/2006/sc8887.doc.htm

By the December, Ethiopia's attempts to deal with the UIC insurrection through mobilizing support for an international peace-keeping force, reaching a diplomatic settlement, or containment through proxy forces, had all failed. Ethiopia then decided to resort to unilateral military force to neutralize the threat. The purpose of war was to contain the imminent collapse of the TFG and other allies, to even-out the military balance, and then create the right conditions for a political settlement. Despite the rationale it was in practice a deviation from the principle of strategic restraint, which the EPRDF had been following.

The intervention was preceded by an escalation of tensions in the preceding months. The UIC had managed to take over an area only 30 Km away from the TFG's headquarters in Baidoa.[292] This development eventually led Ethiopia to send its troops to Baidoa to protect the TFG.[293] While Addis Ababa denied these claims, witnesses reported seeing thousands of Ethiopian troops move into Somalia.[294] This move led the UIC to refuse any further participation in the Khartoum talks, and also further radicalized the Islamists, as Sheikh Aweys for the first time publically acknowledged Eritrean support to his organization.[295] In September 26, UIC took control over the strategic port city of Kismayo.[296] This conquest was unique as the Juba Valley Alliance, which controlled Kismayo, practically handed over the city to the Islamists. A peaceful transfer was agreed on, as many had begun to defect to the Islamists when news of their arrival was heard.[297]

On December 13 the UIC gave Ethiopia an ultimatum to leave Somalia. On December 24 full-scale war was officially initiated: Ethiopian fighter-jets bombed recruitment and training camps,[298] and that same day Sheikh Aweys declared jihad on Ethiopia for the second time, and announced that all Muslims from around the world were welcome to

[292] Associated Press, 'Ethiopia Enters Somalia to Back Government', July 20, 2006.
http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/07/20/AR2006072000298.html

[293] Ibid.

[294] Ibid.

[295] Mail and Guardian, 'Somalia: Islamists refuse talks, acknowledge Eritrea', July 25, 2006.
http://mg.co.za/article/2006-07-25-somalia-islamists-refuse-talks-acknowledge-eritrea

[296]Xinhua News Agency, 'Islamic Courts take over Somalia's southern seaport', September 25, 2006.
http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2006-09/25/content_5136661.htm

[297] IRIN News, 'Protests after Islamic Courts take Kismayo', September 25, 2006.
http://www.irinnews.org/report/61170/somalia-protests-after-islamic-courts-take-kismayo

[298] New York Times, 'Ethiopia Hits Somali Targets, Declaring War', December 25, 2006.
http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/25/world/africa/25somalia.html

partake in the war against Ethiopia.[299] According to an Ethiopian diplomat, the decision to intervene was made against 'the advice of the US'.[300] The military operation ended in swift victory for the Ethiopians, and within two days the UIC were on retreat from many towns; by the 27th Mogadishu fell to the Ethiopian/TFG forces, who continued on towards Jowahar and later Kismayo. Barnes claims that the professional fighters of the ICU resigned to fight another day, while the unprofessional zealots fought the Ethiopians.[301]

Ethiopia's unilateral military action succeeded in disbanding the UIC as an organization and terminating their state-building initiative. It also succeeded in installing its ally, Abdullahi Yusuf and the TFG, in Mogadishu. But this strategy and success would, just like past measures, come at the price of fuelling a nationalist backlash, and fail in the strategic objective of transforming the condition of statelessness in Somalia. The presence of Ethiopian troops generated a fierce resistance in Mogadishu and led to fighting that claimed thousands of lives and displaced hundreds of thousands of people.[302] With Ethiopian support the TFG managed to enter Mogadishu for the first time in 2007, and Kismayo also quickly fell under Ethiopian control. After the disbanding of the UIC, the leadership fled to different parts of the Middle East, and re-grouped in Asmara as the Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia (ARS) in September 2007. The UNSC authorized AMISOM in February 2007, leading to the deployment of initially 1500 troops.

3.5.4. ONLF Attack on the Developmental State and Counter-insurgency in the SRS

The rise of the UIC coincided with heightened domestic insecurity in Ethiopia. The EPRDF's grip over the state nearly slipped after the disputed 2005 election, which was followed by mass protests and resistance in different parts of the country and international

[299] The Guardian, 'Somali hardliner calls for foreign jihadists,' December 24, 2006. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2006/dec/24/ethiopia

[300] Anonymous (No. 12): Ethiopian diplomat Director General on African Affairs, interview with author, October 30, 2015.

[301] Cedric Barnes & Harun Hassan, 'The Rise and Fall of Mogadishu's Islamic Courts', *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 1: 2, (2007): 156-157.

[302] Human rights Watch, *Somalia: War Crimes in Mogadishu,* August 13, 2007. https://www.hrw.org/news/2007/08/13/somalia-war-crimes-mogadishu

scrutiny. The ONLF took advantage of this and escalated their insurgency, forming a loose alliance with the OLF called the Alliance for Freedom and Democracy.[303] The insurgency peaked in 2007 with an attack on a Chinese oil-exploration site in the SRS that killed nine Chinese citizens and brought a great deal of international attention to the insurgency.[304] The ONLF attack had targeted a key element of Ethiopia's developmental state. The active pursuit of FDI was an area where the developmental state economic model and the foreign policy orientation intersected. This attack got extensive international coverage and would serve as a general disincentive for potential international investors who would otherwise consider investing in Ethiopia, it would in other words, also affect Ethiopia beyond insecurity in the SRS. This event consequently changed the EPRDF's security policies in the SRS. The government initiated a new phase in the counterinsurgency operation against the ONLF in response to the attack. Tobias Haggman refers to this strategy as a 'total war', which he claims:

'authorized Ethiopian soldiers stationed in the region to perpetrate a variety of abuses: the killing of civilians in retaliation for ONLF attacks or as a way of discouraging local populations from supporting the rebels; coercing villagers to denounce the ONLF or other 'anti-peace' elements; forcing individuals to act as informants; arresting, interrogating, and torturing thousands of Ogaadeeni civilians Ethiopian security forces suspected of aiding the rebels…'[305]

The EPRDF also regionalized their war against the ONLF. This also involved pursuing and dismantling ONLF cells in Somaliland, Puntland, Djibouti and Kenya,[306] and in this way disrupting supply lines with Eritrea and other Somali groups that the ONLF were cooperating with.[307] The wide regional network of co-optees and allies became essential to succeed with the counter-insurgency against the ONLF. This, as in a number of other situations in this thesis, illustrates that the effects of co-optation and alignments are often long-term.

[303] International Crisis Group, *Ethiopia: Prospects for Peace in Ogaden*, (2013): 11.

[304] Ibid.

[305] Tobias Hagmann, *Talking Peace in the Ogaden: The search for an end to conflict in the Somali Regional State in Ethiopia,* Rift Valley Institute, (2014): 21.

[306] International Crisis Group, *Ethiopia: Prospects for Peace in Ogaden*, August 6, 2013: 12. https://www.crisisgroup.org/file/1224/download?token=mfJQm8fj

[307] Ibid.

3.6. Regional Rivalry De-escalation and Political Settlement

The military offensive that dismantled the UIC paved the way for the resumption of co-optation and alignment diplomacy as Ethiopia's main rivalry management strategies, and therefore also a foreign policy that was more in-line with the Developmental State orientation's principles. Ethiopia would maintain troops in Somalia most of the time from its initial intervention in 2006, and throughout the timeframe of this thesis (2018). It would do so in alignment with regional and global actors and in cooperation with Somali actors. Through diplomatic means, Ethiopia managed to mobilize other states to forge a new regional and Somali political settlement on how state-building in Somalia would be managed.

Conflict in Somalia and regional rivalries that had peaked in 2007 began in 2008 a gradual process of de-escalation. This transformation unfolded in three stages: First, a restructuring of regional alignments was initiated with the Djibouti-Eritrea conflict in 2008, which then facilitated a political settlement between the TFG and parts of the ARS. These two factors paved the way for the development of the institution of federalism and which transformed the dynamics of regional and local competitions for influence and power.

3.6.1. Regional Alignment and Rivalry Restructuring

The radical and revisionist policies of the UIC had come to unite much of the IGAD member states around the imperative of the TFG's survival and on the regional threat that the UIC constituted. This was a major change from 2004, when the TFG was seen solely as an Ethiopian client and Ethiopia was pursuing its goals singlehandedly. The conflict between Eritrea and Djibouti would tip the balance and lead to a fundamental restructuring of the regional alignment power structure. Eritrea and Djibouti's borders were never fully demarcated and the status of Ras Doumeira was disputed. The dispute had led to a confrontation in 1996, when Djibouti accused Asmara of aggression.[308] After

[308] Berouk Mesfin, 'The Eritrea-Djibouti Border Dispute', *ISS Situation Report*, September 15, 2008. https://www.africaportal.org/documents/3379/SITREP150908.pdf

the Ethiopia-Eritrea war in 1998, Eritrean and Djiboutian interests in Somalia, though motivated by different factors, had aligned (though it had never led to any form of cooperation).[309] In 2008 this would change, as the border dispute was yet again resumed.[310]

The only concrete explanation provided so far was that Eritrea's actions were in reaction to plans to initiate a negotiation between the TFG and ARS in Djibouti. According to US diplomatic cables the leadership of the ARS in a meeting with US officials expressed their fears that negotiations with the TFG could result in a breakdown of relations with Asmara and lead to a split in the ARS.[311] Asmara, they claimed, was opposed to talks with the TFG, and they also attributed the border skirmishes in April 2008 between Eritrea and Djibouti to the former's anger at the prospects of mediation in Djibouti. The correlation of the initiation of the Somali-negotiation in Djibouti and the escalation of tensions between Djibouti and Eritrea lends credence to the claims by the ARS leadership.

Regardless of the motives for the conflict, it had the consequence of aligning Ethiopian and Djiboutian interests in Somalia and the region. Ethiopia's head of Military Intelligence at the time claimed that the 'Djiboutians are closer to us after the conflict with Eritrea in 2008', and that the alignment that followed was initiated by both parties.[312] Ethiopia reacted to the crisis by stating that it would take any necessary measure to protect its trade-corridor with Djibouti in case of war between Eritrea and Djibouti, and thereby communicated its unequivocal support for Djibouti.[313] France, the US and the UNSC also condemned Eritrea as the aggressor in this conflict.[314] Eritrea's refusal to accept mediation by both the AU and Arab League contributed to the emergence of a regional and international consensus that Eritrea was not only an aggressor in this case

[309] US Embassy in Djibouti, Subject: 'Gulleh and A/S Frazer Discuss Somalia,' June 26, 2006.

[310] See Eritrea chapter for more detail on this conflict.

[311] US Embassy in Asmara, Subject: 'ARS Ready to Talk Asmara', July 5, 2008.

[312] Yohannes Gebremeskel: Lt. General, Head of Mission and Force Commander of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (2013-2014), Head of the Military Intelligence Department in the Ethiopian Ministry of National Defence, interview with author, May 12, 2017

[313] Reuters, 'Two dead in Djibouti, Eritrea border clash,' June 11, 2008.
https://www.reuters.com/article/idUSL11187409

[314] BBC News, 'France backing Djibouti in 'war.' June 13, 2008. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/7453063.stm

but a source of regional instability.[315] This conflict also had implications for Djibouti's attitude towards Somalia, Ethiopia's chief of military intelligence also claimed that: 'after the conflict with Eritrea in 2008, Somalia became a secondary priority for Djibouti'.[316] This outcome was also shaped by Ethiopia's restraint in its rivalry with Djibouti in the past, as this had prevented a collapse of the relationship.

By June 2008, the external conditions that Ethiopia was facing had significantly changed. Eritrea's conflict with Djibouti had brought Ethiopia closer to the latter. In addition to the skirmishes with Djibouti, Asmara's hosting of the ARS and suspension of its membership in IGAD had made it a fully-fledged international and regional pariah. The regional alliance would be further strengthened over time as attacks by Al Shabaab on civilian targets in Uganda and Kenya intensified the common security threat, and culminated in Kenya's military intervention in the conflict in 2011. By mid-2008, Addis Ababa had thus been able to mobilize more support for its agenda in Somalia and marginalize the influence of its chief regional rival, Eritrea.[317] These new conditions would facilitate the political settlement reached with ARS in August 2008.

3.6.2. Reaching a Political Settlement Through Compromise and Co-optation

Ethiopia's military operation was only intended to be a short-term intervention to pave the way for a long-term solution to a political settlement with the moderate elements of the UIC.[318] With the Islamists regrouping in Asmara under the patronage of Isaias Afwerki, there were no avenues open for Ethiopia to reach out to them. Ethiopia's new

[315] UN Security Council, 'Security Council Urges Djibouti, Eritrea to Resolve Border Dispute Peacefully Unanimously Adopting Resolution 1862 (2009),' January 14, 2009. http://www.un.org/press/en/2009/sc9570.doc.htm

[316] Yohannes Gebremeskel: Lt. General, Head of Mission and Force Commander of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (2013-2014), Head of the Military Intelligence Department in the Ethiopian Ministry of National Defence, interview with author, May 12, 2017

[317] Al Jazeera, 'In 2011 Kenya accuses Eritrea of arming al Shabaab', November 6, 2011. http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2011/11/2011116153437130293.html

[318] Al Jazeera, 'Ethiopia launches attack on Somalia', December 24, 2006, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2006/12/200852512320642940.html.

relationship with Djibouti would therefore play a critical role in reaching a political settlement.

Both the TFG and the ARS were divided into moderates who sought to reach a settlement with the TFG, and hardliners who wanted to maintain the status quo. By May 2008, the moderate elements of the ARS leadership were already secretly voicing their desire to negotiate with the TFG to the US,[319] indicating that the interest in reaching a political settlement was mutual. The moderates in the ARS who were pushing for a settlement were led by Sheikh Sharif, while Prime Minister Nuur Hassan Hussein led the counterpart in the TFG. When Sheik Sharif's faction decided to go to Djibouti for negotiations, Aweys' hardliner faction refused dialogue and the ARS formally split into two factions. In the TFG the hardliners were represented by President Abdullahi Yusuf were resisting the settlement.[320] In June, the negotiations in Djibouti led to an accord between the moderate factions within both the ARS and the TFG.

During the negotiations Ethiopia played a key role due to its influence over the TFG. Its primary objective in the negotiation was to get as many as possible of the ARS in Asmara to join the TFG. Ethiopia's strategy was essentially one of co-optation, which consisted of 'identifying the individuals with the largest constituencies', and convincing them to defect to the TFG-process.[321] Ethiopia's ethnic Somali population was critical in this regard. One ethnic Somali Ethiopian diplomat explained that: 'we have blood connections. There are 36 sub-clans in Ethiopia while in Somalia there are only 29. Their leaders are based in Dire Dawa and Jigjiga. And they can dictate affairs in Somalia and Djibouti.'[322] According to the diplomat, these social networks were critical for reaching out to Somali politicians and convincing them to defect to the TFG.

The Ethiopians acknowledge that Sheikh Sharif played a crucial role in 'convincing the Asmara group to come to the government in Somalia'.[323] According to former Somali Minister of Finance, Hussein Abdi Halane, Sheikh Sharif had two essential demands in

[319] US Embassy in Asmara, Subject: 'ARS Ready to Talk Asmara', July 5, 2008.

[320] Fisseha Shawl: Ethiopian diplomat stationed in Mogadishu and Ambassador to South Sudan 2016, interview with author, July 27, 2015.

[321] Abdulaziz Ahmed: Ethiopian diplomat involved in the Ethiopian missions in the TFG and liaising with Somali politicians, interview with author, October 30, 2015.

[322] Ibid.

[323] Ibid.

the negotiation: adding 275 new members to the new TFG parliament and the withdrawal of Ethiopian troops from Somalia.[324] Both demands were essential to the ARS members. Some elements of the Islamists for example could not easily be co-opted. Halane explains that for some, membership in the UIC was entirely based on their opposition to the presence of Ethiopian troops in Somalia.[325] Opposition to the government and support for the al Shabaab 'particularly in the diaspora' was based on the presence of Ethiopian troops on Somali territory, 'once we [the TFG] provided an exit [plan] for the Ethiopian forces' the opposition 'had no agenda'.[326] The TFG and ARS agreed to include the additional 275 members of ARS into parliament. When selecting the 275 candidates for the TFG parliament, the ARS, according to one Ethiopian diplomat who participated in the negotiations, 'chose individuals only based on their political calculations' that is, based on clan and personal interests, rather than ideology.[327]

The TFG's governance between 2004 and 2008 had also proved to be polarizing and ineffective. These failures led the Ethiopian government to reflect on the causes of their policy failures. One of the conclusions they reached was that Abdullahi Yusuf had taken advantage of Ethiopian support to benefit his own clan, and consequently that their support for him had been detrimental to Ethiopian interests as well as to Somalia's stability.[328] One diplomat stated that: 'Abdullahi Yusuf was Majerteen, and they are seen as chauvinistic...his role disrupted our relationship with the Hawiye'.[329] Abdullahi's

[324] Hussein Abdi Halane: Minister of Finance, Somalia (2010-2011 and 2014-2015), interview with author, June 20, 2016; Hussein Abdi Halane is from the Darod clan family and maintained sympathetic views of Ethiopia throughout his political career.

[325] Ibid.

[326] Ibid.

[327] Abdulaziz Ahmed: Ethiopian diplomat involved in the Ethiopian missions in the TFG and liaising with Somali politicians, interview with author, October 30, 2015.

[328] Anonymous (No. 10): Ethiopian diplomat based in Ethiopian Embassy in Mogadishu, interview with author, February 4, 2014. The diplomat was an Ethiopian from the SRS and from the Hawiye clan. He had worked in the Ethiopian Embassy for many years.

[329] Ibid. While this has been a common allegation made by many Somalis due to the Majerteen's historical role in Somali history, in this particular instance tit is important to take into consideration that this view is coming from someone from the Hawiye clan.

pursuit of personal and clan hegemony put Ethiopia at odds with the entire Hawiye clan that dominates most of southern Somalia.[330]

During the negotiations Ethiopia's alignments with Somali actors had significantly changed. They decided to support Nuur Hussein and pressure Yusuf to accept the agreement in a meeting in Addis Ababa.[331] This led to the familiar pattern of Yusuf sympathizers in parliament accusing Ethiopia of interfering in the internal affairs of Somalia. The new regional coherence on Somalia however left little manoeuvring space for the dissatisfied elements of the TFG to sabotage the peace process. Eventually, the pressure worked, and Yusuf conceded to the negotiated outcome leading to the elections in January 2009, in which Sheikh Sharif was elected President of Somalia.

The pattern of past mediation processes wherein the Somali group that did not attain power defected from the process and then sabotaged it was terminated after the Djibouti process in 2008.[332] This was to a significant extent due to the absence of the access to regional patronage, which in turn was a function of the new regional alignment structure. As a consequence of suspending Eritrea's membership from IGAD and the conflict with Djibouti, Isaias Afwerki deprived his government of any leverage in the Djibouti peace process.

Through co-optation and alignment diplomacy, Ethiopia managed to turn former rivals such as Sheikh Sharif's ARS faction and Djibouti into allies, which in turn gave them more leverage against other rivals such Al Shabaab and Eritrea.

3.6.3. The Effects of the Settlement

The political settlement reached in Djibouti had significant long-term implications for state-building and thus Ethiopia's objectives in Somalia. Replacing Abdullahi Yusuf with Sheikh Sharif had significant implications for this objective. On the other hand, the

[330] Abdulaziz Ahmed: Ethiopian diplomat involved in the Ethiopian missions in the TFG and liaising with Somali politicians, interview with author, October 30, 2015.

[331] Ibid.

[332] Previously it had taken place in in 1996, 1997, 2000 and 2004.

breakup of the UIC led to the emergence of the much more radical and violent threat of Al Shabaab.

The centrality of Abdullahi Yusuf's role in fuelling anti-Ethiopian sentiments was echoed by a Somali Ambassador who had gone from being an opponent of the TFG to later joining it. He described his motives for opposition during Abdullahi Yusuf's rule as follows: 'I opposed [Ethiopia] because most elders opposed [it]…I was against Abdullahi Yusuf who was getting support from Ethiopia, and so I also opposed Ethiopia'.[333] His change of heart came after the Djibouti agreement that led to the end of Abdullahi's presidency and ushered in Sheikh Sharif's government. The official however didn't mention his allegiance or support for Sheikh Sharif as the motivating factor for joining the government, but rather the manoeuvring space that was opened up with the new political framework. While Abdullahi's government had a narrow patronage network, the civil servant claims that in the post-Abdullahi era 'every Somali has access to its leader'.[334]

Soon after Sheikh Sharif assumed the Presidency, he announced that he would implement Sharia across Somalia. The Ethiopian government had no problem with this, as they had over time 'accepted that Islamism [in Somalia] was inevitable'.[335] Sheikh Sharif had put in place an Islamist regime, but this had failed to impress Somalia's more radical Islamists, who vowed to continue the fight against the TFG, Ethiopia and all foreign troops in Somalia. Al Shabaab condemned the ARS as illegitimate when they regrouped in Asmara in 2007. After the Djibouti deal, Sheikh Aweys merged his faction from Asmara with the Ras Kamboni Brigade, the Islamic Front and the Anoole Forces to form Hizb al-Islam in January. 2009. Hizb al-Islam demanded the withdrawal of all foreign troops and the implementation of Sharia law across all of Somalia. They differed from al Shabaab in that they did not pursue an international agenda. Together with Al Shabaab, they would constitute the primary force of resistance against the TFG and Ethiopia. Sheikh Sharif's leadership was generally considered weak and ineffective. As opposed to

[333] Awale Kulane: Somali diplomat, Ambassador to the UN, interview with author, April 28, 2016.

[334] Ibid.

[335] Quote by Fisseha Shawl: Ethiopian diplomat stationed in Mogadishu and Ambassador to South Sudan 2016, interview with author, July 27, 2015; *Financial Times*, 'Interview with Meles Zenawi: Ethiopian Prime Minister.' Jun 22, 2009. https://www.ft.com/content/4db917b4-b5bd-11db-9eea-0000779e2340

his predecessor, however, the TFG under Sheikh Sharif was far more representative of Somalia's clans.

3.7. Abdi Mohamed (Iley) and Autocratic Stability in the SRS

The political settlement between the ARS and TFG also coincided with the initiation of a new political chapter in the SRS. The counter-insurgency against the ONLF had led to the emergence of a new type of political leadership in the region. Hagmann describes the leadership in the SRS until 2007 as: 'dominated by an older generation of mostly uneducated politicians with a reputation for personal enrichment', which 'were replaced by a younger generation of fiercely anti-ONLF Ogaadeeni politicians'.[336] This culminated in the Presidency of Abdi Mohamed (nicknamed Abdi Iley) in 2010, who used a combination of extensive coercion and co-optation to defeat the ONLF and establish total control over the SRS.[337] A former employee of the SRS administration described the changes brought about by Abdi Mohamed as the following: 'Now I don't need an escort when I travel [in the SRS]. He [Abdi Iley]can take credit for pacifying the region. He has also created a coherent state.'[338]

Abdi Iley's political campaigns have gone beyond the region and targeted fellow-clan members in other countries. Hagmann notes that Abdi Iley 'has successfully co-opted members of the diaspora, buying them plane tickets, allocating them land, or giving them other economic opportunities in exchange for their support and for their denunciation of the ONLF.'[339] Abdi Iley's autocratic stability in the SRS was a strategic disadvantage to regional rivals such as Eritrea and Al Shabaab. Stability in the SRS also shaped the way Somalis in Somalia viewed the Ethiopian state. As former Finance Minister Halane explained: 'Somalis see Ethiopia through the lens of what goes on in Ogaden. It can either

[336] Tobias Hagmann, *Talking Peace in the Ogaden: The search for an end to conflict in the Somali Regional State in Ethiopia,* Rift Valley Institute, (2014): 24.

[337] Ibid.

[338] Hussain Kassim: Former employee of the SRS administration, interview with author, June 18, 2016

[339] Hagmann, '*Talking Peace in the Ogaden: The search for an end to conflict in the Somali Regional State in Ethiopia,'* 25.

be a divider or unifier'.[340] Former Deputy Prime Minister Ahmed Abdisalam reiterated these views: 'If Somalis in Ethiopia see themselves as oppressed and have grievances, then the rest of Somalia will see Ethiopia in the same way. Jigjiga is central to Ethio-Somali relations.'[341]

Another Somali diplomat explained that: 'Ethiopia Somali relations changed when Ethiopia started supporting the Ogaden [clan] in Ethiopia and Kismayo. This made Ogadenis closer to Ethiopia. And other Somalis began saying that, if Ogadenis are cooperating with Ethiopia, why should we fight to liberate them?'[342] A former employee of the SRS administration and opponent of Abdi Iley describes the contradiction of his governance as the following: 'He is good at security not governance. He destroyed the social fabric. Most of the intellectuals from that region have left. Although they believed in the Ethiopian state. Now they work in NGOs in Nairobi. These are individuals whom the government had invested a lot of money in.'[343]

Abdi Iley's rise to power coincided with the emergence of other strongmen from the Darod clan family: it was Abdirahman Farole in Puntland and Madobe in Jubaland.[344] There emerged therefore a loose strategic alignment of Darod political entities, which saw Ethiopia as a useful ally to further their strategic objectives viz-a-viz other Somalis.[345] Abdi Iley also posed a strategic challenge to Addis Ababa's regional policies. As part of the counter-insurgency campaign, a Liyou Police (special force in Amharic) was established in the SRS. The size of this militia is estimated by some to be 10 000-15 000,[346] while others estimate it to be as many as 45 000.[347] Abdi Iley, who got entangled in Somali politics, was repeatedly accused of sending the Liyou Police across the border

[340] Hussein Abdi Halane: Minister of Finance, Somalia (2010-2011 and 2014-2015), interview with author, June 20, 2016.

[341] Ahmed Abdisalam: Deputy Prime Minister of Somalia (2008-2009), interview with author, June 19, 2016.

[342] Abdikarim Mohamed, Officer at the IGAD Office of the Facilitator for Somalia Peace and National Reconciliation, interview with author, June 17, 2016.

[343] Hussain Kassim: Former employee of the SRS administration, interview with author, June 18, 2016.

[344] Tobias Hagmann, *Talking Peace in the Ogaden: The search for an end to conflict in the Somali Regional State in Ethiopia,* Rift Valley Institute, (2014): 26.

[345] Ibid.

[346] Ibid: 49.

[347] Rene Lefort, 'Ethnic clashes in Ethiopia: setting the record straight' *Open Democracy,* October 22, 2017. https://www.opendemocracy.net/ren-lefort/ethnic-clashes-in-ethiopia-setting-record-straight

into Somalia to attack rivals. This was notably the case in relation to Somaliland, which tested its alignment with Ethiopia.[348]

3.8. Al Shabaab and Counter Insurgency

Once Ethiopia intervened in Somalia in 2006, it got bogged down in the counter-insurgency against the Al Shabaab. The use of military force on this scale ran counter to the principles of the Developmental State orientation. However, military force was deemed necessary to maintain the buffer-zones and deny any political group deemed too hostile to Ethiopia from attaining state-power in Somalia. Despite its deviation from the Developmental State orientation, the latter did significantly shape the nature of counter-insurgency. The most important impact was that it was conducted in alignment with other states in the region, and politically supported by global actors such as the US, EU and sanctioned by the organizations such as IGAD, AU and UN. Ethiopia managed to get much of the financial cost of its missions covered by the US and EU.[349]

Although Ethiopia managed the Al Shabaab threat primarily through military force, it was however a complementary tool to existing strategies such as buffer-zones. Military force was applied first unilaterally but later multilaterally (unilateral in 2011-2014, then through AMISOM in 2014-2017). The Ethiopian government saw Al Shabaab as a political problem, and considered their counterinsurgency as having limited potential in bringing about a sustainable solution to this problem.[350]

Al Shabaab was established initially in 2005 as a small network, composed of the most radical and internationally orientated Islamists from the UIC.[351] Most of these individuals had either a background from AIAI or undergone training in Afghanistan with Al

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[348] Yusuf Ibrahim: Deputy Commander of Somaliland Navy, interview with author March 1, 2016.

[349] Ethiopia's defence aid from the US for example increased significantly after 2006. See: Security Assistance Monitor, 2006-2014. Accessed December 2, 2018. https://securityassistance.org/data/program/military/Ethiopia/2005/2014/Defense%20Department/Global//

[350] Berhe Tesfay: Major General (ret.) in the Ethiopian Armed Forces and Consul General to Somaliland, interview with author, March 3, 2016.

[351] Seth G. Jones, Andrew Liepman, and Nathan Chandler, *Counterterrorism and Counterinsurgency in Somalia: Assessing the Campaign Against Al Shabaab*. (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2016): 12. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1539.html.

Qaeda.[352] And consequently there was a significant continuity between the AIAI, UIC and Al Shabaab. In August 2006, Al Shabaab became an autonomous member of the UIC,[353] and after the Ethiopian intervention in December, it was in conflict with the UIC leadership, due to the latter's decision to flee to Eritrea. Al Shabaab decided to remain and fight the Ethiopian military presence. The nationalist backlash that the Ethiopian presence generated became an important source of recruitment for the armed group.

An Ethiopian withdrawal from Somalia, which was part of the settlement in 2009, had the consequence of enabling Al Shabaab to conduct a significant territorial expansion. This included strategic towns such as Baidoa, Kismayo, Hiraan and Jowahar.[354] In the process, the rebel group displaced key Ethiopian allies such as Ahlu Sunna Wah Jamaa (ASWJ) and attained new and significant sources of taxation.[355] Al Shabaab increasingly began resembling a state, and 'by 2010, al Shabaab had freedom of movement in most of southern Somalia. It was an area the size of Denmark, with about 5 million inhabitants, which made up about 50 per cent of Somalia's total population.'[356] In addition to establishing a unique religious political order (including taxation and policing), it also declared Jihad against Kenya, and began conducting cross-border attacks after 2010. That year they attacked a café in Kampala with suicide bomber, killing 76 civilians.[357] Al Shabaab like the UIC emerged as an alternative state project to the TFG.

The rebel group's fortunes changed in 2010 after they conducted an attack on TFG troops, killing 100 TFG soldiers, but in the process losing 25% of their own troops in addition to significant financial losses.[358] Sheikh Sharif – who had made an Ethiopian exit from Somalia a precondition for negotiation with the TFG in 2008 – then requested Ethiopia to assist the counter insurgency effort against Al Shabaab by sending troops back into Somalia. The Kenyans soon joined the Ethiopian troops. According to US

[352] Ibid.

[353] Ibid: 13.

[354] Ibid: 18.

[355] Ibid.

[356] Ibid.

[357] Xan Rice, 'Uganda bomb blasts kill at least 74', *The Guardian*, July 12, 2010. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/jul/12/uganda-kampala-bombs-explosions-attacks

[358] Seth G. Liepman and Chandler, *Counterterrorism and Counterinsurgency in Somalia: Assessing the Campaign Against Al Shabaab*, 20

diplomatic cables, Kenya was already in 2009 expecting an attack by Al Shabaab and told the US government that they could 'no longer afford to sit on the sidelines'.[359] In 2011 Kenya initiated a military intervention into Somalia, which was called 'Operation Linda Nchi'. Together with 'TFG and clan militia forces, Kenyan forces assaulted al Shabaab positions in Ras Kamboni, Kismayo, Baidoa, Afgoye, and elsewhere in southern Somalia throughout the fall/winter of 2011 and into 2012.'[360] According to the former Ethiopian Foreign Minister Seyoum Mesfin, there were strategic disagreements between Kenya and Ethiopia on which Somali groups should establish local authority in Jubaland, but they swiftly reached a political settlement on the issue.[361]

Ethiopia complemented these operations with a military contingent into Western Somalia. Between 2011 and 2014, Al Shabaab's territorial control significantly decreased as AMISOM pushed it out of Mogadishu, and Ethiopian and Kenyan troops pushed it from the West and South. Territorial losses led to a loss of taxation income and recruits. This led the armed group to adapt their strategies to the new circumstances by focusing more on suicide attacks and assassinations, which led to casualties from attacks rising annually.[362]

In 2014, Ethiopia made the decision to integrate 4400 troops into AMISOM, which then increased the total number of troops to 22,126.[363] Ethiopia continued to conduct unilateral operations in Somalia against Al Shabaab after 2014, but then decided to withdraw these troops in 2016 due to lack of financial resources,[364] which 'prompted the AU to call for a temporary increase 'of up to 4,000 troops' for AMISOM, presumably to enable Addis

[359] US Embassy in Djibouti, Subject: 'Somalia: Kenyan Foreign Minister Pushes Lower Juba Initiative', 10.12.2009.

[360] Seth G. Liepman and Chandler, *Counterterrorism and Counterinsurgency in Somalia: Assessing the Campaign Against Al Shabaab*, 23.

[361] Mesfin and Beyene, 'The Practicalities of Living with Failed States,' 136.

[362] Liepman and Chandler, *Counterterrorism and Counterinsurgency in Somalia: Assessing the Campaign Against Al Shabaab*, 23.

[363] BBC News, 'Ethiopia joins Somalia's African Union force', January 22, 2014. https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-25849750

[364] Paul D. Williams, 'Joining AMISOM: why six African states contributed troops to the African Union Mission in Somalia,' *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 12:1, (2017): 183-184.

Ababa to integrate more troops into the mission and receive financial assistance accordingly.'[365]

Beyond counter insurgency, the political effects of military presence were manifold. Politically, the presence of Ethiopian troops in Somalia provided Addis Ababa with more capital for co-optation of Somali actors, as it could readily provide military support to its local allies. It was a critical element in the pursuit of the long term objective of overcoming the condition of statelessness in Somalia. The Ethiopian military effort also successfully served the primary domestic security objective of preventing Al Shabaab attacks on its soil. A clear indicator of success in this regard was Al Shabaab's inability to conduct a single attack inside Ethiopia, while conducting repeated attacks inside Kenya.

3.9. Containing Rivals through Co-Optation in the Federation-Making Process

By 2018, the EPRDF had made significant progress towards the main objectives of its Developmental State foreign policy in Somalia: to contain insecurity from spilling over into Ethiopia through buffer-zones, use these buffer-zones as a stepping-stone for building a state in Somalia, and prevent any hostile group from assuming power in Somalia. The federation-making process that began in 2011 was the last major milestone in this process. Through the federation-making process Ethiopia got to institutionalize buffer-zones and move closer to a condition wherein they could serve as self-sufficient buffers against rivals and insecurity.

When the federation-making process began in 2011, Ethiopia was conducting an insurgency against Al Shabaab and engaged in a rivalry with Eritrea. Ethiopia saw both these actors as potential threats, while it saw its own allies as fragile. Ethiopia's strategic purpose in this process was therefore to make sure that its allies were able to continue to function as buffer-zones, and that the state-building process progressed, while simultaneously attaining influence in as many regional states as possible.

[365] Ibid: 185.

Somalia ended its transitional phase and adopted a federal constitution under the leadership of Sheikh Sharif Ahmed. In 2011, the 'Road Map' constitutional process to shift from a transitional to a permanent regime was agreed to by the UN, TFG, Puntland and Ahlu Sunna Wal Jaama (ASWJ). This resulted in a new government and a Provisional Constitution in 2012. Through the Road Map process clan elders identified 825 delegates to an assembly, which elected a 225-member parliament, which in turn elected Hassan Sheikh as President over Sheikh Sharif in 2012. The Independent Federal Constitution Commission elected by both the TFG and ARS in 2009 drafted the federal constitution, which allowed for the establishment of regional states based on the administrative boundaries of the pre-civil war regime. It allowed 2-3 administrative regions to form a federal state, which culminated in the establishment of Jubland, South-West State Hiirshabelle and Galmudug.

This institution-making process initiated an on-going competition and conflict for control over the emerging regional states. This had two dimensions: competition between the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and regional states, and between individual warlords and their clans who sought to position themselves in the political race to control a regional state. For external actors that sought to influence political processes in Somalia, this meant that in addition to influencing the political centre, they also had to influence the regional states. For Ethiopian engagement this had two implications. On the one hand it created new domestic enemies for most Somali actors that shifted attention away from Ethiopia. On the other, the familiar problem wherein Ethiopia could be perceived to side with one Somali actor against another increased in tandem with the number of state-making conflicts amongst Somalis. This in turn led to the familiar pattern of the losers in each conflict resorting to nationalist rhetoric that fuelled anti-Ethiopian sentiments.

The institutional and geopolitical conditions also changed the way competition for power and influence manifested itself. The most effective strategy became co-optation, while the utility of the strategy of sabotage – by defecting from the state-making process and initiating a competing process – decreased both for most external and for local actors. Ethiopia was arguably the most effective external actor in the art of co-optation, and managed to attain more influence in the federation-making process than any other foreign

power.[366] Diplomatic capital such as mediation and clan-networks, and both military and financial resources, were employed as tools for co-optation.

Puntland

Puntland was Ethiopia's most stable and staunchest ally in Somalia from the early 1990s. Ethiopia therefore did not have to co-opt Puntland's authorities or make an effort to establish influence there when the federation-making process began in 2011. Ethiopia's logistical and financial support to the Puntland administration had been considerable since the administration was established in 1998.[367] Puntland through the role of Abdullahi Yusuf used Ethiopia to position itself in a position of strength viz-a-viz other Somali actors, and the relationship also helped its leader assume the Presidency of the TFG in 2004, while Ethiopia in return developed a relationship with a long-term ally in Somali politics.

After 2012 Puntland served the purpose of being an important balancing force in the FGS against Islamist and other actors with which Ethiopia had conflicts of interests. Under the leadership of Abdiweli Mohamed Ali, Puntland had positioned itself as a leader of a Darood block that included Jubaland (and to some extent also SRS), against the Hawiye-dominated FGS in the federation-making process. The biggest conflict of interests between the two groups was power-sharing between Mogadishu and the regional states. Puntland put the federation-making process in Somalia at the top of its agenda, and established a Ministry of Constitution, Federal Affairs, and Democratization for this purpose.[368] Ethiopia's challenge in relation to Puntland was primarily balancing this alignment with that of Somaliland, with which Puntland had a rivalry. Ethiopia managed this by applying the tools of mediation and coercive diplomacy to contain this conflict.[369]

[366] As the following sections will illustrate Ethiopia was deeply involved in the formation of most regionaø states in Somalia and often succeeded with installing their allies in these administrations.

[367] Mesfin Amare who was then head of the Eastern Command of the EDF described how Ethiopia supported its ally in Puntland, Abdullahi Yusuf, with both money and logistics during a security incident in 1998 as part of the buffer-zone policy. Mesfin Amare: Major General (ret.), former Commander of the Eastern Division in the Ethiopian Armed Forces and Liaison Officer to Eritrean groups for the Ethiopian government, interview with author, May 17, 2017.

[368] Abdiweli Mohamed Ali: President of Puntland (2014-), Prime Minister of Somalia (2011-2012), interview with author, April 10, 2017.

[369] See section on Somaliland for more detail.

Puntland served the purpose of acting as a trusted ally in the competition for influence in the state-making process in Somalia. Its support was useful in situations like the conflict over Jubaland and South-West State as a balancing force against the FGS. It also illustrates the cumulative effects of co-optation and diplomatic capital. The more actors one had already co-opted, the easier it was to co-opt others. In other words, it became progressively easier, because one could use exiting allies to incentivise new ones.

Jubaland

Ethiopia managed to secure influence in Jubaland state, one of the most strategically important regions in Somalia. This was achieved through a three-stage process that involved first, co-opting Ahmed Mohamed Islam (Madobe), secondly, supporting him in becoming President of Jubaland, and thirdly using him to project influence in Somalia and fighting Al Shabaab. Jubaland is located in Southwestern Somalia on the border with Ethiopia and Kenya. Ethiopia did not initially want to support Ogaden influence in this region as they feared their links with the ONLF, only when they realized that the Ogadenis could support their fight against the Al Shabaab did they change their position.[370] Gradually there was a strategy of using the Ogaden elites as a 'bridge' for a larger regional strategy of stabilizing Somali territories across the Horn.[371] Madobe would play a critical role in this process.

Madobe was a member of the UIC and governor of Kismayo in 2006 when Ethiopia intervened in the Somali conflict. He was wounded during the war and taken back to Ethiopia where he was treated in a hospital.[372] Madobe was released from Ethiopia at the behest of Sheikh Sharif.[373] He had under Ethiopian custody switched sides in the conflict and joined the ARS-group that took part in the Djibouti mediation in 2009, where he also briefly took a seat in parliament. During his days under Ethiopian custody, Madobe developed a very close relationship with Ethiopia, which would later prove beneficial.

[370] Hussain Kassim: Former employee of the SRS administration, field-notes from interviews with Somali stakeholders in the federation-making process shared with author through personal communication, June 23, 2016.

[371] Ibid.

[372] US Embassy in Nairobi, Subject: 'Somalia – Juba Offensive Moving Forward; Powerful interests Probably Working to Undercut Ogaden Clan', 18.8.2009.

[373] Ibid.

Ethiopia's second task in this process was promoting its co-opted ally in the political competition in Jubaland. Kenya was the first to lobby for the idea of a state in Jubaland in 2009, an idea that was supported by Ethiopia but not the US.[374] Its first challenge in this regard was the Kenyan regional state initiative, Azania, under the leadership of the former TFG defence minister, Mohamed Abdi Mohamed "Gandhi".[375] The project faced opposition from many locals and the FGS. Azania remained a virtual state due to opposition from many actors. This led IGAD to convene a dialogue with stakeholders in May 2012, with the objective of establishing the state of Jubaland. A technical committee called the 'Grand Stabilization Initiative for Southern Somalia' comprising Ethiopia, Kenya, TFG and '30 representatives from all major clans' was formed.[376] The purpose was to create a Jubaland state from the three regions, Lower Juba, Middle Jubba, and Gedo. Ethiopia and Kenya agreed to a more inclusive process, which led to a conference in February 2013. This included more than 800 participants, and resulted in the election of Madobe as President of Jubaland.[377]

Once Madobe was elected, Ethiopia faced the old challenge of sabotage from the candidates who were left out of the new settlement. For example, in relation to the antagonism between the Marehan sub-clan and Madobe, Hussein Abdi Halane, explains that 'they [the Ethiopians] had strong relations with the Marehan, which they didn't want to sacrifice.' He further explains that the Ethiopians 'tried to get Marehans together with Madobe.'[378] Ethiopia managed this challenge by relying on its extensive clan-network to indirectly co-opt or pressure the rebels.

Five other candidates, who had contested the election, immediately declared themselves winners, including former Defence Minister, Barre Hirrale. In addition to this, the FGS

[374] US Embassy in Djibouti, Subject: 'Somalia: Kenyan Foreign Minister Pushes Lower Juba Initiative', December 10, 2009.

[375] The Daily Star, 'Kenya's risky gamble on Somali border regions,' November 16, 2011. http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2011/Nov-16/154205-kenyas-risky-gamble-on-somali-border-regions.ashx

[376] Matt Bryden, 'Somalia Redux*?* Assessing the New Somali Federal Government', *CSIS Report*, August 8, 2013: 17.

[377] Joanne Crouch and Oliver Chevreau, 'Forging Jubaland: Community Perspectives on Federalism, Governance and Reconciliation', *Safeworld Report*, April 2016. https://www.agora-parl.org/node/19087

[378] Hussein Abdi Halane: Minister of Finance, Somalia (2010-2011 and 2014-2015), interview with author, June 20, 2016.

contested both claims and disavowed both Barre and Madobe, by claiming that the entire Jubaland process was 'unconstitutional'. Instead they wanted an alternative approach, wherein they could appoint regional administrators and then build a regional state from below (presumably with the aim of having a subordinate ally in charge of this strategic state). There was also a clan-dimension to this: the Hawiye-dominated FGS feared and wanted to contain the emergence of another Ogaden dominated regional-state (as this would be the fourth, alongside Puntland, SRS and northern Kenya).[379] This conflict led to the emergence of an unexpected convergences and conflicts of interests. Al Shabaab, which had an axe to grind with their former comrade in arms, Madobe, had the same objective as the FGS in this case. This led for example to instances where FGS's allies in the Jubaland conflict were given free passage through Al Shabaab controlled areas.[380] Madobe's contender, Barre, was also a former Ethiopian ally, who now threatened to cooperate with Al Shabaab if not accommodated. The tacit support for Barre Hirralle by the FGS culminated in a violent confrontation with Madobe over Jubaland in May 2013.[381] The FGS managed to muster the support of the Hawiye clans while Madobe mobilized pan-Darod support.[382]

These conflicts culminated in yet another mediation conference in Addis Ababa in June, between Madobe and the SFG, which culminated in the creation of the Jubaland state.[383] Ethiopia had to rely on its networks and relations with clan-elders in the Marehan sub-clan, to which Barre belonged. The Marehan then collectively put their weight behind Madobe, which decisively shifted the power balance. Puntland also supported the Jubaland initiative in order to promote Darod interests in region.

The Addis Ababa talks were critical for solving the crisis, as both contenders had significant military capacity and many allies. The FGS had to support the talks due to their inability to militarily or politically contend the process. According to the Vice

[379] Ibid.

[380] Bryden, 'Somalia Redux*?* Assessing the New Somali Federal Government', 22.

[381] Ibid; Joanne Crouch and Oliver Chevreau, 'Forging Jubaland: Community Perspectives on Federalism, Governance and Reconciliation.' *Safeworld Report*, April 2016, 4.

[382] Bryden, 'Somalia Redux*?* Assessing the New Somali Federal Government', 22; Crouch and Chevreau, 'Forging Jubaland: Community Perspectives on Federalism, Governance and Reconciliation,' 4.

[383] Bryden, 'Somalia Redux*?* Assessing the New Somali Federal Government', 22.

President of Jubaland, the Addis Ababa agreement had a transformative impact on the discourse on federalism in Somalia. He states that 'the President and the Damul Jadid are still not convinced about federalism…before the Addis agreement Mogadishu did not want federalism, but now increasingly it is becoming open to federalism'.[384] The opposition to federalism was also seen as an opinion limited to the political elite in Mogadishu: 'Even the people living in Mogadishu want federalism, it is only the politicians that do not want it.'[385] After the instalment of Madobe in Jubaland, at the end of this process Ethiopia's diplomatic capital and network of allies had been significantly expanded. It had also attained extensive influence in a politically important actor in an important regional state in Somalia.

South-West State

The formation of the South-West State was one of the most contentious processes in the federation-making process. Instead of rival claims to authority within a state, it was characterized by rival claims over borders and regional states. One state-making project pursued by former Speaker of Parliament Aden Madobe aspired to create South West State by combining six administrative regions (the three that constitute Jubaland, and the Bay, Bakool and Lower Shabelle regions), while another that would only constitute the three regions of Bay, Bakool and Lower Shabelle was being initiated by Sharif Hassan Sheikh Adan.[386] The FGS rejected the six-part region, citing its commitment to the Addis Ababa agreement from 2013 over Jubaland.[387] Through mediation by the FGS, the SW6-group accepted to settle for a SW3 and an assembly elected Sharif Hassan Aden as President. The FGS, Madobe and Puntland's President Gaas all supported Aden's Presidency.[388] This is another example of the cumulative nature of Ethiopia's co-optation

[384] Abdulkader Haji Mohamed: Deputy President of Jubaland, interview with author, February 5, 2014. At the moment of the interview Abdulkader Haji Mohamed was an ally and sympathetic of Ethiopia. But like Madobe, he was previously an opponent of Ethiopia's role in Somalia.

[385] Ibid.

[386] Hussain Kassim: Former employee of the SRS administration, field-notes from interviews with Somali stakeholders in the federation-making process shared with author through personal communication, June 23, 2016; Cleophus Thomas, 'Federalism in Somalia: Obstacles, Aspirations and Opportunities in Jubaland', PhD dissertation, George Mason University, 2017: 138.

[387] Ibid; Thomas, 'Federalism in Somalia: Obstacles, Aspirations and Opportunities in Jubaland', 140.

[388] Hussain Kassim: Former employee of the SRS administration, field-notes from interviews with Somali stakeholders in the federation-making process shared with author through personal communication, June 23, 2016.

strategy, where individuals co-opted in the past are mobilized to support the co-optation of new actors.

IGAD represented by Ethiopian Ambassador Wondimu and IGAD Special Envoy (Kenyan) Ambassador Affey, 'relentlessly supported FGS efforts to bring together the SW6 and SW3 camps'.[389] Ethiopia, Kenya and IGAD were present during the signing of the SW3 agreement in Mogadishu on June 23, 2014. To this end Ethiopia co-opted key figures in the SW6 camp to desert to the SW3 camp.[390] Ethiopia also provided security for the South West State in Baidoa, where they also served as the most important defence against Al Shabaab, and in this way also gained leverage.[391] Ethiopia had also been hosting senior members of the new regional cabinet in Addis Ababa, where they met with the PM and other high ranking officials, who committed Ethiopia to supporting the administration develop its own security forces.

Galmudug

Galmudug was another case of a regional state under the control of allies before the federation-making process was initiated. It was first established as a state in 2006, when it was led by three TFG officials, first by Mohamed Warsame Ali, then Mohamed Ahmed Aalin and then Abdi Hasan Awale. Ali and Awale had also participated in the war against the UIC in 2006 on the side of Ethiopia and TFG.

The formal establishment of a Galmudug state in 2013 involved (as per the constitutional provision) the union of two administrative regions, Galgaduug and Mudug, into one federal state – Galmudug. This however led to a conflict over the status of north-Mudug, over which Puntland had been claiming jurisdiction since 1993.[392] The constitution however did not allow the formation of federal states other than from the administrative units from the pre-civil war regime. This was settled in May 2015 when the FGS acknowledged Puntland's jurisdiction over north-Mudug.[393]

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[389] Ibid.

[390] Ibid.

[391] Ibid.

[392] Thomas, 'Federalism in Somalia: Obstacles, Aspirations and Opportunities in Jubaland', 187,

[393] Hussain Kassim: Former employee of the SRS administration, field-notes from interviews with Somali stakeholders in the federation-making process shared with author through personal communication, June 23, 2016.

The state-formation process in Galmudug also involved conflicts between local clans, groups and individuals. The state-making conference in Adado sponsored by the FGS was rejected by the ASWJ militia and its allies, who decided to initiate a rival conference. Despite the religious foundations of the ASWJ (it was Sufi organization established to counter radical Sunni groups), it was also seen as a vehicle for the promotion of Ayr (Hawiye sub-clan) interests. The FGS tried to promote a Damul Jadid candidate of their own. Ministers and high level officials had been seen campaigning for their candidate Guled. The FGS for their part were not only motivated by ideology, but also the personal interest of the President, who would need the support of as many regional presidents as possible for his bid to extend his term in office. Ethiopia's support to the ASJW was also intended to counter the influence of Islamists in the emerging Galmudug state. It campaigned for its candidate Ahmed Abdisalem, who had been Ambassador to Ethiopia. In July 2015 it was the FGS backed Guled who won the Presidential election, illustrating the limitations of Ethiopia's co-optation capacities.

Federal Government: Balancing and Interdependence

Ethiopia's relationship with the FGS was tense and was maintained to a great extent by the security interdependence generated by the presence of the common threat of Al Shabaab. There were both ideological and institutional reasons for the tense relationship and conflicts of interests. Institutionally, the central government had an interest in resisting the devolution of power and influence to the regional states. In the conflict between the centre and periphery, Ethiopia mostly sided with the latter. Ideologically, the three Presidents were at odds with Ethiopia. Both Presidents Sheikh Sharif (2009-2012) and Hassan Sheikh Hassan (2012-2017) were Islamists. Hassan Sheikh was part of an informal political network called Damul Jadid, which was believed to have a political orientation similar to that of the Muslim Brotherhood.[394] The relationship between Ethiopia and Damul Jadid was characterized by mutual suspicious and hostility. Mohamed Abdullahi (Farmajoo), who took over the Presidency in 2017, campaigned on a nationalistic platform and in particular an anti-Ethiopian rhetoric. His victory was widely celebrated across Somalia, which was an indication of how extensively anti-Ethiopian

[394] Matt Bryden, 'Somalia Redux? Assessing the New Somali Federal Government', 8.

sentiments were felt amongst Somalis.[395] Both Somalis and outsiders expected friction between Farmajoo and Ethiopia.[396] Despite the nationalistic rhetoric, however, Ethiopia-Somali relations continued as before: indeed, Farmajoo engaged in such unexpected actions such as the capture and rendition of ONLF leader Abdikarim Sheikh Muse to Ethiopia in 2017. This led to widespread objections from the public and a Parliamentary commission that declared the measure illegal – a price Farmajoo was willing to incur in order to maintain his relationship with Ethiopia.[397]

The conflicting visions and interests between Ethiopia and Somalia's Presidents were apparent to all parties. Despite this, their relationships remained relatively stable. They chose to play out their differences by competing for influence in the regional states in non-violent ways rather than open confrontation. One reason for this was the security interdependence created by the existential threat posed by Al Shabaab to the FGS, and Ethiopia's role in containing this. Despite being initially opposed to the presence of Ethiopian troops, all three Presidents ended up requesting troop reinforcements by Ethiopia.

The Ethiopian government also tried to engage in a soft-power push in Somalia by providing scholarships to Somali students to study in Ethiopia. According to one Ethiopian diplomat: 'We are hosting Somali's [scholarships] to create a good impression'.[398] This has however not had the intended effect, as Ethiopia was unable to compete with the extensive Turkish and Gulf soft-power projection in Somalia, as well as the deep-rooted suspicion towards Ethiopia in the Somali public.

3.10. Somaliland: Developmental Partner

[395] BBC News, 'Somalia's Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo chosen as president,' February 8, 2017. https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-38904663

[396] Zakaria Yusuf, 'The Regional Risks to Somalia's Moment of Hope,' International Crisis Group, February 22, 2017. https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/somalia/regional-risks-somalias-moment-hope

[397] VOA, 'Report: ONLF Rebel Leader Illegally Extradited to Ethiopia', November 18, 2017. https://www.voanews.com/a/report-onlf-rebel-leader-illegally-extradited-to-ethiopia/4124760.html

[398] Fisseha Shawl: Ethiopian diplomat stationed in Mogadishu and Ambassador to South Sudan 2016, interview with author, July 27, 2015.

Somaliland's relationship with Ethiopia assumed a distinct character. Somaliland was the only Somali state with which Ethiopia had developmental cooperation. The relationship illustrates in many ways the potential for developmental cooperation with other Somali states. It involved mutually beneficial economic cooperation based on the comparative advantage of each state. The rivals that Ethiopia was confronted with in Somaliland were local Salafist groups that sought to take over the state and regional rivals, notably Egypt and to a lesser extent Turkey, which sought to attain influence in Somaliland at the expense of Ethiopia. As in other Somali entities, co-optation was the central rivalry management strategy applied by Ethiopia in Somaliland. Somaliland more than any other part of Somalia illustrates how co-optation can be a relationship that the co-optee has as much of an incentive to initiate as the co-opter. In Somaliland Ethiopia also had an extensive presence and relationship with the wider society and particularly the civil service. Somaliland's pursuit of statehood also showed how strategically challenging the politics of co-optation can be.

Ethiopia's only rivals in Somaliland were local Salafist groups. While the challenge in other parts of Somalia stemmed from organized groups such as AIAI, in Somaliland the challenge manifested itself through extensive grassroots movements and financial and political networks, which aspired to take over the state. Foreign education played an important role in this phenomenon, and after the civil war Gulf-funded Salafist orientated madrassas came to fill the gap left by the fledgling new state. At the higher-education level, a number of individuals who had studied in Gulf countries through scholarships came back with Salafist ideology, and attained influential positions in government and business. By 2001 they had gained such influence that, according to former Foreign Minister Abdillahi Mohamed Duale, they almost prevented the constitution from passing in the parliamentary vote.[399] Politicians in Somaliland and Ethiopian officials claim that the political influence of the Salafist groups increased significantly over the next decade.[400] Under Ahmed Mohamed Mohamoud Silanyo's Presidency (2010-2017), Islamists managed to assume an influential role in the ruling Kumiye party, and by 2015 almost managed to take over the party from within.[401] While the Islamists were trying to

[399] Abdillahi Mohamed Duale: Foreign Minister of Somaliland (2006-2010), interview with author, March 3, 2016.

[400] Aden Musa: SNM veteran and Somaliland's Representative to Ethiopia (2016), interview with author, April 5, 2016.

[401] Ibid.

build a state in southern Somalia, in Somaliland they were trying to capture the state from within through legal means.

Al Shabaab posed a different type of threat to Somaliland: they sought pursue their objectives by creating disorder and conflict. They were mostly unsuccessful in their objectives, but managed to conduct a notable attack on the Ethiopian Consulate and UNDP office in Hargeisa in 2008, which killed some 28 people, and was possible due to support from locals.[402] One of the suicide bombers was a native of Hargeisa, and the house in which they planned and executed the attack was rented from an individual who was allegedly aware of their intentions.[403] The former Commander of Al Shabaab Ahmad Godane was also a native of Hargeisa. Both the Ethiopian and Somaliland officials interviewed in Somaliland were of the opinion that Somaliland's Salafists sought to terminate Somaliland's alignment with Ethiopia and reorient its foreign policy towards Middle Eastern partners.[404]

While Somaliland's secessionist agenda was on the one hand a major blow to the Greater Somalia nationalism, on the other hand it posed a significant strategic and diplomatic challenge to Ethiopia by complicating its rivalry management activities. Hargeisa looked to Ethiopia's support as the best hope for its bid for independence. Southern Somali political groups unanimously and vehemently rejected this. Addis Ababa therefore risked losing one ally by appeasing another. Somaliland's territorial rivalry with Puntland was another strategic challenge that Ethiopia faced in relation to these actions. Both Somaliland and Puntland laid claims to the Sol, Sanag and Cayn (SSC) region, which was located within the borders of the British Protectorate of Somaliland, but was primarily inhabited by the Dulbahante sub-clan of the Harti (Darod). Puntland was predominantly inhabited by the Majerteen sub-clan of the Harti and was seen as a Darod state. Puntland's leadership proclaimed that the Sol, Sanag and Cayn region was an integral part

[402] Berhe Tesfay: Major General (Ret.) in the Ethiopian Armed Forces and Consul General to Somaliland, interview with author, March 3, 2016.

[403] International Law and Policy Report, 'Somaliland Risk Analysis', August 26, 2013.

[404] Berhe Tesfay: Major General (ret.) in the Ethiopian Armed Forces and Consul General to Somaliland, interview with author, March 3, 2016; Aden Musa: SNM veteran and Somaliland's Representative to Ethiopia (2016), interview with author, April 5, 2016. Due to his background in the SNM, Aden Musa has a more leftist and secularist approach to politics and was highly critical of political Islamism in general.

of their region, based on political boundaries that are older than the colonial administration, on which Somaliland was based. Somaliland and Puntland forces have repeatedly engaged in violent conflicts along the border, which left dozens of casualties. The situation became even more complicated in 2012 when political elites from the SSC area declared the establishment of an independent state Khatumo.[405]

Ethiopia's primary interests in Somaliland were to maintain an important buffer-zone, attain access to an additional sea outlet, and markets for Ethiopian goods. Ethiopia pursued these objectives and dealt with the challenges listed above primarily through the strategy of co-optation. Both the challenge from the Salafist movements and the competition with regional rivals for influence in Somaliland have to some extent centred on a competition for the hearts and minds of Somaliland's political elites and wider population. Ethiopia was confident in its standing amongst the general population.[406] Both the diplomats based in Hargeisa and the Somaliland elite pointed out that Ethiopia has had a uniquely high standing in Somaliland society.[407] They attributed this to historical factors such as the political support the SNM and the shelter that that several hundred thousand refugees received from Ethiopia during the 1980s. SNM veteran Abdi Yusuf Duale described the impact of the refugee experience as the following: 'because of the period we had in Ethiopia, our attitudes towards Ethiopia had changed. That was not limited to our generation only, but also our children.'[408] Ethiopia's co-optation strategy also went beyond targeting the political elite in Somaliland. After 1991, Ethiopia has played a significant role in developing key economic sectors such as agriculture and higher education, where private Ethiopian universities were one of the biggest suppliers of this service. Ethiopian Airlines, through Addis Ababa, was the only commercial aviation service to the outside world available to Somalilanders.[409] Several hundred of Somaliland's government officials also receive scholarships to study in Ethiopian

[405] Mohamed Saleh, a central political figure in the Khatumo state-making effort, interview with author, June 13, 2013; Ali Issa, a central political figure in the Khatumo state-making effort, personal communication with author, July 16, 2013.

[406] Berhe Tesfay: Major General (ret.) in the Ethiopian Armed Forces and Consul General to Somaliland, interview with author, March 3, 2016.

[407] Abdi Yusuf Duale: former SNM leader, interview with author, March 3, 2016; Aden Musa: SNM veteran and Somaliland's Representative to Ethiopia (2016), interview with author, April 5, 2016.

[408] Abdi Yusuf Duale: former SNM leader, interview with author, March 3, 2016.

[409] Mohamed Omar: Somaliland Foreign Minister (2010-2013), interview with author, May 17, 2016.

universities annually.[410] In the military, a number of officials also receive training and education in Ethiopia. Consequently, many – if not most – of Somaliland's political elites and civil servants have been educated or received training in Ethiopia. The effects of this were visible during the annual bilateral summit in Berbera in 2015, where a significant number of the Somaliland delegates spoke Amharic.[411] Some of these measures were of course economically beneficial to Ethiopia, for example this relationship allowed Ethiopia to expand its educational services for the first time outside its borders. Ethiopia also earns 500 million USD annually from khat exports to Somaliland.[412] Scholarships and military training were strategically motivated to prop up the section of Somaliland society deemed strategically important allies. These measures made it easy to co-opt Somaliland's elites and use them to contain the influence of both Salafist groups and external actors. Because of this, Ethiopia considered its relationship with the local population the last buffer against the threat from both Salafist movements and regional competitors in Somaliland.[413]

The challenge posed by Somaliland's conflicts with other Somali political authorities was managed through mediation diplomacy and pressuring actors to temporarily accept the status quo in relation to the territorial question. Maintaining influence in Somaliland required delicately balancing Ethiopia's relationship with Somaliland with that of Puntland and Mogadishu. Ideologically, the EPRDF was inclined to recognize Somaliland's claim to independence. Strategically, however, they felt that such a policy would ruin their relationship with the South in the long term. One diplomat described the dilemma as follows: 'we don't want to take advantage of the South's weakness…[however]…short of recognition Somaliland deserves good treatment. We need to prevent Somaliland from falling into the trajectory of the rest of Somalia…The nature of our engagement with Somaliland is a political message to the rest of

[410] Fisseha Shawl: Ethiopian diplomat stationed in Mogadishu and Ambassador to South Sudan 2016, interview with author, July 27, 2015.

[411] Participant observation March 2, 2016.

[412] James Jeffrey, 'Somaliland abuzz from Ethiopia's khat convoys', *Al Jazeera*, April 21, 2015. https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2015/03/somaliland-abuzz-ethiopia-khat-convoys-150325100843701.html

[413] Berhe Tesfay: Major General (ret.) in the Ethiopian Armed Forces and Consul General to Somaliland, interview with author, March 3, 2016.

Somalia.'[414] Consequently, they adopted the stance that they would be the second state to recognize Somaliland if another state decided to do so, and decided to support Somaliland in any way possible apart from recognition. This led to measures such as recognizing the use of Somaliland passports and initiating commercial flights through Ethiopian Airlines from Hargeisa to Addis Ababa.[415] Had Ethiopia been pursuing a hegemonic and predatory policy – as argued by many analysts – a policy of recognizing Somaliland as a state should have been pursued.

In relation to the conflict between its allies Somaliland and Puntland, Ethiopia chose to rely on mediation and coercive diplomacy to pressure both states to refrain from violence. According to an Ethiopian diplomat: 'The slightest problem in Haregeisa or Garowe, one side tries to take advantage to attack the other. We try to prevent conflict and promote intelligence sharing.'[416] Politicians from the disputed Sol, Sanaag and Cayn region claim that pressure from Ethiopia was a significant factor in containing this conflict.[417] One Ethiopian Major General confirmed this by stating: we told both parties [Somaliland and Puntland] that we would cut out relations if they started fighting.[418] In the process they have also managed to maintain their neutrality and relationship with both Puntland and Somaliland.

As Ethiopia's economy grew, Djibouti's logistical capacity to manage Ethiopia's imports and exports through its port was being pushed to its limits. In 2015 Somaliland came to play an important role in Ethiopia's plan to diversify its access to the sea. Somaliland's Berbera port remained inactive for more than two decades after the Somali state collapsed in 1991. Ethiopia had for many years planned to develop and utilize the port, and invested

[414] Fisseha Shawl: Ethiopian diplomat stationed in Mogadishu and Ambassador to South Sudan 2016, interview with author, July 27, 2015.

[415] Mohamed Omar: Somaliland Foreign Minister (2010-2013), interview with author, May 17, 2016.

[416] Fisseha Shawl: Ethiopian diplomat stationed in Mogadishu and Ambassador to South Sudan 2016, interview with author, July 27, 2015.

[417] Mohamed Saleh, central political figure in the Khatumo state-making effort, interview with author, June 13, 2013.

[418] Anonymous: Lieutenant General in the Ethiopian Armed Forces and former Commander of Western Division, October 27, 2015. The military official is a former TPLF fighter and was a leading figure in the institutional rivalry that emerged between the military and intelligence agencies after Meles Zenawi's death in 2012.

in this initiative by completing a road infrastructure on its side of the border.[419] By 2015, what the project lacked was road infrastructure that linked the Berbera port to the Ethiopian border and finances to develop the port.[420] Ethiopia had in the past together with Somaliland's government tried to lobby China to develop the port in exchange for building a military base, which they eventually rejected.[421] By 2015 two alternative private investors were being entertained for the Berbera project, a French company and the Emirati DP World. In 2017 DP World decided to invest 440 million USD over a period of 30 years to develop the Berbera Port, in exchange for a permission to open a military base for the UAE government in Berbera.[422] Ethiopia's important role in convincing the UAE to make this investment will be examined in detail in a subsequent section.

3.11. Managing Regional Competition in Somalia: Alignment, Containment and Strategic Restraint

The Developmental State continued to significantly shape the management of rivalries with other states in Somalia during the federation-making process. Strategic restraint from military conflict with regional rivals in Somalia remained the dominant principle, due to the likely negative implications to Ethiopia's economic development that conflict would entail. Secondly, some of the new competitors for influence in Somalia had significant investments in Ethiopia or elsewhere in the region that were important to Ethiopia's development. Consequently, the Developmental State also constrained conflict through economic incentives.

The number and types of states involved in Somali politics and the means by which they competed for influence changed during the federation-making process. Ethiopia deepened

[419] Berhe Tesfay: Major General (ret.) in the Ethiopian Armed Forces and Consul General to Somaliland, interview with author, March 3, 2016.

[420] Ibid.

[421] Ibid.

[422] Mohamed Farah Abdi, 'UAE military base in Berbera boosts international trade, Somaliland-Ethiopia's relations', *The Reporter*, February 18, 2017. https://www.thereporterethiopia.com/content/uae-military-base-berbera-boosts-international-trade-somaliland-ethiopias-relations

its alignment with Djibouti, Kenya, Uganda and the US; it isolated Eritrea and eliminated its influence in Somalia; it contained Egyptian influence; and exercised strategic restraint in regards to competitors Turkey and UAE. The most significant new development in 2009 was the growing alignment of interests and security interdependence in Somalia. Ethiopia was in 2006 pursuing an agenda on its own, but by 2008 it had aligned its interests with a number of states in the region as well as the US. After the 2009 political settlement and in the federation making process, Somalia's three neighbouring states Ethiopia, Djibouti and Kenya all had a stake in the process. Both peace-keeping and the diplomatic engagement were coordinated through IGAD. Most importantly, while their influence might be uneven, these new conditions also meant that there was no way any one actor could either dominate the process or be entirely marginalized. Al Shabaab's links with Al Qaeda, its violent and radical nature and ability to engage in attacks outside of Somalia's borders, had increased security interdependence between Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Somaliland, Puntland, Djibouti and the US in a way neither the UIC or AIAI had done in the past.[423] This significantly changed the security landscape for Ethiopia.

The second condition was the successful isolation and containment of Ethiopia's rivals. The regional losers in these new developments were Egypt and Eritrea. While in 2006 they faced Ethiopia and a fledgling TFG, after 2008 these two states faced a coalition of states. The alliance power-structure had tilted in favour of Ethiopia. Eritrea continued its campaign after the Djibouti deal, but its influence diminished over time. In 2009 they tried to persuade Kenya to support an alternative Somalia political process, which the latter rejected.[424] The Kenyans seemed to have developed a hostile attitude towards Asmara because of their belief that Eritrea supported Al Shabaab attacks on AMISOM.[425] The UNMGSE reports in the period 2012-2014 illustrate how Eritrea's ability to project power in the region gradually decreased. The report from 2011 details activities by Eritrean officials in Somalia that included training, intelligence sharing and financial support.[426] In 2014 however their overall assessment was 'that Eritrea is a marginal actor

[423] US Embassy in Nairobi, Subject: 'Somalia – The TFG, Al Shabaab and Al Qaeda', July 6, 2009.

[424] US Embassy in Djibouti, Subject: 'Somalia: Kenyan Foreign minister Pushes Lower Juba Initiative', December 10, 2009.

[425] Ibid.

[426] Reuters, 'Exclusive: Eritrea reduces support for al Shabaab - U.N. report', July 16, 2012. http://uk.reuters.com/article/us-eritrea-somalia-un-idUSBRE86F0AK20120716;

in Somalia, and increased public scrutiny by the international community has made any direct support to Al-Shabaab much riskier'.[427] Djibouti's cooperation with Ethiopia and Kenya's military involvement in 2011 gradually rendered the role of Egypt and Eritrea less significant.

A third category of external actors was managed through strategic restraint. As Eritrean and Egyptian presence diminished, the Horn of Africa emerged after the Arab Spring as a theatre for Gulf States and Turkey's increasingly assertive foreign policy and rivalries. As opposed to Eritrea, none of these actors were perceived by Ethiopia as having any relations with Al Shabaab; instead their objectives were seen as limited to attaining influence over the Somali state, and containing the influence of their Middle Eastern rivals. Turkey was the Middle Eastern state that attained the most extensive influence in Somali politics during this period. Turkish diplomatic reach in Somalia has been extensive. They first established a presence through NGOs and schools, which provided free education in Turkish. Somalia became the fourth largest recipient of Turkish aid in the world, and Turkey the largest non-OECD donor in Somalia. More important than quantity, was perhaps the nature of the aid, which left visible and symbolic footprints with immense soft-power value.[428] Turkish aid workers were readily visible and present amongst the Somali public, and engaged in the construction of roads and hospitals. Turkish Airlines was also the first international airline to provide services to Somalia. Turkey also made other symbolic gestures such as President Recep Erdogan's visit Somalia during the height of famine in 2011, making him the first foreign leader to visit Somalia since 1991.[429] Ankara made an effort to mediate between Somalia and Somaliland. On the military front, they opened their first overseas military base in Somalia in 2017.[430] Its purpose was primarily to train the Somali military, but the base

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United Nations Security Council, *Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 1916 (2010),* July 18, 2011: 375. http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2011/433

[427] United Nations Security Council, 'Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2111 (2013)*,'* October 15, 2014: 6. http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2014/726

[428] Berouk Mesfin, 'The Soft Power Role of Turkey in Somalia*', ISS Today*, May 22, 2012. https://issafrica.org/iss-today/the-soft-power-role-of-turkey-in-somalia

[429] Abukar Aman, 'Erdogan: The hero of Somalia', *Al Jazeera*, January 21, 2015. https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2015/01/visit-erdogan-somalia-201512112433181881 8.html

[430] Abdillahi Mohamed Duale: Foreign Minister of Somaliland (2006-2010), interview with author, March 3, 2016.

provided Ankara with a military presence and facilities that allowed swift power projection in the region.

Somaliland's political elites often point out how extensively Ankara has invested in the South and neglected the North. Despite favouring Mogadishu, Turkey also made efforts to expand its influence in Somaliland, in which they were confronted with a significant Ethiopian presence. The winner in the Middle Eastern scramble for influence in Somaliland became UAE. After the Yemen war in 2015, UAE and Saudi Arabia expanded their military presence on the Red Sea. Initially, the UAE used Djibouti as a base to conduct operations on their targets in Yemen. The cooperation quickly ended however when 'an altercation between a senior Emirati diplomat and the commander of Djibouti's air force ruptured bilateral relations between the UAE and Djibouti.'[431] This led the UAE to shift its cooperation from away from Djibouti to Eritrea – a measure that initially worried Ethiopia.[432] UAE sought to expand its military presence in the Red Sea and in this regard looked to use Somaliland's Berbera as a base for its operations in the Yemen war. Alarmed by the prospects of Eritrea breaking out of the isolation, Ethiopia persuaded the UAE to invest in Somaliland instead.[433] The UAE then agreed to a build both a military facility and port in Somaliland.

These Middle Eastern actors were, as opposed to Eritrea, not seen as enemies or threats, in that they were not seen as seeking to inflict harm on Ethiopia. They were instead only competitors for influence. In addition to this, these states also invested heavily in the Ethiopian economy. Turkey was in 2014 the largest source of FDI in Ethiopia[434] In relation to these Middle Eastern states, economic incentives trumped any other foreign policy interests. Ethiopia did not publicly react negatively to the presence of these states in Somalia, but instead focused on containing their influence through co-opting Somali politicians.

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[431] Brendon J. Cannon and Ash Rossiter, 'Ethiopia, Berbera Port and the Shifting Balance of Power in the Horn of Africa', *Rising Powers Quarterly*, Vol. 2, Issue 4, (2017): 14.

[432] Ibid.

[433] Nizar Manek, 'U.A.E. Military Base in Breakaway Somaliland to Open by June', Bloomberg, November 6, 2018. https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-11-06/u-a-e-military-base-in-breakaway-somaliland-seen-open-by-june

[434] Tesfaye Hailu, 'Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Outlook in Ethiopia: Evidence from Oromia Region Selected Special Zone', *International Journal of African and Asian Studies,* Vol.35 (2017): 35.

In relation to the competition with Middle Eastern states, Ethiopia's policy was characterized by strategic restraint. It did not allow the conflicts of interests described above with these states to develop into a diplomatic conflict, let alone a violent one. Ignoring the domestic calls to 'contain the Arab encirclement', the EPRDF chose to take advantage their presence. They supported Somaliland's cooperation with UAE on Berbera, and later attained a 19 % stake in the Berbera Port.[435] The choice of dealing with these challenges through restraint rather than force and coercion was a function of the prioritization of economic development. Ethiopia needed additional outlets to the sea. UAE's investment in Berbera, while ceding influence to a state with which Ethiopia disagrees on many issues, was a pathway for developing Somaliland, and thus its long-term stabilization and attaining a new access to the sea.

3.12. Conclusion

This chapter has drawn attention to a very neglected historical period in Ethiopia-Somalia relations: the EPRDF's first years in power. The Revolutionary orientation illustrates that EPRDF's first policy on Somalia when coming to power, far from being hegemonic and driven by a fear of Greater Somalia nationalism, was instead characterized by disinterest as well as inability to anticipate and foresee the ideological incompatibility between it and various Somali factions. What emerged under the Revolutionary orientation was a negative peace. That is, a peace that was not based on interdependence, common interests or held together by some other incentive, but rather merely characterized by the absence of conflict. There were no external threats to create security interdependence, and Ethiopia did not have a policy of or a capacity to pursue economic integration at the time. Consequently, once conflicts of interests emerged there were no incentives for self-restraint and military confrontation ensued.

The influence of this orientation declined after the AIAI conducted terrorist attacks in Ethiopia. The EPRDF's first response was to dismantle the AIAI bases in Somalia and pursue a policy of buffer-zones. The latter strategy disrupted the power balance amongst

[435] Capital, 'Ethiopia buys 19% stake on Berbera Port', March 5, 2018. http://capitalethiopia.com/2018/03/05/ethiopia-buys-19-stake-berbera-port/

warlords, and set in motion a chain reaction that led to the emergence and escalation of anti-Ethiopian Somali nationalism.

Under the Developmental State, the EPRDF formulated clear objectives and corresponding strategies. Its primary objective was to overcome the condition of statelessness, and prevent any political group hostile to Ethiopia and that had the intention of destabilizing Ethiopia. The short-term strategy applied was to conduct cross-border military operations to neutralize imminent threats. The intermediate strategy was to construct buffer-zones inside Somalia along the border to Ethiopia. This involved supporting the establishment of small political structures that could play the role of states by controlling violence, providing services and most importantly for Ethiopia, make sure that no group hostile to Ethiopia could cross the border. The long-term strategy was to make a state through a building block strategy, wherein the small buffer-zones and regional states would come together to form a centralized state.

The intermediate and long-term strategies were pursued through the tactic of co-optation. Co-optation was an essential feature of strategic restraint in Somalia. It was the via media between military force and the depoliticized and de-securitized engagement that characterized the Revolutionary orientation. It was an alternative way of projecting power that were in line with the economic priorities of the Developmental State. It provided a path to stabilization and influence in a non-violent way. Though it generated cooperation with Somali political elites, this was an ad-hoc interest-based cooperation contingent on geopolitical circumstances, as opposed to the sort of societal positive peace that characterized Ethiopia's relationship with Somaliland.

The other tactic applied to pursue these long-term objectives was regional and global alignments. The Developmental State orientation played a role in two ways: firstly, strategic restraint in the past (such as Ethiopia's dispute with Djibouti in 2000 during the Arta initiative) was important for being able to take advantage of a dispute between Eritrea and Djibouti in 2008. Secondly, restraint against Eritrea in 2000-2017 (i.e. not settling the rivalry through war) was also important for not generating the perception of hegemonic aspirations amongst its neighbours Kenya, Uganda, Sudan and Djibouti. This helped create the image of Eritrea as a regional spoiler and that Ethiopia's intervention in Somalia in 2006 was motivated by self-defence. Strategic restraint also led Ethiopia to

invest in diplomacy. Lobbying in the AU, IGAD and of global powers such as the US were critical for attaining diplomatic support for its mission in Somalia and for isolating its rival Eritrea. This also illustrates that rivalry management is essentially a multilateral game rather than a dyadic interaction, in which the actors' relationship with third parties is an important variable.

Under the Developmental State, the relative stability that emerged was based on security interdependence rather than merely the absence of conflict. The stability that emerged in the Somali-Ethiopian relationship after 2008 had been tested and survived the conflicts of interests that erupted between Ethiopia and Somali leaders such as Abdullahi Yusuf in 2008, Barre Hirrale in 2012 and Farmajoo in 2017 – conflicts that were eventually managed through compromise, peaceful and institutional means. In this case we also find a regional variation in the depth of peace that emerged. In Somalia, stability and peace was maintained in relation to the FGS primarily by the need to cooperate against Al Shabaab, and in relation to the regional states by the need to balance against the FGS. Once these incentives disappear, the actors will be independent of each other and have no acute need to compromise when conflicts of interests emerge. This does not mean that violence would necessarily follow, but the type of compromise and restraint exhibited in 2009-2017 might not continue – unless significant measures that would generate economic incentives are put in place. In Somaliland on the other hand, the relationship has developed beyond pragmatic elite-based self-interest to one of societal integration and narratives of affinity embedded in national identity. Just as there are narratives about enmity between Somalia and Ethiopia in southern Somalia, there were public discourses based on historical events and past relationships about affinity between the Somaliland and Ethiopian peoples. This is also nourished by extensive economic interdependencies, such as, trade, educational services and the Berbera port.

The Developmental State had two economic dimensions in this case. It led to the development of an alternative strategy for dealing with old challenge of attaining access to the sea. As opposed to the Irredenta, which sought to achieve this objective through territorial annexation, the EPRDF chose to pursue this goal by buying shares in seaports in neighbouring countries such as Djibouti, Somaliland and Sudan. Secondly, the prioritization of attracting FDI also led it to actively seek out investments from countries like Turkey and UAE. Its success in this regard served as an additional constraint on its

behaviour in Somalia. Despite alarmist calls about the 'Arab encirclement' by domestic constituencies along the lines of the Irredenta, Ethiopia chose to come to terms with Middle Eastern military presence in Somalia.

The Developmental State ideology was particularly important in generating economic interdependencies in a context such as the Horn of Africa, where the societies were at an early stage of development and did not have strong private sector economies. The state stepped in to fill the gap by investing in infrastructure and energy projects that created interdependencies. In Somaliland, there were both private sector trade and public sector cooperation on infrastructure integration (Berbera port). The latter has been highlighted by both governments as constituting a much more important source of interdependence than private sector interaction.

There is an important temporal dimension to the effectiveness of these strategies. The Developmental State orientation did not yield results immediately when it was formally adopted in 2002. On the contrary, conflict escalated and culminated in war in 2006. The evolution of the effectiveness of alignment and co-optation strategies displayed a cumulative snowball character, which led to increased stability over time. The ability of Ethiopia to co-opt Somali political actors improved as the number of co-optees increased. US diplomatic cables for example described how local allies/buffer-zones in southern Somalia began to defect to the UIC in 2006, not due to ideological reasons, but because it was safer to side with the winner. Many of the economic incentives for cooperation were also dependent on being in a particular stage in development. For example, Ethiopia's push for infrastructural integration with neighbouring countries could only be applied by the EPRDF after two decades in power, rather than when the Developmental State policy was adopted in 2002.

This case-study illustrates how ideational factors and variations explain important behavioural dynamics in Ethiopia's engagement with Somalia. Firstly, as opposed to much of the literature, foreign policy in the period of 1991-1996 were shaped by the revolutionary ideological formation of the EPRDF, rather than Ethiopian state-identity. This orientation was discredited by its inability to anticipate external threats, which illustrates how ideational frameworks based on history and ideology are challenged, discredited and changed through interaction with strategic developments on the ground.

The second foreign policy orientation, of the Developmental State is another ideationally driven foreign policy that significantly shaped policy towards Somalia.

This chapter has demonstrated that much of the literature's claims of hegemony as motive and military force as primary foreign policy tool of Ethiopia's engagement with Somalia were misleading. And that Ethiopia's motives were in fact limited to building a political order in Somalia not dominated by Islamists with international agendas or proxies of Ethiopia's regional rivals, and achieving this through diplomatic means such as co-optation. The second military intervention in Somalia in 2006 illustrates yet again how unexpected external exigencies challenge and lead to deviations from foreign policy aspirations.

Finally, the rivalry dynamics amongst Ethiopians and Somalis also display another ideational characteristic: Ethiopia's irreconcilable enemies – both in Somaliland and southern Somalia – were internationalist Islamists. This indicates that not only Ethiopia but also many of its Somali counterparts pursued foreign policies driven by ideas. The behaviour of both Somaliland and southern Somali actors also display that its important to examine and understand the sub-national variations in foreign policy orientations.

Chapter 4. Ethiopia's Eritrea Policy, 1991-2018

4.1. Introduction

Ethiopia's history of conflict and cooperation with Eritrea has been uniquely intense. By supporting Eritrea's right to secession in 1993, the EPRDF adopted an unusual stance on this self-determination question. In the post-partition period Ethiopia's economic and security policies were often motivated by trust and solidarity rather than self-interest. In 1998 the two states engaged in the most deadly inter-state war in modern African history, despite extensive economic interdependence. Ethiopia's management of the war was also peculiar. Meles Zenawi, after having attained a military victory, defied the advice and demands of his peers in the EPRDF and decided to give up any leverage attained through military means by settling the border dispute through international arbitration. In the rivalry that ensued after the war, Meles chose to apply a long-term diplomatic containment strategy against Eritrea, instead of relying on Ethiopia's greater conventional military power to settle the conflict.

While the partition process and border war have received a great deal of academic attention,[436] Ethiopia's strategies for managing the post-war rivalry have been overlooked. Meles Zenawi was the architect of Ethiopia's Eritrea policy, and thus any effort to understand Ethiopia's post-war polices must centre on his leadership. Meles' approach to Eritrea was radically different from those of his colleagues in the EPRDF and Ethiopia's political opposition. His critics attribute his unorthodox approach to a personal bias in favour of Eritrea,[437] while academic studies often do not consider Meles' Eritrea policies in the context of the broader foreign policy orientation which they were part of.[438]

[436] See: Tekeste Negash and Kjetil Tronvoll, *Brothers at War: Making Sense of the Eritrea-Ethiopia War,* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2000); Michael Woldemariam, 'Partition Problems: Relative Power, Historical Memory, and the Origins of the Eritrean-Ethiopian War', in *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 21, (2015)

[437] Gebru Asrat, interview by VOA America, VOA America. October 6, 2014. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K79OxTTv4ZU

[438] Few studies of Ethiopia-Eritrea relations have given any attention to the 2002 foreign policy strategy. See for example: John Abbink, 'Ethiopia—Eritrea: Proxy Wars and Prospects of Peace in the Horn of Africa', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 21, no. 3 (September 1, 2003): 407–26.

This chapter shows that Meles Zenawi's post-war policies were unique in the Ethiopian political spectrum, including in relation to much of the EPRDF leadership, but that they however involved similar tactics and were based on the same strategic priorities as the policies applied towards other states in the region. Meles' inclination to rely on diplomatic means to manage the rivalry with Eritrea was a not function of Eritrea's historical relationship with Ethiopia, but rather of his understanding of Ethiopia's fragile economic and political conditions at the time, and his prioritization of economic development as the primary national interest. Consequently, his Eritrea policy reflected the priorities of the Developmental State orientation rather than any other factor.

The Developmental State orientation shaped the management of the rivalry with Eritrea through the principle of strategic restraint. Strategic restraint was more important and required more sacrifice in relation to Eritrea than towards any other state. It was in relation to Eritrea that the ideals of the Irredenta were most relevant and apt. Ethiopian territorial revisionism towards Eritrea included access to the sea, which was seen as an existential national security concern by many Ethiopians. Eritrea's attack on Ethiopia in May 1998 made the restoration of lost status and the use of military force combined imperatives. Convincing the Ethiopian people and the EPRDF that the conflict and subsequent rivalry after 2000 ought to be managed through diplomatic means was a challenging task. Meles was however of the view that avoiding another war with Eritrea was essential for the Developmental State governance model to succeed at home. The most important feature of policy towards Eritrea under the Developmental State foreign policy orientation was strategic restraint.

This chapter is divided into three parts that examine Ethiopia's policy towards Eritrea under the Revolutionary orientation, the Irredenta and the Developmental State. Parts one and two constitute background material in this chapter, and are mostly based on secondary sources, but do provide a unique interpretation of the drivers of Ethiopia's policies in the 1990's. Part three is the main contribution of this chapter and relies extensively on interviews and covers neglected aspects of Ethiopia's policies towards Eritrea.

Part one accounts for Ethiopia's policy towards Eritrea under the Revolutionary Orientation, and draws attention to how successful cooperation in the form of economic

and political integration was taken for granted and not problematized, and conflict not anticipated. This led to security and economic policies that were often based on trust and solidarity, rather than self-interest. It then accounts for how conflicting interests gradually evolved and culminated in war in 1998. The Revolutionary orientation was based on the assumption that serious conflicts of interest with neighbouring states were unlikely. When such conflicts did emerge with Eritrea, the orientation did not have any mechanisms for managing them. The argument made in this section differs from much of the literature which focuses on the intimate historical relationship between the TPLF and EPLF as the crucial explanatory factor for the evolution of the relationship in the 1990s. While I do not deny that this peculiar history mattered, but by illustrating that the EPRDF's policies towards Eritrea were similar to policies towards other neighbouring states this thesis illustrates that an ideationally driven foreign policy orientation was also a crucial driver of Ethiopia's policy towards Eritrea in the 1990's.

Part two focuses on how the war led to a resurgence of the Irredenta orientation. When the war broke out in 1998, much of the Ethiopian public, opposition parties and crucially the EPRDF made a turn to the Irredenta. Its values, symbols and narratives were effective for mobilizing resources and people from various parts of Ethiopia for the war effort. While most of the EPRDF and the Ethiopian political elites seemed to have made a full reorientation to Ethiopia Irredenta, Meles and some of his colleagues however only resorted to this orientation for tactical reasons.

Part three accounts for Ethiopia's policy towards Eritrea during the post-war rivalry and under the Developmental State governance model. The Developmental State ideology incentivised the EPRDF to avoid settling the rivalry through military force, and instead relied on a long-term strategy of coercive isolation to bring about a policy or regime change in Eritrea. This section first examines Ethiopia's use of proxy-warfare as a rivalry management strategy. Secondly, it accounts for the role of conventional military force in this rivalry, and how Ethiopia pursued the twin goals of restraining itself from getting drawn into a full-scale war with Eritrea, and deterring the latter from aggression. It shows that Ethiopia succeeded with these objectives, not only by building-up a sufficient military capacity, but also through skirmishes along the border and war games that served the purpose of signalling resolve.

The third section accounts for the role of Ethiopia's strategy of coercive isolation. It illustrates how this process went through two stages. In the first stage, between 2000 and 2007, Eritrea was not isolated regionally or globally. In the second stage, Eritrea was gradually isolated regionally, and in 2009 was sanctioned by the UNSC. It argues that this can to a great extent be attributed to Eritrea's foreign policy choices, but also illustrates how this was Ethiopia's plan as early as 2003, and how various tactics were employed to accelerate and push this process forward. The EPRDF's tactics included nudging Eritrea to react aggressively by using its greater diplomatic capital to frustrate Isaias. Ethiopia then made diplomatic overtures to third parties in the region and globally, in order to convince them that Eritrea was a collective threat, while itself as a responsible government. Thirdly, Addis Ababa employed coercive diplomacy against states trying to cooperate with Eritrea. It concludes by exploring the limitations of the strategy of coercive isolation, and the rivalry de-escalation that began in 2018.

By 2013, Ethiopia had succeeded in isolating Eritrea regionally and globally, so that it no longer posed a serious conventional military threat. A number of voices within the EPRDF and wider public were increasingly dissatisfied with the stalemate produced by the containment policy, and called for a new policy on Eritrea that could lead to a sustainable peace. This led Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn to declare in 2017 that his government was working on a new policy for Eritrea. Before the policy was made public, there was a change in leadership in the EPRDF. Abiy Ahmed became Ethiopia's new Prime Minister in April 2018, and in June declared that Ethiopia would accept and demarcate the border with Eritrea. Within a few months, diplomatic and economic relations were restored and the rivalry had significantly de-escalated. I conclude by arguing that this was primarily an outcome of two factors: The Developmental State had created a new power balance between Ethiopia and Eritrea which incentivised both states to make peace and secondly, the scapegoating of the TPLF by Abiy Ahmed and Isaias Afwerki, which made it possible for both parties to sell the peace deal as a victory to their domestic audiences. Finally, I also draw attention to how Abiy Ahmed's administration has been moving away from the Developmental State, both as economic model and foreign policy orientation.

4.2. The Revolutionary Orientation: 1993-1998

4.2.1. Background: Historical TPLF-EPLF Relations

The EPLF and TPLF had a long history of conflict and cooperation during their insurgency against the Derg. Most notable instances of cooperation were EPLF's military support to the TPLF in 1975/6 through training and equipment, and TPLF's reciprocation during the Derg's Red Star campaign in 1982 when they sent some 5000 soldiers to fight alongside the Eritreans.[439]

The two organizations however had many political differences. The most important difference was their different approach to nationalist ideology. The EPLF pursued a unitary nationalist programme that recognized Eritrea as multi-ethnic society, but was fiercely opposed to any institutional accommodation of these identities. The TPLF on the other hand were from the outset Leninist in their orientation, and believed that the primary contradiction in Ethiopian society was the oppression of the nationalities. These differences led to fierce political feuds between the two organizations in the early days of their revolutionary war. The most important event in this process was the EPLF's blockage of an escape route to Sudan for Tigrayan civilians fleeing drought and famine in 1985.[440] This event led the TPLF to terminate relations with the EPLF until 1988, when they resumed a tactical alignment. Despite these conflicts the common objective of defeating the Derg became an overriding imperative until Eritrea achieved independence.

In 1991 Eritrea, became de fact but not de jure independent, and a situation of two systems in one state emerged with the formation of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) and the Provisional Government of Eritrea (PGE). Given the unique situation, relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea were only formalized through a generic agreement called the Principles of Cooperation.[441] This document recognizes that Eritrea's 'right to self-determination was frustrated by…previous expansionist

[439] Abebe Teklehaimanot: Major General (ret.) and former Chief of the Ethiopian Air Force, interview with author, March 21, 2014. Abebe Teklehaimanot is a veteran of the TPLF guerrilla struggle and was alongside a number of other military officials forced into early retirement by Meles Zenawi for not clearly siding with during the 2000 TPLF split. He subsequently maintained good personal relations with Meles Zenawi, but remained critical of Meles Zenawi's handling of the Eritrea war.

[440] Martin Plaut and Patrick Gilkes 'Conflict in the Horn: Why Eritrea and Ethiopia Are at War – Eritrea', ReliefWeb, March 31, 1999. https://reliefweb.int/report/eritrea/conflict-horn-why-eritrea-and-ethiopia-are-war

[441] Negash and Tronvoll, *Brothers at War: Making Sense of the Eritrea-Ethiopia War*, 105

governments'.[442] The premise for the new relationship was therefore one where the EPRDF saw Eritrea's secession not as a gesture of good-will from Ethiopia, but rather as justice delayed. Article 1 of the agreement recognized Eritrea's right to hold a referendum on independence, while Article 3 recognized Ethiopia's right to use the Port of Assab for free.[443] It also states that the two entities 'agree to enter into a mutual defence agreement'.[444]

4.2.2. Post-Partition Foreign Policy

After Eritrea's formal secession in 1993, the two states signed the Friendship and Cooperation Agreement (also known as the Asmara Pact), which was to serve as a framework for the cooperation between them. The Pact had 25 protocols that formulated an ambitious plan to integrate the two states and societies in various economic and social spheres, from education and tourism to defence,[445] and provided a basis on which economic integration would be pursued. A joint ministerial commission was supposed to meet annually to assess progress in the implementation of the protocols.

After the partition Ethiopia, guided by the Revolutionary orientation, pursued a number of unusually accommodative policies in various sectors that were based not on self-interest but rather on solidarity and trust. One of the first and most important manifestations of the accommodative stance of the EPRDF was its acceptance of Eritrea's policy of deporting more than 130,000 Ethiopians living in Eritrea during the partition, while Eritreans who had lived in Ethiopia continued to do so unaffected by the partition.[446] Eritreans maintained most of the privileges of Ethiopian citizenship while attaining sovereign statehood. Trust also led the Ethiopian government to conclude that the demarcation of the common border was not a priority in 1993.[447] The two parties had agreed to start a

[442] Ibid.

[443] Ibid.

[444] Ibid.

[445] Ibid: 31.

[446] John R. Campbell, *Caught between the Ideology and Realities of Development: Transiting from the Horn of Africa to Europe.* Migration Studies Unit Working Papers, London School of Economics, 2009: 5

[447] Negash and Tronvoll, *Brothers at War: Making Sense of the Eritrea-Ethiopia War,* 26

formal demarcation process, but neither of the governments took any initiative to start this process until 1997.

In regional politics, a security alignment emerged between Ethiopia and Eritrea that went beyond cooperating against common threats to considering a threat against Eritrea as a threat against Ethiopia. The two states were committed to a mutual defence agreement through the Asmara Pact, and were also members of an informal alliance called the 'Frontline States'.[448] The first instance of cooperation came in 1993 when Sudan's Islamist projection against Eritrea in 1993 led Ethiopia to conclude that the threat was a shared one.[449] The two governments coordinated their proxy-war against Sudan, through support for Sudanese opposition groups and coercive diplomacy through IGAD and other international bodies.[450] Ethiopian and Eritrean troops also collaborated in the regional/global operation to install Joseph Kabila as President of DRC in 1996.[451] During Eritrea's war with Yemen in 1995, Ethiopia not only sided with Eritrea, but also supported Eritrea with military equipment such as lending it fighter jets.[452] Given that Ethiopia neither shared any border with Yemen nor had any conflict with it, this was particularly indicative how Ethiopia's relationship with Eritrea was not always based on self-interest and was devoid of a clear strategic motive.

Economic policy was also initially driven by vague assumptions about an easy path to economic integration. This led the EPRDF to provide access to Ethiopian markets for Eritrean companies, which were allowed to export goods to Ethiopia free from tariffs. Eritrea exported 82% of its manufacturing goods to Ethiopia in 1992-1997,[453] and imported mostly agricultural goods in return. Access to Ethiopian markets was supposed to be reciprocated with free use of the Assab Port by Ethiopia; Worku however shows

[448] David Shinn: US Ambassador to Ethiopia (1996-1999), interview with author, April 14, 2017.

[449] Mulugeta Berhe: Major General (ret.) and responsible for demobilization of the Derg's Armed Forces, interview with author, April 27, 2017.

[450] See Chapter 5 for more detail.

[451] Harry Verhoeven and Phillip Roessler, *Why Comrades Go to War: Liberation Politics and the Outbreak of Africa's Deadliest Conflict*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

[452] Abebe Teklehaimanot: Major General (ret.) and former Chief of the Ethiopian Air Force, interview with author, March 21, 2014

[453] Worku Abera, 'Asymmetric Benefits: The Ethio-Eritrea Common Market (1991 to 1998)', *International Journal of African Development* 4, no. 1 (June 2017): 70. https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/ijad/vol4/iss1/6.

that almost 1 billion Birr was paid in port fees to Eritrea during this period;[454] while Ethiopian goods were exempted from tariffs, a substantial amount of money was paid in service fees. Another clause of the Asmara Pact provided for shared management of the oil refinery in Assab, where Ethiopia would purchase crude oil using its foreign currency, and then allocate 30% of the fuel from the refinery to be sold to Eritrea in local currency (despite the Eritrean population numbering around 5% of the Ethiopian).[455]

Many Ethiopians raised the problem of informal practices, such as, smuggling, which they believed compromised Ethiopian interests.[456] The President of Tigray Regional State, Gebru Asrat, claims that his regional government caught 38 million birr worth of sesame seeds being smuggled from Ethiopia to Eritrea.[457] Raw products such as sesame seeds and coffee were allegedly smuggled to Eritrea and then exported to the outside world by the EPLF.[458] In this way, Gebru claims that EPLF's smuggling deprived the Ethiopian state of foreign currency. Ethiopian assets located in Eritrean territory, such as navy ships, an oil refinery and financial assets were confiscated by the Eritrean government, and Eritrea's share of Ethiopia's debt was also forgiven.[459] In terms of monetary policy, Eritrea used multiple exchange rates for the birr, which included an 'official exchange rate, the auction rate, and the "preferential exchange rate"'.[460] Worku explains that:

The IMF observes that the EPLF used the 'preferential rate' for 'equilibrating' (IMF, 1995) its dollar holdings. What this IMF statement means is that the EPLF used the illegal rate for accumulating US dollars. For buying US dollars and selling the birr, the EPLF utilized the 'preferential rate' and used its embassy in Addis Ababa, supporters, and party members (Asrat, 2014) and its companies, especially the Red Sea Trading Company and the Finance Commission (IMF, 1995), to carry out the transactions. Implementing a triple exchange rate regime, while

[454] Ibid: 65.

[455] Ibid: 67.

[456] Gebru Asrat, 'Interview by VOA America'; Gebru Asrat is a veteran of the TPLF guerrilla struggle and was the President of the Togray Regional State at the time of the war with Eritrea. He was also one of the dissenters in the TPLF spilt in 2000. And while he was suspended from the party, he wasn't imprisoned like Siye Abraha. But unlike the likes of Abebe Teklehaimanot he became a vocal opponent of Meles Zenawi and the TPLF after the split.

[457] Worku, 'Asymmetric Benefits: The Ethio-Eritrea Common Market (1991 to 1998)', *International Journal of African Development*, 59.

[458] Gebru Asrat, Interview by VOA America,

[459] Worku, 'Asymmetric Benefits: The Ethio-Eritrea Common Market (1991 to 1998),'

[460] Ibid: 64.

Ethiopia was using only the official exchange rate, permitted the EPLF to siphon off Ethiopia's foreign exchange, resulting in Eritrea's 'comfortable foreign exchange reserve position' (IMF, 1995, p. 34) in the early 1990s.[461]

The rush to economic integration and the accommodative stance by Ethiopia was to some extent caused by an ambiguous approach to Eritrean nationhood by both Meles Zenawi and Isaias Afwerki. Meles Zenawi and many of the TPLF leaders were convinced that Eritrea and Ethiopia would be reunited at some point.[462] Isaias Afwerki entertained similar ideas about reunification through integration. In his first state visit to Ethiopia in 1993, he declared that the full integration of the two states was an objective that should be pursued, starting with economic integration and culminating in political integration.[463] Former Eritrean Defence Minister Mesfin Hagos later claimed that Isaias proposed to the EPLF leadership that Eritrea should join Ethiopia in a confederation, a proposition that was voted down.[464]

The nature of Ethiopia's policy towards Eritrea in 1991-1998 was therefore, as much of the literature argues, a function of the unique and intimate relationship between the Eritrean and Ethiopian peoples as well as the TPLF-EPLF.[465] This literature does however not take into consideration that policy towards Eritrea was made in a broader ideational framework, as the EPRDF's policies towards Somalia and Sudan indicate. In other words, Eritrea policy was as much rooted in the EPRDF's ideological revolution

[461] Ibid: 64.

[462] This view was notably held by Sebhat Nega and, according to David Shinn, also Meles Zenawi. It should be noted that both Sebhat and Meles were seen as having a particular affinity with Eritrea, and thus it may have been a view limited to a few leaders in the TPLF; Sebhat Nega: Executive Director of Ethiopian International Institute for International Peace and Development and first Chairman of the TPLF, interview with author March 19, 2014; David Shinn, 'Conference on the Future of Ethiopia and Eritrea Relations', October 18, 2015. https://www.tesfanews.net/conference-on-the-future-of-ethiopia-and-eritrea-relation-video/

[463] Isaias Afworki, *Interview in Addis Abeba 1993*, (1993). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rthKX-ymawE.

[464] EritreaToday. "Radio SBS Interview with Mesfin Hagos in Tigrinya." *Eritrea Today*, July 22, 2018. http://www.eritreatoday.com/radio-sbs-interview-with-mesfin-hagos-in-tigrinya/.

[465] This literature includes: Negash and Tronvoll, *Brothers at War: Making Sense of the Eritrea-Ethiopia War;* Paulos Milkias, 'Ethiopia, The TPLF and Roots of the 2001 Political Tremor', *International Conference on African Development Archives*, (August 1, 2001). http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/africancenter_icad_archive/4; Leenco Lata, 'The Ethiopia-Eritrea War', *Review of African Political Economy,* Vol. 30, No. 97, (2003).

against the Derg and unitary nationalism as it was a function of the peculiar TPLF-EPLF history.

4.2.3. The Decline of the Revolutionary Orientation

Ethiopia's accommodative policies in economic and security affairs were challenged within the EPRDF from 1996 onwards, culminating in the decline of the Revolutionary orientation in 1998.

In security affairs, divergent views on the relationship with Eritrea emerged within the EPRDF around 1996. During Eritrea's war with Yemen, Siye Abraha and Tewolde Woldemariam had questioned the rationale of supporting Eritrea when, in their view, it was the aggressor.[466] A group of officials in the Central Command, led by Tewolde Woldemariam, had as early December 1997 put forward the idea that the EPLF was planning an attack and that Ethiopia should prepare for such an eventuality.[467] Tamrat Layne, the then Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister, has also claimed that he presented a report to the EPRDF leadership that warned that war could potentially break out with Eritrea in the near future, but that Meles Zenawi had rejected the report and told him to suppress it.[468]

In economic affairs, the Tigray Regional State and other Ethiopians complained to the federal government about the access Eritreans had to the Ethiopian economy, and illicit economic activity by the Eritrean government.[469] The Eritrean and Ethiopian governments also began to disagree on how economic relations should be managed and regulated. In the Asmara Pact, Eritrea and Ethiopia had agreed to harmonize macroeconomic policy, most important of which were the exchange and interest rates, but over time it became very clear that they had conflicting objectives and interests in relation

[466] Milkias, 'Ethiopia, The TPLF and Roots of the 2001 Political Tremor', 4.

[467] Tewolde Woldemariam was at the time one of the most influential figures in the TPLF and plausible contender to Meles Zenawi's leadership. He was one of the leaders in the dissent process in the TPLF and subsequently unofficially put on house arrest for many years. Tewolde Woldemariam: Head of organisational affairs in the TPLF, interview with author, May 1, 2014.

[468] Tamrat Layne, interview by SBS Radio, June 27, 2018. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PjgjiydQgAU

[469] Tewolde Woldemariam: Head of organisational affairs in the TPLF, interview with author, May 1, 2014

to these issues.[470] Three ministerial meetings were held to work out the details of the arrangement in 1993-1996, none of which made much progress.[471] In relation to trade, Ethiopia proposed a free-trade area as a first step in the integration process.[472] Eritrea on the other hand wanted to renegotiate the entire agreement, and proposed equal trade and investment opportunities for 'nationals of both countries, irrespective of whether they are residents or non-residents.'[473] Ethiopia however insisted that it would have to restrict Eritrean citizens' access to a number of sectors, to which Asmara responded by accusing Addis Ababa of pursuing protectionist policies.[474] In November 1996, the two states established a joint-committee to review the economic relations and find a long-term arrangement for managing bilateral relations, which submitted its findings on January 1, 1997.[475]

The tensions increased in November 1997 when Eritrea introduced its own currency, the Nakfa. Eritrea wanted its currency to be on par with the Ethiopian Birr, with trade between the two states be conducted in the national currencies.[476] Given that Ethiopia's economy was more than ten times the size of Eritrea's, this demand was deemed unacceptable to Ethiopia.[477] Ethiopia rejected both demands, and stated that a Letter of Credit would be required for Eritreans wishing to trade with Ethiopia. By January 1998 this was official policy, which led to price hikes on some products in both countries. Ethiopia had also after the adoption of the Nakfa issued new bills for its Birr currency, an action that made Eritrea's Birr reserves valueless.[478]

The economic competition that was emerging around 1996 between the two states has also been attributed to the changing economic role of Tigray.[479] The TPLF had

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[470] Negash and Tronvoll, *Brothers at War: Making Sense of the Eritrea-Ethiopia War,* 31-32

[471] Ibid: 32.

[472] Ibid.

[473] Ibid.

[474] Ibid; Prunier, "The Ethio-Eritrean Conflict: An Essay in Interpretation."

[475] Negash and Tronvoll, *Brothers at War: Making Sense of the Eritrea-Ethiopia War,* 33.

[476] Ibid: 35.

[477] Gérard Prunier, "The Ethio-Eritrean Conflict: An Essay in Interpretation." Refworld, November 1, 1998. http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6a6b74.html.

[478] David Shinn, "Time to Bring Eritrea in from the Cold (But It's Harder than It Sounds)" *African Arguments* (blog), January 13, 2014. https://africanarguments.org/2014/01/13/time-to-bring-eritrea-in-from-the-cold-but-its-harder-than-it-sounds-by-david-shinn/

[479] Negash and Tronvoll, *Brothers at War: Making Sense of the Eritrea-Ethiopia War,* 37-38.

established a partystatal, EFFORT, in 1995, which had become an important actor in the Ethiopian economy and began to develop a manufacturing sector in Tigray that could compete with Eritrea's. Consequently, EFFORT and the Eritrean equivalent were competing in the same markets and sectors.

The challenge of demarcating the border had also been underestimated by the EPRDF under the Revolutionary orientation, and from 1997 was manifested through competing territorial claims by local administrations and law enforcement agencies from both countries. Border skirmishes in July/August 1997 led the Eritrean President to write a complaint to his Ethiopian counterpart about the occupation of territory by Ethiopian troops, which he believed was within Eritrean jurisdiction.[480] The Ethiopian PM responded that the territories occupied by Ethiopian troops were within its boundaries and thus not disputed.[481] Following this correspondence, a joint border-commission composed of high-ranking security officials from both states was established and held its first meeting in November 1997.[482] The second meeting was held on May 8 1998.[483] On May 6-8 skirmishes had taken place in the border town of Badme. According to Ethiopian officials, while the commission was in session, Eritrean troops entered Badme, and when they were told leave, responded by saying that Badme was Eritrean territory, which ended up with an exchange of fire and the Eritrean troops taking over the town.[484] While they disagree on who initiated the skirmishes, both governments agreed that these issues had been discussed, and that both sides had agreed to solve this issue peacefully through third-party mediation.[485]

4.3. War and the Irredenta Interlude: 1998-2000

4.3.1. The Border War

Despite the agreement to solve the territorial claims through dialogue and third party arbitration, on May 12 heavily armed Eritrean forces, consisting of soldiers, tanks, and

[480] Ibid.

[481] Ibid: 27.

[482] Ibid: 28.

[483] Ibid: 28.

[484] Sebhat Nega: Executive Director of Ethiopian International Institute for International Peace and Development and first Chairman of the TPLF, interview with author March 19, 2014.

[485] Negash and Tronvoll, *Brothers at War: Making Sense of the Eritrea-Ethiopia War*, 28-29.

artillery attacked and occupied Badme, and other areas, such as, Kafta Humera Wereda, Tahtay Adiabo Wereda and Laelay Adiabo Wereda, all of which had until then been governed by Ethiopia.[486] The Ethiopian presence was initially only composed of local militias and police and was therefore quickly overpowered.[487] The following day the Ethiopian Parliament issued a statement denouncing Eritrea's actions as aggression against Ethiopian sovereignty and demanding that Eritrea retreat to the status quo ante. Eritrea responded on May 14 by referring to Ethiopia's statement as 'appalling', and claimed that it was Ethiopia that had started the conflict by making incursions into Eritrean territory.[488] They proposed that disputed territories be demilitarized and that the dispute be settled by a third party mediator.[489] Full-scale war broke out between the two states immediately afterwards. In June Eritrea invaded and took control over the town of Zalambessa.[490] Both sides also began bombing civilian targets using their air forces, Ethiopia notably bombed the Asmara Airport, and Eritrea retaliated by bombing an elementary school in Tigray.[491] In June-December the fighting de-escalated and the two governments instead focused their attention on accruing heavy weapons and positioning themselves.[492]

In early 1999 the second round of fighting began, leading to Ethiopian troops breaking through Eritrea's defence-lines on the western front and recapturing Badme in what became known as 'Operation Sunset'.[493] On the central front, Ethiopia made efforts to retake Zalambessa, but Eritrea managed to defend its positions.[494] Small pieces of territory were exchanged back and forth at a great human cost during this phase.[495]

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[486] Sean D Murphy, 'The Eritrean-Ethiopian War (1998-2000)', *SSRN Electronic Journal*, (2016): 2.

[487] Eritrea-Ethiopia Claims Commission - Partial Award: Central Front - Ethiopia's Claim 2, (April, 28 2004): 467.

[488] Cabinet of Ministers of the Government of Eritrea, 'Statement of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Government of Eritrea on the Dispute with Ethiopia,' May 14, 1998.

[489] Ibid.

[490] Alexandra Magnolia Dias, 'An Inter-State War in the Post-Cold War Era: Eritrea-Ethiopia 81998-2000),' (Ph.D. diss., London School of Economics and Political Science, 2008): 97.

[491] Negash and Tronvoll, *Brothers at War: Making Sense of the Eritrea-Ethiopia War,* 60.

[492] Magnolia Dias, 'An Inter-State War in the Post-Cold War Era: Eritrea-Ethiopia 81998-2000),' 97.

[493] Ibid.

[494] Murphy, 'The Eritrean-Ethiopian War (1998-2000),' 4.

[495] Ibid.

In the third and final round of heavy warfare in May 2000, Ethiopian forces managed to move from Badme and penetrated deep into Eritrean territory, and take control of Eritrean cities and town such as Barentu, Om Hajer, Tesseney and Agordat.[496] Meles declared the war with Eritrea over on May 31, and ordered the Ethiopian troops not to continue marching towards Asmara or Assab.[497]

4.3.2. War Mobilization and the turn to the Irredenta

The war with Eritrea was a political shock that the Revolutionary orientation could not endure. The assumptions and ideals of the orientation were not only seen as flawed by most Ethiopians when the war broke out, but were also substantively incapable of providing any direction on how to pursue one's national interest under conditions of war. The Revolutionary orientation was based on the assumption that conflict could be averted, simply by adopting an accommodative attitude. It had no any strategies for managing threats and conflicts once they had materialized.

The first challenge that the EPRDF faced when the war began, and to which the Revolutionary orientation was of no use, was popular mobilization. The government needed to convince its citizens to contribute financial resources and volunteer for the war effort. Resorting to the narratives, symbols and ideas of unitary nationalism was for this purpose much more effective. The problem was of course that the EPRDF's nation-building project had centred on deconstructing the empire-state of Ethiopia and its unitary nationalism. About this process of deconstruction Bach notes that:

Imperial symbols and heroes were in fact denigrated and new ones were made founding myths. For instance, the imperial flag was presented as a mere 'piece of cloth' and King of Kings Menilek II (r. 1889-1913), until then celebrated as a national hero and symbol of resistance against European colonialism, was condemned for his "genocidal campaigns" within its Ethiopian empire.[498]

[496] Magnolia Dias, 'An Inter-State War in the Post-Cold War Era: Eritrea-Ethiopia 81998-2000),' 2.

[497] David Gough, 'Ethiopia Ends War with Eritrea', *The Guardian*, June 1, 2000. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2000/jun/01/ethiopia1.

[498] Jean-Nicolas Bach, 'EPRDF's Nation-Building: Tinkering with Convictions and Pragmatism', *Cadernos de Estudos Africanos*, no. 27 (2014): 105

Two central aspects of this deconstruction were to create a distinction between Ethiopia's history before and after the coming to power of the EPRDF, and to focus attention on domestic injustice and enemies rather than external enemies. The political re-orientation of the EPRDF in 1998 led to a change on both aspects. The new discourse emphasized historical continuity across regimes and the theme of collective responses to external aggression. Tronvoll describes the EPRDF's mobilization efforts as follows:

> The seven-month lull in the fighting between the Eritrean invasion in May 1998 and the Ethiopian offensive starting in February 1999 was used to build up the Ethiopian armed forces and to prepare the people for war. Every day, in the newspapers and on the radio and television, the preparation for war against the new enemy Eritrea was covered. Poems and songs about the new political situation were particularly popular, since they managed to capture and convey the re-emerging spirit of nationalism among the Ethiopian people.[499]

Historical analogies were made between Ethiopia's recapture of Badme and the victory over Italy at Adwa in 1896.[500] The government organized public demonstrations with banners that said: 'The victory of Adwa was repeated at Badme! The victory scored by our fathers was repeated by our children! The youth have lived up to the historical legacy through a resounding victory!'[501] Tronvoll notes that: 'Such slogans sustained the historical enemy images of Ethiopia, and views that Ethiopia has been – and always will be – threatened by foreign aggression: a country 'fenced by fire' as one informant described it.'[502] This is exactly the 'siege mentality' that the Revolutionary orientation had set out to deconstruct in 1991.

Although the re-orientation back to the Irredenta was party policy, the motives behind the support for this policy amongst officials varied. A substantial number of the EPRDF seemed to have genuinely re-embraced the ideals of the Irredenta. According to Tronvoll: 'In the immediate aftermath of the Eritrean invasion, key TPLF and EPRDF officials

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[499] Kjetil Tronvoll, *War and the Politics of Identity in Ethiopia: Making Enemies and Friends in the Horn of Africa*, (Oxford: James Currey, 2009): 136.

[500] Alexandra Magnólia Dias, 'The Conduct of an Inter-state War and Multiple Dimensions of Territory: 1998-2000 Eritrea-Ethiopia war,' *Cadernos de Estudos Africanos*, 22, 2011.

[501] Tronvoll, *War and the Politics of Identity in Ethiopia: Making Enemies and Friends in the Horn of Africa*: 140.

[502] Ibid.

appeared to have forgotten all about their old rhetoric and ideology.'[503] In fact, many of the TPLF dissenters that were suspended from the party in 2001 adopted this foreign policy orientation as permanent positions.[504]

A small group of individuals such as Meles Zenawi, Sebhat Nega and Hassen Shifa however seemed to have resorted to this discourse only as a tactical and temporary measure, rather than out of conviction.[505] During the war Sebhat Nega explained his position as the following:

We don't believe that the unity of Ethiopia should be based on confronting a foreign invader, or any other force. The unity of Ethiopia can come fundamentally from adhering to the implementation of the constitution, human rights questions, economic development, and government services in all aspects, in health, in education, etc, etc. These are the bases. For example, if we have to fight against the EPLF, we will not feel that it will serve as enhancing Ethiopian nationalism. No, no, no, no! It will warm up for a short period of time, but in the final analysis, it is economic rights, it is political rights – basically, it is the political, social and economic development of the country that can enhance Ethiopian nationalism and Ethiopian identity. And we don't want to exploit the war to warm up Ethiopian nationalism. It won't last. It may last for three or four months, but finally the people need to count on the advantages they get from their government, in health, in education, in justice and economic benefits. Therefore, this war will bring no change; it will only stimulate the Ethiopians for a short period of time. It is not sustainable. And we shall not capitalise on it.[506]

The onset of the war also led to a resurrection of Irredenta values and sentiments amongst the public, particularly in urban areas. Tronvoll's ethnographic research during the war captured some of the sentiments amongst the residents of Addis Ababa. One academic said:

This war is important for Ethiopia. We needed it. Finally, Ethiopia is again an important entity for the government. With the coming of war, the EPRDF has been forced to subdue the politics of ethnicity and concentrate on enhancing the national spirit instead. The re-emerging feeling of

[503] Ibid.

[504] EBC. 'Ethiopian Election 2010: Debate 6, Round 2 - Part 4 of 8: EDP,' April 10, 2010. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YCMJ78nyi8c.

[505] Tronvoll, *War and the Politics of Identity in Ethiopia*, 150-151

[506] Ibid: 150.

Ethiopianness is thus worth the costs of war.'[507] Another academic had this to say: 'Ethiopia needs this victory. The people need this victory. We need to feel proud once again, proud of being first and foremost Ethiopians and not Amharas, Oromo or some other ethnicity as the EPRDF has forced us to identify as. This time we are Ethiopians first, and whatever ethnic background we have is not relevant![508]

The war was also a vindication for those who had opposed the secession of Eritrea from the outset. Right after the war began, a journalist captured the sentiments of some of the residents in Addis Ababa. One resident said: 'Border dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea? What border dispute? Ethiopia's northern border is the Red Sea!'[509] Another said: 'The only lasting solution to the Ethio-Eritrean conflict is a re-unification of the two countries. Ethiopia will continue to be mad about being so terribly port-dependent. Eritrea will never refrain from trying to destabilize Ethiopia so long as it remains essentially enviable in economic terms'; and 'with so many resources from the rest of Ethiopia (from the central government and regional budgets, EFFORT and private sources) now being invested in Tigray, the TPLF would be a liability if it did not regain the port of Assab as a result of the loss of which Ethiopia is now forced to pay up to one billion Birr a year in hard currency.'[510]

During a public rally in Addis Ababa, one demonstrator said: 'nothing can stop our army. We are way superior to the Eritreans and now we shall rightfully take back what was lost in 1991 but which belongs to us. Eritrea will once more be joined to the motherland'.[511] According to Tronvoll 'The statement shows a striking resemblance to a promise hailed by Ethiopian soldiers of Haile Selassie in 1935 before they marched against the Italian invading army: "Never fear, we shall soon be at the sea!"'[512]

Many opposition parties also felt vindicated by the war. They too were of the opinion that Eritrea's secession was wrong to begin with, as it was part of the historical boundaries of the Ethiopian state. Parties such as the All Amhara People's Organization reacted with

[507] Ibid: 130.

[508] Ibid: 140.

[509] Addis Tribune, 'Ethiopia: Political Parties Declarations on the Ethio-Eritrean War,' June 19, 1998. https://allafrica.com/stories/199806190085.html

[510] Ibid.

[511] Tronvoll, *War and the Politics of Identity in Ethiopia*, 142.

[512] Ibid.

statements such as: 'Since Eritrea is an integral part of Ethiopia, the so-called border dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea ought to be viewed in this context.'[513] The war provided an opportunity for attitudes had been repressed to resurface.

4.3.3. Managing the War

The EPRDF agreed on the need to resort to military force as a defensive measure in 1998. They however disagreed on the timing and terms of the cessation of hostilities: Meles wanted to rely on military force for the limited objective of regaining territory lost in 1998, while the rest of the EPRDF wanted to use Ethiopia's military force to impose a victor's peace. In particular, they wanted to disable Eritrea's military force and settle the territorial dispute by force.

EPRDF's Understanding of the War

There was a general consensus in the EPRDF that the two main causes of the war were economic competition, and a general positional rivalry over who should be able to dictate the terms of the relationship,[514] problems that, in their view, were aggravated by Isaias Afwerki's incapacity to comprehend the norms of international politics. A US diplomatic memo from a discussion between US diplomats and Meles Zenawi provides important insights into the latter's strategic thinking. According to the US diplomats, Meles claimed that 'Eritrea was clear from 1991 onwards that it wanted to be Singapore and would need the support of the hinterlands … Ethiopia, no hinterland, undertook a route to its own economic development that stymied Eritrea's, and economic disagreement simmered for some time.'[515] The importance of economic motives has been reiterated by other senior TPLF officials such as Gebru Asrat and Sebhat Nega.[516] US diplomats claim that the invasion of Badme was seen by Meles as motivated by a desire 'to warn Ethiopia of

[513] *Addis Tribune*, 'Ethiopia: Political Parties Declarations on the Ethio-Eritrean War,' June 19, 1998. https://allafrica.com/stories/199806190085.html

[514] This has also tended to be the dominant interpretation in the literature on the conflict. See Michael Woldemariam, 'Partition Problems: Relative Power, Historical Memory, and the Origins of the Eritrean-Ethiopian War', *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, 21, (2015).

[515] US Embassy, Addis Ababa, Subject: Meles on Next Steps: Let Things Evolve Naturally, August 10, 1998.

[516] Gebru Asrat, interview by VOA America; Sebhat Nega: Executive Director of Ethiopian International Institute for International Peace and Development and first Chairman of the TPLF, interview with author March 19, 2014.

Eritrea's capabilities should the GFDRE [Ethiopia] continue to stand in the way of the Eritrean economic vision'.[517] This calculus was moreover based on the assumption that Ethiopia was militarily 'underprepared'.[518] The diplomatic sources moreover claim that Meles admitted that while this was the case, Isaias had underestimated Ethiopia's ability to 'call upon demobilized forces and train others'.[519]

Once the war had begun, it was seen as an affront to Ethiopia's sovereignty and identity; according to the cables Meles made the following argument:

> With the invasion of Badme and the attempt to change facts on the ground by force, Eritrea crossed an Ethiopian red line. On other issues, Ethiopia might have agreed to turn its cheek, but this affront was so great that to let it pass in silence would have been essentially to relinquish national sovereignty. Thus, the demand that Isaias withdraw and that Badme be returned to the status quo ante is everything. If he does, then perhaps he will have learned his lesson. If he does not, then he must be taught.[520]

The notion of (ir)rationality was central to Meles' understanding of Isaias Afwerki's leadership. According to Gebru Asrat, prior to the war when colleagues in the TPLF warned that Eritrea was possibly planning an attack, Meles had allegedly responded by saying: 'Isaias is not insane'.[521] Meles' position (unwillingness to accept claims about a possible Eritrean attack) in 1996-1997 was therefore based not only on emotional notions of solidarity or fraternity, but also on assumptions of rational deterrence. After the war this had changed. US diplomats claim that he explained how he thought Isaias didn't 'understand the rules of the game', that he 'wasn't a rational decision-maker', and that he 'may not be able to back down now because it would be at variance with his understanding of the realities'.[522] According to the cables, Meles therefore concluded that 'he had to learn his lesson'. And because of this that the US should 'back-off' and 'let things evolve naturally'.[523] Instead of taking deterrent effect of Ethiopia's resource and

[517] US Embassy, Addis Ababa, Subject: Meles on Next Steps: Let Things Evolve Naturally, August 10, 1998.

[518] Ibid.

[519] Ibid.

[520] Ibid.

[521] Gebru Asrat, 'Interview by VOA America.'

[522] US Embassy, Addis Ababa, Subject: Meles on Next Steps: Let Things Evolve Naturally, August 10, 1998.

[523] Ibid.

thus also military superiority for granted, Meles' perception and understanding evolved into one where the contender had to be 'taught' through action about one's capacity and resolve to retaliate.[524]

From the EPRDF's perspective the war was therefore driven by both a real and incompatible conceptions of national interests, which were complicated by the leadership of Eritrea's President, who in their view, did not comprehend international norms and was irrational. The resort to military force was therefore a reactive and defensive policy that aimed at retaking territory that Ethiopia had governed prior to the war, and secondly to establish a deterrence relationship by making Isaias sensitive to Ethiopian ability to retaliate. As will be evident in the following section, they disagreed on whether to use military force for other objectives.

Diplomacy and Military Force

During the war diplomacy served the functions of providing a mechanism for determining the terms of peace and for mobilizing support in the regional and international communities. While there was a consensus in the EPRDF on the use of force for defensive purposes, during the war Meles and his colleagues would disagree on the timing and terms of peace, and the role of diplomacy and military force in this process. Proponents of the Irredenta wanted to use military force to pursue a victor's peace, and to use diplomacy merely as a means of communication. Meles on the other hand wanted to settle the dispute through diplomatic means.

Both Eritrea and Ethiopia were open for third-party mediation throughout the war, but however differed on the timing and terms of the mediation, and the relationship they developed with the mediators. The first attempt at mediating a settlement was a joint Rwanda-US initiative in June 1998.[525] The controversial part of the recommendations was the point that 'Eritrea should re-deploy from Badme to positions held before May 6.'[526]

[524] On the concept of 'learning deterrence' see: Amir Lupovici, 'The Emerging Fourth Wave of Deterrence Theory-Toward a New Research Agenda: The Emerging Fourth Wave of Deterrence Theory', *International Studies Quarterly* 54, no. 3, (2010).

[525] Negash and Tronvoll, *Brothers at War,* 57.

[526] Ibid.

Ethiopia accepted this plan, while Eritrea rejected it, not only because of the recommendations but also because they felt 'overrun' by the US-Rwanda mission.[527] Eritrea then wanted the OAU to take over the role as third-party mediator.[528] The OAU took on the task, but came to the same controversial conclusion that Ethiopia had been peacefully administering Badme before the war in May 1998, and that Eritrea needed to redeploy to the status quo ante.[529] Eritrea couldn't accept this aspect of the OAU proposal, as it believed it was occupying territory that was within the colonial boundaries on which Eritrean sovereignty was based. Eritrea did not abandon the process altogether but was 'dragging its feet' on a final acceptance of the OAU terms.[530] The US made a second attempt at mediating peace between Ethiopia and Eritrea in September 1998. Eritrea however rejected US efforts and accused the US of interfering with the OAU effort to mediate peace.[531] Eritrea declared its readiness to accept the terms of the OAU peace-deal proposed in June 1998, after Ethiopia recaptured Badme in February 1999.[532]

This led to a division within the EPRDF on how to respond to Eritrea's acceptance of the OAU proposal. Meles' position, according to TPLF official, Tewolde Woldemariam, was that Ethiopia should accept the OAU proposal.[533] Medhane and Young reiterated Tewolde Woldemariam's claims: 'After a heated debate the Central Committee (CC) voted (17 to 13) to reject what the majority regarded as overly conciliatory proposals. Significantly, Meles was in the minority.'[534] Their rationale for rejecting the proposal was that Eritrea still occupied other territories such as Zalambessa, and therefore that it still didn't fully accept the terms of the OAU peace plan.[535]

The second major division in the EPRDF on diplomatic responses came on May 31 2000, when Meles decided to terminate the war effort and settle the conflict through diplomacy.

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[527] Ibid.

[528] Ibid: 61.

[529] Human Rights Watch, *The Horn of Africa War: Mass Expulsion and the Nationality Issue*, Vol. 15, (2003), https://www.hrw.org/reports/2003/ethioerit0103/ethioerit0103-05.htm

[530] Negash and Tronvoll, *Brothers at War,* 62.

[531] Ibid: 71-72.

[532] Ibid: 74.

[533] Tewolde Woldemariam: Head of organisational affairs in the TPLF, interview with author, May 1, 2014.

[534] Medhane and Young, 'TPLF: Reform or Decline?' 390.

[535] Murphy, 'The Eritrean-Ethiopian War (1998-2000),' 6.

Meles' opposition to the Irredenta had been consistent. This declaration came in the context of proximity-talks in Algiers facilitated by the OAU, which culminated in a cessation of hostilities agreement on June 18.[536] The agreement involved an Ethiopian redeployment to territories it administered before May 1998, and for an UN peacekeeping mission to be deployed in a temporary security zone that would be based in a 25 Km zone within Eritrea's borders, Eritrean troops would not be able to operate within this zone.[537] While these were immediately agreed to, talks continued until December to determine the terms of a broader peace agreement. After lengthy negotiations the final Algiers agreement was signed on December 12, 2000, this included amongst other things an agreement to set up the Ethiopia-Eritrea Claims Commission (EECC), the Ethiopia-Eritrea Border Commission (EEBC) and a commission to establish the origins of the war. Each commission was composed of five members, two of which were appointed by each party, who together would appoint a president.[538] The UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea was established in July, with the first troops being deployed in December.

By agreeing to arbitration, Meles had given up the leverage attained through military means, and allowed a third party to determine the future. This decision was made after Ethiopia had broken through Eritrean defence-lines, and after having sacrificed tens of thousands of lives.
In other words, at a point when Ethiopia could have gone for a victor's peace, Meles had pursued a settlement almost on equal terms with Eritrea. This led to strong reactions within the EPRDF. Many in the TPLF/EPRDF leadership wanted to continue the military campaign all the way to Asmara, in order to dismantle the EPLFs military capacity for the long term.[539] Meles on the other hand wanted to use military force only to regain lost territory and thereafter rely on negotiations.[540] He explained how the differences within the party on Eritrea were related to broader ideological differences as the following:

As the war progressed, weaknesses within the whole system of the EPRDF, ... weaknesses of government and of vision, became very visible. So the war was more like a magnifying glass. ...

[536] Ibid.

[537] Ibid: 7.

[538] Ibid.

[539] Tronvoll, *War and the Politics of Identity in Ethiopia*, 210

[540] Ibid.

Some of us came to the conclusion that the biggest threat to Ethiopia under EPRDF was not the EPLF, but it was our own internal weaknesses and that we had to set our priorities correctly. We therefore felt that we should cut the war short and focus on revitalisation of the EPRDF. ... It was very clear that there was a lot of confusion, on who we were, what we were for, and so on. So we felt we should stop the war and clean up our own house. ... So the fundamental issue was what we now call the *tehaddaso*, renewal or rejuvenation movement of the EPRDF. ... It was what type of economic system we have, what type of democratic governance we have, what type of international relations we have, what is our vision, what is being carried on by way of baggage from the past, what is new, how do they relate to each other? ... *Then* it began to have an Eritrean dimension to it; the dimension of how do we relate to Eritrea? Is the issue to be understood the way the peasants understand it: one of fighting injustice, correcting injustice and insult? Or is it going to be understood as something going beyond that to revenge and cause pain? And even further beyond that, to a resurrection of imperial policy? The resurrection of imperial policy was too repugnant in the EPRDF for it to have any currency, but causing pain beyond what is required to correct injustice began to manifest itself in some quarters in the EPRDF.[541]

For Meles, those arguing that military force ought to be used for any other purpose than regaining lost territory from the EPLF were motivated by a desire for revenge or even imperialism. His opponents in the party for their part accused him of treason. Gebru Asrat, for example, said 'Meles Zenawi's group sidelined the nation's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.'[542] Meles was seen as lenient on Eritrea, and moreover that this 'weakness' stemmed from his partial Eritrean heritage.[543]

4.3.4. Post-war Political Configurations

After the war, both the Ethiopian and Eritrean regimes became personalized autocracies, albeit to different degrees. Meles and Isaias were challenged for their management of the war and both responded by eliminating their contenders.

In Eritrea, the National Assembly of Eritrea and the Central Office of the PFDJ decided in September 2000 that an assessment of the management of the war was necessary.[544] This was followed up by the publication of an open letter calling for an appraisal of the

[541] Meles Zenawi quoted in Tronvoll, *War and the Politics of Identity in Ethiopia*, 211.

[542] Gebru Asrat quoted in Tronvoll, *War and the Politics of Identity in Ethiopia*, 217.

[543] Ibid: 210.

[544] Dan Connell and Tom Killion, *Historical Dictionary of Eritrea*, (Plymouth: The Scarecrow Press, 1998): 408.

conflict and the implementation of the constitution by a group of Eritrean scholars.[545] In response to the growing demands for reform, Isaias took a number of measures such as demoting senior officials and obstructing institutional measures towards preparing for elections.[546] In May 2001, fifteen members of the PFDJ and National Assembly (known as the G-15) signed an open letter wherein they accused President Isaias of 'conducting himself in an illegal and unconstitutional manner' and requested a meeting wherein the PFDJ Central Committee and National Assembly could conduct an assessment of the war.[547] In September, Isaias had members of the G-15 arrested and began a general crackdown on dissent. Private newspapers were closed, and the reformers accused of having plotted with foreign agents in order to conduct a coup in Eritrea. Isaias then declared that the planned democratization process had to be put on hold until the conflict with Ethiopia had been resolved. This included suspending the implementation of the constitution, closing parliament and banning the private press and opposition parties.[548]

In Ethiopia a similar process unfolded, where Meles was challenged in September 2001 by his colleagues in the TPLF over his management of the Eritrea war, but before a formal evaluation could be conducted he purged the TPLF of contenders and consolidated a personalized autocracy.[549] This set the stage for the formulation of a new alternative foreign policy orientation.

4.4. The Developmental State Orientation

4.4.1. The Developmental Rationale of Strategic Restraint

Eritrea Policy in the 2002 White Paper

The white paper begins by noting that Eritrea was the closest and most intimate of all of Ethiopia's neighbours.[550] This was due to cultural ties and history of conflict. Because of this, the EPRDF was of the view that many Ethiopians' approach to Eritrea was also exceedingly emotional. The EPRDF argued that there were predominantly two types of

[545] Ibid.

[546] Ibid.

[547] Ibid.

[548] Human Rights Watch, 'Never to be Seen Again in Eritrea?'18.09.2018, https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/09/18/never-be-seen-again-eritrea.

[549] See Chapter 2 for more detailed analysis of this process.

[550] Ethiopia Ministry of Information, *Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and Strategy*, 63-64.

attitudes towards Eritrea amongst Ethiopians: in the first category were people who have not come to terms with Eritrea's independence; and in the second we find those who had accepted its secession but that sought to regain access to the sea by annexing the port of Assab.[551] This was an explicit reference to proponents of the Irredenta. The EPRDF considered all these views to be based on an exaggerated notion of Eritrea's importance to Ethiopia. This is their assessment:

> The contribution the Eritrean market makes to our economy is negligible, at least in the immediate and foreseeable future. The same is true as regards investment and finance. Eritrean ports are, however, more convenient ports for us, especially to the northern and central parts of the country, than other ports. We also believe that the significant electric power potential we have can be a better and cheaper alternative for Eritrea which has scarce power resources. Our wider market opportunity is more to the economic advantage of Eritrea than their limited market is to Ethiopia. Given all these considerations, a healthy relationship between Ethiopia and Eritrea would bring about mutual benefits for the peoples of both countries. However we feel that our links do not justify being given a high regard as far as our priorities are concerned.[552]

While the potential gains from the relationship were few, the threats posed by the regime in Asmara were considerable. In this regard the EPRDF made an explicit distinction between regime and people in Eritrea. The EPLF government in Asmara was described as a criminal organization engaged in 'rent-seeking', whose aspirations to play the role of a regional police had led it to militarize the Eritrean nation.[553] The use of the term 'rent seeking' illustrates how the Developmental State orientation also led to a characterization of rivals through political economy terminology.

Based on the above considerations, the EPRDF's policy towards Eritrea primarily sought to avoid conflict, since a second war, regardless of the damage that would be inflicted upon Asmara, would undoubtedly also have negative repercussions for Ethiopia's development trajectory. It identified two potential pathways for avoiding war: first was that Ethiopia had to develop its own military capacity and deter Eritrea from aggression,

[551] Ibid.

[552] Ibid: 64.

[553] Ibid: 67.

while the second option was to overthrow the EPLF regime. The latter was not considered as a plausible option for the EPRDF, but rather an exclusive prerogative of the Eritrean people. Consequently, Ethiopia's primary policy was to rely on its deterrence capacity. A second strategy to be employed was that of containment, this would consist of mobilizing 'international and regional political, diplomatic and economic pressure' on Eritrea.[554] Short of war, an active policy of pressuring Eritrea to change its policies was to be pursued. The policy of containment could be reversed if 'Eritrea pursues policies based on mutual interest, accountability and transparency, i.e., democratic policies, it will be possible to forge a new relationship.'[555] And hence, there is an opening for pursuing a more benign policy towards Eritrea, but it would nevertheless have to be in response to a change in the behaviour of Eritrea, though what specifically needs to change was not clarified.

Strategic Restraint and Rivalry Management

The EPRDF's post-war policies towards Eritrea sought to achieve the following objectives: to avoid war, and – despite what was stated in the 2002 white paper – pursue a regime or policy change in Eritrea. The need for regime change was to a great extent based on Meles' and the EPRDF's perception of Isaias Afwerki as an individual with whom it was difficult to find a modus vivendi. According to US cables, the EPRDF interpreted the rivalry as one of competing hegemonic aspirations rooted in the personality of Isaias Afwerki: 'President Isaias is viewed by Meles and his government as an extremely dangerous, hostile, and evil individual whose sole goal is to make Eritrea the dominant power in the Horn of Africa and to promote Isaias' role as paramount leader in the region. Ethiopia stands in the way of Isaias' desire for dominance in the region.'[556] The EPRDF viewed Isaias Afwerki as someone that either needed to be removed, contained or conditioned into a different behavioural pattern.

The objective of avoiding war was driven by the logic of strategic restraint. The restraint was strategic because Ethiopia had the military means to pursue its political and territorial interests through force, but chose instead to restrain itself in order to pursue other

[554] Ibid: 71.

[555] Ibid.

[556] US Embassy in Addis Ababa, Subject: 'Meles Security Advisor on Border Crisis', November 7, 2005.

strategic priorities. The rationale for strategic restraint in relation to Eritrea was Meles' understanding of Ethiopia as a politically and economically fragile state that needed to prioritise poverty reduction and economic transformation before regional supremacy, territorial acquisition or prestige. In terms of managing the rivalry, it also meant that Ethiopia had to find a way of containing its rival that didn't come at the expense of economic development. Ethiopia was larger, more resourceful and diplomatically more influential than Eritrea, but Ethiopia's economic fragility made it dependent on the international community for its survival. Developing trade relations and attaining development assistance required adhering to international norms. Meles explained his rationale for not pursuing Ethiopia's territorial interests in relation to Eritrea by force as the following:

> Ethiopia has never been a country that breaks international law. If we want to take that territory [Assab] by force, physically it might be possible. However, after having taken that territory, there will be no way for us to continue as a normal member of the international community. We will become what they call a pariah state. We will become an isolated and condemned country. At this time we need to trade. At this time we need to attract investment. At this time we need assistance for our development. From our interests' perspective, when we look at Assab, we ask whether it is of any value for our development. If we take that port it must be to use it for export our goods. But if we take it by force there will be a situation wherein we won't have any goods to export. And so it will be of no use for us. We would turn into a condemned and isolated state. And under those conditions we would never be able to escape poverty.[557]

The combination of the objectives of strategic restraint and regime or policy change in Eritrea led the EPRDF to rely on three measures when managing the rivalry with Eritrea: deterrence, proxy-war and coercive isolation. All three policies were in line with the Developmental State orientation's economic priorities than conventional military force. The harm they caused also illustrates that the Developmental State's strategic restraint was motivated by self-interested economic priorities, rather than a pacifist stance based on ethical concerns.

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[557] Aend Ethiopia. 'PM Meles Zenawi at Ethiopian Embassy DC,' (Published 2013). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZRWsjhXo7Zg

To avoid war the EPRDF would work towards reducing Ethiopia's vulnerability and building up a sufficient retaliation capacity to deter Eritrea from initiating another war. In line with the Developmental State priorities it was imperative that the defence expenditure was kept at a minimum, sufficient only to maintain a deterrent capacity given that prioritization of economic development was the very rationale of restraint. Likewise the objectives of regime and policy change would also be pursued through the strategies of coercive isolation and proxy-war, which were deemed compatible with the economic priorities of the Developmental State. Through diplomatic isolation Meles expected that regime change or policy change in Eritrea could be achieved. According to US diplomatic cables the head of UNMEE Joseph Legwaila 'stated that following Ethiopia's demobilization of 150,000 troops before 2003, PM Meles had told him that Ethiopia's strategy was to isolate Eritrea and wait for it to implode economically.'[558] Another diplomatic cable describes Meles plans to isolate Eritrea as the following:

Meles commented that he had modified his own approach to Isaias, from initially trying to 'cage' his Eritrean rival completely, to now trying to force him through a single exit from his predicament. 'All other doors must remain closed if the President is to come out through the right opening', he concluded. Meles professed not to know for sure how comfortable Isaias' was with the status quo, but he seemed less comfortable every day.[559]

4.4.2. Containment through Proxy-war

The EPRDF's proxy-war strategy consisted of supporting the establishment of new organizations, and facilitating cooperation between established armed groups. This was in line with the Developmental State orientation as it was a means of putting pressure on a rival while avoiding a conventional war. The opposition groups comprised three categories: ethnic/Islamist movements, youth organizations, and unitary nationalist groups. Ethiopia had the best working-relationship with the ethnic/Islamist opposition groups. They not only opposed Isaias Afwerki's autocracy, but also sought some form of

[558] US Embassy, Addis Ababa, Subject: 'United Nations Requests USG Assistance to Monitor and Resolve Eritrea-Ethiopia Crisis', October 28, 2005.

[559] US Embassy in Addis Ababa, Subject: 'DAS Yamamoto Discusses Internal Politics, Eritrea and Somalia with PM Meles', October 17, 2005.

institutional accommodation of religious and ethnic minorities.[560] Ethiopia helped establish the Red Sea Afar Democratic Organization (RSADO) and the Democratic Movement for the Liberation of the Eritrean Kunama (DMLEK), which in 2014 were estimated to have armed wings numbering 15,000 and 4,000 troops respectively.[561] Ethiopia also supported an alliance of 13 ethnic and Islamist parties called the Eritrean Democratic Alliance (EDA). In 2003, EDA moved its base to Ethiopia and declared that it was receiving support from Ethiopia, Sudan and Yemen through the Sanaa Forum.[562] The Ethiopian government focused its efforts on turning these armed groups into effective political organizations. In 2011 it facilitated the establishment of the Eritrean National Congress for Democratic Change (ENCDC), which held its inception meeting in Awassa, Ethiopia, where it 'elected 127 representatives of diaspora Eritreans from all over the world'.[563] The forum was intended to serve as a parliament in exile. By 2016 this ambition had turned out to be a failure due to infighting amongst the leaders of the various groups.[564] The other major categories of opposition groups were the unitary nationalists who sought a reformed and democratic EPLF. They were composed of predominantly Christian highlanders and were led by EPLF dissenters.[565] This group was represented by the Eritrean Democratic Party (EDP), which was established by former Defence Minister Mesfin Hagos in 2002. It was highly hostile to and refused to cooperate with the Ethiopian government. Its members were based in Europe and it did not have an armed wing. The third category was the youth group Eritrean Youth Solidarity for Change (EYSC), which was established in the Ethiopian refugee camps to represent the high numbers of young people in the camps, they were however incapable of effectively organizing themselves and quickly became politically irrelevant.[566]

The relationship between the Ethiopian governments and the opposition groups was characterized by mutual dissatisfaction. The EPRDF having a background in guerrilla warfare were disappointed by the weak organizational capacity, constant infighting and

[560] US Embassy in Addis Ababa, Subject: 'Eritrean Opposition Unites, Again,' June 29, 2008.

[561] Mohammad Saleh and Kjetil Tronvoll, *Eritrean Opposition Parties and Civic Organisations* (Norwegian Peace Building Resource Centre, 2014): 2'

[562] US Embassy in Addis Ababa, Subject: 'Eritrean Opposition Unites, Again,' June 29, 2008.

[563] Mohammad and Tronvoll, *Eritrean Opposition Parties and Civic Organisations*, 3.

[564] Ibid.

[565] Ibid.

[566] Ibid: 4.

fragmentation that characterized virtually all the Eritrean groups.[567] The opposition groups on the other hand were regularly complaining about not receiving sufficient support from the Ethiopian government, and questioned their motive for not being more supportive.[568]

In 2013 the Eritrean opposition's political struggle gained some momentum due to worsening conditions inside Eritrea. Political and military defections were occurring regularly in 2011-2013.[569] Minister of Information Ali Abdu, who was considered to be very close to the President and the architect of the system of tight censorship in Eritrea, defected from the government in 2012.[570] In January 2013 the Eritrean Ministry of Information was taken over by dissenting military officials, who forced the TV station to broadcast a message that demanded the release of political prisoners.[571] The mutiny was squashed by troops loyal to Isaias Afwerki that surrounded the ministry and overpowered the dissenters in a shootout.[572] Migration from Eritrea became recognized globally as a humanitarian crisis in 2013, with the UN Special Rapporteur reporting that as many as 4000 Eritreans were fleeing each month to neighbouring countries.[573] An estimated

[567] As Liaison Officer to Eritrean political organizations Mesfin Amarae's most important task was to help Eritrean political groups organize effectively. By 2017 he seemed to have given up hope on the older generation of Eritrean politicians, and had begun looking to the youth civil society groups as the last hope for effectively organizing opposition to Isaias Afwerki's regime. Mesfin Amare: Major General (ret.), former Commander of the Eastern Division in the Ethiopian Armed Forces and Liaison Officer to Eritrean groups for the Ethiopian government, interview with author, May 17, 2017.

[568] Hussein Khalifa alluded that there might be more sinister motives behind what he perceived as Ethiopia's refusal to provide more help. But it should be noted that his political organization, ELF, is a Muslim dominated organization which has historically had very bad relations with the TPLF, and that came to Ethiopia simply out necessity when they were denied safe haven in Sudan. Hussein Khalifa: Chairman of the Eritrean Liberation Front (2011-), interview with author, July 4, 2013.

[569] Sami Aboudi, "Three Eritrean Officers Defect to Saudi Arabia-Website." *Reuters*, November 12, 2013. https://www.reuters.com/article/us-saudi-eritrea-idUSBRE9AB0RY20131112.

[570] Expressen, 'Ministern bekräftar: Har lämnat regimen,' January 30, 2013. https://www.expressen.se/nyheter/ministern-bekraftar-har-lamnat-regimen/

[571] William Davison and Beaflyan Hayle, 'Eritrea Mutiny Shows Growing Military Discontent With Isaias', *Bloomberg*, January 25, 2013. http://www.erigazette.org/?p=4686.

[572] Ibid.

[573] Lisa Schlein, "UN: Thousands Fleeing Eritrea in Desperation." *VOA News*, June 19, 2014. https://www.voanews.com/a/un-thousands-fleeing-eritrea-in-desperation/1940783.html.

400,000 Eritreans migrated from Eritrea in 2002-2016.[574]

Progress in mobilizing the Eritrean opposition groups however remained without any consequence, despite the migration crisis, the mutiny in 2013 and defections. While there were more than 150 000 Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia, the opposition groups were highly divided and prone to constant infighting and fragmentation. The Eritrean groups were for example not able to establish themselves and operate within Eritrea and only recruited Eritreans who were already in exile. Nor did they manage to conduct military operations or put any pressure on the Eritrean government.

The Ethiopian government primarily blamed the leadership of the opposition groups for this failure. According to the former Minister of Information, Bereket Simon, 'they do not manage to work together'.[575] One of the reasons for their incapacity to cooperate was due to competing nationalisms, driven by the highland-lowland divide rather than the regional divisions within the highlands.[576] Ethiopia's Foreign Minister Tedros Adhanom also ascribed the opposition's failure to the work of the Eritrean government; he claimed that opposition groups 'are fully infiltrated, [by the Eritrean government] who wrecks all consolidation'.[577]

Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia however pointed to non-political causes for the failure to mobilize militarily against Isaias' government. One refugee said: 'The people of Eritrea have been fighting for 30 years, and don't want to repeat this.' Another said: 'The youth are not ready for military struggle. This has nothing to do with the weakness of the parties. They want to go to the West.'[578] They also pointed out that they left Eritrea to avoid war. One refugee notes: 'All soldiers are fed-up because their salary is constant and never increases. The economic aspect is the most important. There is no improvement in life. People come here because they don't want to fight.'[579] About the conditions within

[574] Michael Woldemariam, '"No war, no peace" in a region in flux: crisis, escalation, and possibility in the Eritrea-Ethiopia rivalry', *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 12:3, (2018): 411.

[575] Bereket Simon: Founding member of EPRDF and former Minister of Government Communications, interview with ILPI staff, March 5, 2014

[576] Ibid.

[577] Tedros Adhanom: Foreign Minister of Ethiopia (2012-2016), interview with ILPI staff, March 4, 2014.

[578] Anonymous (No. 14): Eritrean refugees in the Hitsats Refugee Camp, Tigray, interview with author, July 9, 2013. The interviewees were mostly young men and recent arrivals in the Ethiopian refugee camps.

[579] Ibid.

Eritrea, one refugee explained: 'there is a great deal of resentment. There is forced labour in the military camps. The commanders sell the produce from these farms and take most of the profit. I was at Keren Zoba Anseba, it was led by commander Wodi Erbe. I left one year and six months ago.'[580]

4.4.3. Conventional Military Force: Restraint and Deterrence

The Developmental State orientation led the EPRDF to restrain itself from using military force to pursue regime or policy change in Eritrea. Military force would only serve the purpose of deterrence. The EPRDF succeeded with this objective by maintaining an upper-hand in conventional military power and regularly signalling their readiness to retaliate.

Ethiopia had a significant advantage over Eritrea in conventional military power in the post-war rivalry. Ethiopia's larger economy meant that it had more financial resources at its disposal to acquire more weapons than Eritrea. While Eritrea maintained a significantly larger army than Ethiopia, these were primarily composed of troops from the forced national service conscription; while Ethiopia chose to have only a professional army, rather than conscripts. Forced conscription had a negative impact on the morale of the troops in Eritrea; the indefinite nature of the conscription and low salary was the main reason why many soldiers chose to flee the Eritrea.[581]

[580] Ibid.

[581] Ibid.

Figure 2: Military and Economic Power Indicators

	Ethiopia (2004)[582]	Ethiopia (2015)[583]	Eritrea (2004)[584]	Eritrea (2015)[585]
GDP (USD bn)	7.4	63	1,09	4,2
Military Budget (USD mn)	298	399	74	
Armed Forces	180 000	138 000	200 000	200 000

The military power imbalance between Ethiopia and Eritrea was extensive. Nevertheless, Ethiopia and Eritrea engaged each other occasionally in skirmishes along the border and conducted operational military exercises that heightened tensions.[586] In addition to maintaining a robust retaliation capacity, Meles felt it necessary to regularly signal to Isaias that Ethiopia was ready and able to retaliate if need be. This is illustrated by the war games and signalling activities that took place throughout the rivalry. In 2004, for example, UN observers note that there is a build-up of armed forces along the border as well as training and firing of heavy calibre-weapons by Ethiopia.[587] In 2005, according to US diplomatic cables, Meles told the US Embassy that: 'Ethiopia was moving 30,000 reserve troops to the border with Eritrea over the next ten days as a precautionary measure, due to concerns about UNMEE's decreasing effectiveness.'[588]

In 2011, Ethiopia's policy changed from simply relying on its deterrence capacity to one of proportional responses to provocations. In reaction to the AU bombing attempt in 2011, Meles announced a change in Ethiopian strategy:

[582] IISS, 'Sub-Saharan Africa', *The Military Balance,* Vol. 105, No. 1 (2005): 379. https://doi.org/10.1080/04597220500387704.

[583] IISS, 'Chapter Nine: Sub-Saharan Africa', *The Military Balance,* Vol. 116, No. 1 (2016): 445. https://doi.org/10.1080/04597222.2016.1127636.

[584] [584] IISS, 'Sub-Saharan Africa', 378.

[585] IISS, 'Chapter Nine: Sub-Saharan Africa', 444.

[586] Michael Woldemariam, '"No war, no peace" in a region in flux: crisis, escalation, and possibility in the Eritrea-Ethiopia rivalry,' *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 12:3, (2018).

[587] UN, *Yearbook of the UN 2004*, (2004): 266-270.

[588] US Embassy, Addis Ababa, Subject: 'United Nations Requests USG Assistance to Monitor and Resolve Eritrea-Ethiopia Crisis', October 28, 2005.

Until now, our strategy has been defending sovereignty by speeding up our development. Now, we found that we could not go any longer with passive defence…Therefore, we have to facilitate ways for Eritrean people to remove its dictatorial regime. We have no intention to jump into their country but we need to expand our influence there. If Eritrean government tries to attack us, we will also respond proportionally'.[589]

After the change of policy to proportional response, the Ethiopian and Eritrean armed forces engaged almost on annual basis in minor clashes along the border. Notably in March 2012, the Ethiopian Air Forces conducted aerial attacks on targets inside Eritrean territory; according to a government official 'this strike was part of our plan to take proportional measures that included the attacks in Eritrea's southeast'.[590]And in 2016 journalists and local residents reported that they had witnessed significant troop mobilization and heard heavy artillery.[591] The Eritrean government released a press statement claiming that they were under attack by Ethiopia.[592] The following day Ethiopia confirmed the clashes had taken place and that they had led to 'significant casualties on both sides'.[593] The skirmishes however never escalated to full-scale war.

Signalling was necessary because of Ethiopia's structural vulnerability (internal instability).[594] Meles was of the view that taking advantage of this vulnerability was central to Isaias' strategy on Ethiopia. While Ethiopia's upper-hand in conventional military capacity remained constant throughout this period, its structural vulnerability however often fluctuated. Meles feared this could embolden Eritrea to attack. During Ethiopia's 2005 election crisis, for example, US diplomats report that Meles told US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Don Yamamoto that 'he did not expect Isaias to attack, but could not afford to allow Ethiopia's election dispute to drag on much longer,

[589] Abraham Fisseha,'Ethiopia calls for regime change in Eritrea', *Africa News,* April 6, 2011.

[590] Aaron Masho, 'Ethiopia again attacks rebel targets in Eritrea', *Reuters,* March 17, 2012. https://www.reuters.com/article/ethiopia-eritrea-attack/update-2-ethiopia-again-attacks-rebel-targets-in-eritrea-idUSL5E8EH08C20120317

[591] BBC News, 'Ethiopia, Eritrea Forces Clash on Border', June 13, 2016. https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-36515503

[592] Eritrea Ministry of Information, 'Press Release,' June 14, 2016. http://www.shabait.com/news/local-news/21996-press-release-

[593] BBC News, 'Ethiopia and Eritrea blame each other for border clash,' June 13, 2016. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-36515503

[594] This vulnerability was recognized explicitly in the 2002 Strategy as national security concern.

lest it "confuse" the Eritrean leader about Ethiopia's vulnerability'.[595] Meles told Yamamoto that he was confident in Ethiopia's deterrence capacity, according to the cable: 'The only thing stopping Eritrea from attacking Ethiopia was not the U.N. Mission on Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), nor pressure from the international community, but rather President Isaias' belief that "he would die first", Meles said bluntly.'[596] But he admitted that Ethiopia's domestic political condition jeopardized this. According to the cable: '"The only chink in our armor is instability in Addis," [Meles] added. If Isaias were to be confused by signs of Ethiopian weakness, the PM said, people would die.'[597] Deterrence through pre-eminence in conventional military power was not sufficient and could not be taken for granted. Both Isaias and Meles saw conventional military power as only one aspect of the power balance; political stability was another volatile and important variable. The state and prognosis of political stability was to a great extent a matter of interpretation and much more open to misinterpretation than the power-balance in conventional weapons.

4.4.4. The Three Stages of Eritrea's Isolation

The most effective rivalry management tool applied against Eritrea under the Developmental State orientation was coercive isolation. The purpose of coercive isolation was to induce regime or policy change in Eritrea. The process of isolating Eritrea went through three stages. In the first stage (2001-2007), Ethiopia and Eritrea started off with a relatively similar standing in the regional and international communities (that is, both states had a cordial relationship with most states). Eritrea however gradually developed an antagonistic relationship with a few states. In the second stage, Eritrea's involvement in Somalia made it a collective threat to many states in the Horn of Africa and internationally. In the third stage, Eritrea's isolation became consolidated with the imposition of UNSC sanctions in 2009.

[595] US Embassy in Addis Ababa, Subject: 'DAS Yamamoto Discusses Internal Politics, Eritrea and Somalia with PM Meles,' October 17, 2005.

[596] Ibid.

[597] Ibid.

Stage One: Limited Conflict

Meles Zenawi's decision to settle the war through international arbitration would have significant implications for the trajectory of the post-war rivalry. The EEBC verdict was unexpected, and Meles subsequently had to adapt his containment strategy around this outcome. The EEBC gave its verdict on April 13 2002. The results were however unclear as they only provided the coordinates, without explicitly stating to whom the contested towns had been allotted.[598] This led the OAU representative in The Hague to mistakenly interpret the ruling as recognizing Badme as Ethiopian territory.[599] The OAU provided this misinformation to the Ethiopian Foreign Minister, who took it at face-value and declared to the Ethiopian public that the verdict 'unequivocally confirmed Badme to be the sovereign territory of Ethiopia'.[600] The EPRDF understood after having made these statements that Badme had in fact been awarded to Eritrea.

After the EEBC verdict Meles was caught between his legal commitments through the Algiers Agreement (and by extension his relationship with the international community) and the Ethiopian population – both of which his power depended on. The strategy adopted to balance these interests was to stall the implementation of the agreement without rejecting it. Shortly after the verdict, Ethiopia began moving new settlements into the contested Badme town. The UNSC responded by ordering Ethiopia to reverse the illegal settlements – an order with which Ethiopia did not comply. Then in 2003 Meles declared the EEBC verdict 'unjust and illegal.'[601] Eritrea, for its part, demanded that the UNSC sanction Ethiopia for rejecting the verdict of the EEBC. The potential for sanctions led Meles to accept the verdict of the EEBC 'in principle' and propose the Five Point Peace Plan (5PPP), which proposed:

a) Resolve the dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea only, and only through peaceful means;

(b) Resolve the root causes of the conflict through dialogue, with a view to normalizing relations between the two countries;

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[598] Martin Plaut, "Ethiopia and Eritrea: Returning to War?" *International Journal of Ethiopian Studies,* Vol. 2, No. 1/2 (2005): 182

[599] Ibid.

[600] Seyoum Mesfin quoted in Plaut, "Ethiopia and Eritrea: Returning to War?", 182.

[601] IRIN, "Border Ruling 'Wrong and Unjust', Meles Says." May 27, 2003. http://www.irinnews.org/report/43963/eritrea-ethiopia-border-ruling-wrong-and-unjust-meles-says

(c) Ethiopia accepts, in principle, the Ethiopia-Eritrea Boundary Commission decision;

(d) Ethiopia agrees to pay its dues to the Ethiopia-Eritrea Boundary Commission and to appoint field liaison officers;

(e) Start dialogue immediately, with a view to implementing the Ethiopia-Eritrea Boundary Commission's decision in a manner consistent with the promotion of sustainable peace and brotherly ties between the two peoples.[602]

The US and most European states did not show any sign of bias against Eritrea, nor did Isaias' government have any negative perceptions of the West or international institutions when the EEBC verdict was given. Former US Ambassador David Shinn notes that during this period: 'Isaias was a frequent visitor to the US, Meles rarely came.'[603] In fact Eritrea was in November 2002 lobbying the US government to open a military base in Eritrea. It hired a lobbying firm to lobby Washington that was tasked with portraying Eritrea as the best choice in the region.[604] This relationship would gradually change however. By refusing to implement the EEBC, Meles steered Isaias into conflict with the international community. Isaias expected the international community to not only support him but also to take action against Ethiopia, when the various actors did not take immediate action against Ethiopia, he reacted aggressively by taking measures that would gradually lead to the breakdown of diplomatic relations.

Isaias' diplomatic actions seemed to be intended to push the international community to take disciplinary measures against Ethiopia. One of his first measures was recalling the Eritrean Ambassador from the AU in 2003. According to the Ambassador: The government of Eritrea had 'already written a letter to the AU chairperson telling him it has failed to take disciplinary measures. And since there was no reaction from the AU,

[602] UN Security Council, 'Progress report of the Secretary-General on Ethiopia and Eritrea', April 16, 2004 https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/197C14FCBAAA8AFB85256F7200690171-unsc-eri-eth-16dec.pdf

[603] David Shinn: US Ambassador to Ethiopia (1996-1999), interview with author, April 14, 2017.

[604] Judy Sarasohn, 'Eritrea Pushes to Get U.S. Base,' *Washington Post*, November 21, 2002. https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/2002/11/21/eritrea-pushes-to-get-us-base/f730d0da-a727-43c1-ae16-15c8b06ae7a3/

they have had to take that action.'[605] In 2004 the UN appointed Lloyd Axworthy as special envoy to the Horn of Africa to mediate peace between the two parties, and while Meles was willing to meet Axworthy, Isaias refused to meet him.[606] In 2004 Eritrea began to put restrictions on UNMEE operations. It closed its supply routes, arrested local staff, and in 2005 prohibited helicopter flights within its airspace.[607] The UNSC condemned and threatened Eritrea with 'further appropriate measures, including under Article 41 of the Charter of the United Nations.'[608] Finally, in December 2005 Eritrea ordered UNMEE to leave Eritrea within ten days, which led to a condemnation by the UNSC.[609]

Meles' diplomacy was – in stark contrast to Isaias' – perceived as constructive. His 5PPP was for example seen as a positive step: One US diplomatic cable notes that the Special Representative in charge of UNMEE saw it positively: 'According to Legwaila, Meles's five-point peace proposal of November 2004 therefore represented a shift in policy, and reflected an attempt to engage Eritrea constructively in talks.'[610] Eritrea's reaction on the other hand was described as the following: 'Eritrea, however, has explicitly rejected contacts with both the SRSG and with UN Special Envoy for Ethiopia and Eritrea Lloyd Axworthy...Legwaila and other UNMEE officials also reported that the UN SYG received daily "hate mail" from Eritrea, rendering the appointment of any UN envoy ineffective.'[611]

Isaias Afwerki's coercive diplomacy also extended to high-level US officials. In January 2006 he denied US Assistant Secretary Jendayi Frazer access to the border area, which led to her only visiting Ethiopia during that trip. Frazer returned to the US with the conclusion that the EEBC verdict '"was wrong" and that a major piece of disputed territory should be awarded to Ethiopia instead of Eritrea.'[612] That year Isaias initiated a

[605] ReliefWeb, 'Eritrea: Interview with Recalled AU Ambassador Salih Omer – Eritrea', November 21, 2003. https://reliefweb.int/report/eritrea/eritrea-interview-recalled-au-ambassador-salih-omer.

[606] BBC News, 'Horn UN Envoy Faces Uphill Task', February 20, 2004. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3503845.stm.

[607] BBC News, 'Eritrean Move "cripples" UN Role', December 8, 2005. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4510810.stm.

[608] UN, 'Security Council Demands Eritrea End Restriction on Mission, Unanimously Adopting Resolution 1640 (2005)', November 23, 2005. https://www.un.org/press/en/2005/sc8561.doc.htm.

[609] Ibid.

[610] US Embassy in Addis Ababa, Subject: 'United Nations Requests USG Assistance to Monitor and Resolve Eritrea-Ethiopia Crisis', October 28, 2005.

[611] Ibid.

[612] Jeffrey A. Lefebvre 'Choosing Sides in the Horn of Africa: Wikileaks, the Ethiopia Imperative, and American Responses to Post-9/11 Regional Conflicts', *Diplomacy & Statecraft,* 23:4, (2012): 713.

propaganda war on the US. According to a US diplomatic cable, Isaias accused 'the US of being an agent of Ethiopia and "interfering" in Eritrea and Somalia under the guise of a "terrorism fantasy"'.[613] Isaias rhetorical war began by criticizing US policy on the Ethiopia-Eritrea border demarcation process and later evolved to a claim that Washington had a regional scheme to 'dominate' and 'plunder' the region. The US embassy in Asmara's reaction was the following:

that Isaias continues to intensify his rhetorical attacks is troubling enough, but equally disturbing is that his views are, in our opinion, not posturing but deeply held, albeit totally misguided, convictions about the USG, our attitudes towards Eritrea, and our role in the world. It is not just these remarks, however. Our concerns about where Isaias is leading Eritrea have to be looked at as well against the backdrop of the past twelve months where we have seen repeated anti-US statements by high level government officials, the expulsion of USAID, the misappropriation of food aid, the violation of agreements with the UN, the forced closures of NGOs, the on going violation of the Vienna convention, restriction on movement of all foreigners in the country, and expanding violations of human rights. And this list, unfortunately, is illustrative only, not comprehensive.'[614]

Isaias Afwerki's next measure was to put restrictions on the US diplomatic mission in Asmara, to which the US retaliated by closing the Eritrean consulate in Oakland.[615] An official at the Eritrean Ministry of Foreign Affairs states that the closure of the consulate was a major economic blow to the Eritrean government. US officials were motivated by what they believed were 'on-going restrictions placed by the GSE in violation of the Vienna Convention'.[616]

European states however maintained a relatively positive attitude towards Eritrea in this period. Norway for example was of the persuasion that Eritrea could be engaged if a less heavy-handed approach was applied.[617] The US Embassy in Asmara's assessment was that:

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[613] US Embassy in Asmara, Subject: 'President Isaias Excoriates US and "Terrorism Fantasy" in Martyrs' Day Speech', June 21, 2006.

[614] Ibid.

[615] Reuters, 'Eritrea Lashes out at U.S. over Consulate Closure', August 13, 2007. https://www.reuters.com/article/us-eritrea-usa/eritrea-lashes-out-at-u-s-over-consulate-closure-idUSL1322177120070813

[616] US Embassy in Asmara, Subject: 'Feedback from Eritrea on the Closure of the Consulate in Oakland', August 14, 2007.

[617] US Embassy in Addis Ababa, Subject: 'Ethiopia-Eritrea: Norwegian Thoughts', September 27, 2005.

most of our European counterparts in town, continue to pursue a carrot approach in engaging the GSE -- even in the absence of any positive actions to accompany the GSE's shiny new words. The Europeans continue to feel that if they can get the GSE to re-engage in any sort of dialogue -- and promoting its regional ambitions would be the real draw for the GSE -- eventually, the EU will be able to broach the sensitive topics of the border demarcation and human rights. Post accepts that anything's possible, and would agree that the Eritrean's newly-discovered affability it dealing with the EU is indeed fuelled by a desire to re-establish its somewhat tarnished regional credentials. We continue to caution our EU colleagues, however, that the GSE's new "open" approach to the EU -- when viewed in tandem with their continued targeted antagonism towards the U.S. -- is more likely a GSE gambit to split the U.S. and EU rather than any true change of heart.'[618]

In the Horn of Africa and Red Sea area, Eritrea's conflicts were limited to Sudan and Yemen during this phase. Ethiopia's first action in its diplomatic containment strategy was to resort to regional alignment, through the Sanaa Forum, which was formed together with Sudan and Yemen in 2002.[619] Though it was not formally established to contain Eritrea, in practice that was its main purpose. According to Mesfin Amare, the Ethiopian liaison officer to the Forum: 'The purpose of Sanaa Forum was to put tactical pressure on Eritrea, which was an enemy to Sudan, Ethiopia and Yemen'.[620] When it was formed, Ethiopia stated that Eritrea was a regional destabilizer that had to be contained, and moreover that 'Ethiopia, the Sudan and Yemen have agreed to act together towards this goal'.[621] This was also echoed by the leaders of Sudan and Yemen who accused Eritrea of being a source of instability in the region and of seeking to destabilize the three states.[622] They however maintained that the Forum was open to all states in the region. Somalia

[618] US Embassy in Asmara, Subject: 'EU Delegation Discusses Somalia with President Isaias', March 28, 2007.

[619] PanaPress, 'Ethiopia, Sudan, Yemen Set up Sana'a Cooperation Group' December 30, 2003. http://www.panapress.com/Ethiopia,-Sudan,-Yemen-set-up-Sana-a-cooperation-group--13-497441-17-lang2-index.html

[620] Mesfin Amare: Major General (Ret.), former Commander of the Eastern Division in the Ethiopian Armed Forces and Liaison Officer to Eritrean groups for the Ethiopian government, interview with author, May 17, 2017

[621] IRIN, 'Addis Calls for End to Eritrea's "Aggressive Posturing"', October 29, 2002. http://www.irinnews.org/report/35394/eritrea-ethiopia-addis-calls-end-eritreas-aggressive-posturing

[622] Sudan Tribune, 'Asmara Dismisses Accusations of Causing Instability', December 30, 2003. http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?page=imprimable&id_article=1318.

joined in 2004 and Djibouti in 2010.[623] Eritrea responded by writing to the UNSC complaining that this 'axis of belligerence cannot be tolerated'.[624]

Eritrea was at the turn of the Millennium a relatively influential state capable of projecting power in the region, and effectively resisted pressure from the Sana'a Forum. In retaliation against Sudan, Eritrea successfully combined proxy-war and diplomacy to coerce Bashir into submission. Eritrea's support to Darfuri rebels as well as the Eastern Front was critical in this regard. While Asmara acknowledged providing them 'political and moral' support, it is widely believed and officially claimed by Khartoum that they were also providing military support.[625] The Eastern Front managed to put significant pressure on Khartoum and consequently, in mid-2006 Bashir requested Eritrea's help to mediate a peace with the rebel organization.[626] Isaias had in effect through military pressure forced the Sudanese government to seek some form of rapprochement and acknowledge Asmara's right to play a role in this conflict and peace process.[627] According to US diplomatic sources, Eritrean officials noted that they were pleased by Sudan's 'commitment…to have the GSE [Eritrean government] play a greater role in Abuja.'[628]

Eritrea's role in the Sudanese peace mediations also created opportunities for aligning with European states. US diplomatic cables state that Presidential advisor Yemane Gebreab told US officials that Eritrea had established close relations with the Norwegian government on the peace processes in Sudan, and the US for their part asked how they could contribute to these processes.[629] Isaias had managed to fuel a conflict, and then make himself a necessary part of the solution, and then in becoming part of the solution managed to gain political and diplomatic capital. Not only did Isaias demand to participate in peace processes, but he often tried to initiate alternative political processes

[623] Both after they were entangled in conflict with Eritrea.

[624] Eritrea Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 'Letter from Eritrea Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the UN Security Council (S/2002/1218)', ReliefWeb, October 31, 2002. https://reliefweb.int/report/eritrea/letter-eritrea-ministry-foreign-affairs-un-security-council-s20021218.

[625] Dan Connell, 'The EPLF/PFDJ experience: how it shapes Eritrea's regional strategy', in *Eritrea's External Relations: Understanding its Regional Role and Foreign Policy*, (ed.) Richard Reid, (Chatham House: 2009)

[626] US Embassy in Asmara, 'GSE Confirms Role in Eastern Front Talks', April 28, 2006.

[627] Ibid.

[628] Ibid.

[629] Ibid.

of his own, which he could control. US diplomats interpreted Isaias' behaviour as the following: 'President Isaias continues to see himself as a player in the region, taking credit for success in Sudan. His claim of "progress toward peace" in Somalia is somewhat confusing given the situation reported on the ground there.'[630] Isaias demanded at this point a 'seat at the table' in regional politics, but was not in conflict with the wider IGAD community. US diplomats note that: 'the GSE has wanted to be involved in Sudan, but only playing by their own rules. Noting that we continue to see indications that the GSE has been working, along with Sudan, to push forward with an Eritrean-led mediation while trying seemingly to derail the UN-AU effort, the Ambassador questioned whether the GSE would really be willing to work within an international framework'.[631] At this stage, Ethiopia's strategy coercive isolation had made little progress.

Stage Two: Eritrea Becomes a Collective Threat

The emergence of UIC in Somalia and Eritrea's overt support for this group became a turning point in the rivalry between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and the former's pursuit of coercive isolation. While Ethiopia's Somalia agenda had until 2006 only been its own, the radical and transnational character of the UIC made it a collective threat to other states such as Kenya, Uganda and the US.

Eritrea invested significant efforts in its proxy-war in Somalia's civil war,[632] which by the end of 2006 looked to be heading for an Islamist victory. Ethiopia's intervention in December, however, reversed this trajectory. This was followed by an endorsement by IGAD of Ethiopia's intervention. In a communiqué it declared that it appreciated Ethiopia 'for all the sacrifices it has made to promote the common position of IGAD', in reference to its intervention in Somalia.[633] In what seemed like a reference to Eritrea, it also referred to: 'all forces that undermine (the Somali) government and attempt to prevent it from carrying out its responsibilities'.[634]

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[630]US Embassy in Asmara, Subject: 'President Isaias Speaks on Border and on Region', August 25, 2006.

[631] US Embassy in Asmara, Subject: 'UN Special Envoy Meets with Eritrean President Isaias', March 23, 2007.

[632] See Chapter 3.

[633] C Bryson Hull, 'E. African Bloc Sides with Ethiopia over Somalia'. *Reuters*, April 13, 2007. https://www.reuters.com/article/idUSL13328254._CH_.2400

[634] Ibid.

Consequently, Eritrea found itself in a situation in which everyone had adopted what it viewed as a pro-Ethiopian position in the Somali conflict. In reaction to IGAD's actions, Eritrea announced the suspension of its membership in in the regional body due to the latter's Somalia policy. Eritrea declared that the suspension of its membership was 'a temporary withdrawal. We feel that it's not responsible to stay in that organisation when decisions are being made that are not legally or morally acceptable', and furthermore alleged that 'The organisation is being manipulated by external forces'.[635] US diplomats interpreted Eritrea's actions as follows:

> The GSE's position is part of its constant refrain that Eritrea is morally superior to others and they are the only ones who follow the rule of law, a position that has more holes than a sieve. By removing itself from regional or international entities that it cannot force to do its bidding, the GSE avoids being held accountable by such bodies for its actions. This eliminates yet another avenue for the international community to engage with the GSE in any sort of constructive discussion.[636]

Stage Three: UNSC Sanctions

Eritrea continued its efforts to shape regional politics and contain Ethiopia outside IGAD. While Ethiopia's intervention in Somalia and the disbanding of the UIC was a strategic blow to Eritrea, it retaliated by hosting the fleeing Islamists and helped arrange the ARS conference in Asmara. When Djibouti was in the process of arranging a mediation process between the ARS and TFG, conflict broke out between Eritrea and Djibouti over the status of Ras Doumeira. According to a US diplomatic cable, members of the ARS the dispute between the two neighbours was driven by Eritrea's frustrations over Djibouti's organizing of the mediation process: by drawing the ARS to the TFG, Djibouti was depriving Isaias Afwerki of his proxy.[637] When Eritrea occupied Ras Doumeira in March 2008, the issue was brought to the UNSC by Djibouti, but Eritrea refused access to fact-finding missions from the UN and AU to the area.[638] Djibouti then accused Eritrea of

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[635] Sudan Tribune, "Eritrea Suspends Its Membership in IGAD over Somalia." April 23, 2007. http://www.sudantribune.com/Eritrea-suspends-its-membership-in,21508.

[636] US Embassy in Asmara, Subject: 'Eritrea Announces Temporary Withdrawal from IGAD', April 25, 2007.

[637] US Embassy in Asmara, Subject: 'ARS Ready to Talk Asmara', July 5, 2008.

[638] American Association for the Advancement of Science, *Monitoring Border Conflicts with Satellite Imagery and Eritrea*, 2015: 3. https://www.aaas.org/sites/default/files/reports/Djibouti%20and%20Eritrea.pdf

building trenches within Djibouti's side of the border.[639] Troops from the Eritrean Defence Force defected to Djibouti as diplomatic negotiations were taking place between the two parties in May.[640] In June the two parties engaged in an armed confrontation that led to several dozen fatalities on both sides. Satellite images show that there were military build-ups and construction work taking place on the Eritrean side of the border a few months before the clashes, which indicate that Eritrea had planned the attack in advance.[641] Moreover Eritrea denied that it had any troops deployed on the border, or that there was in fact any conflict, despite international journalists having seen Eritrean troops on the border.[642]

Ethiopia immediately took advantage of the situation to draw Djibouti into a security alignment. One way Addis Ababa did this was by publicly declaring that it would do anything necessary to protect its access to its trade corridor with Djibouti.[643] One Ethiopian military official explained that 'Djibouti didn't have a problem with Eritrea in 1998, that's why they didn't join the [Sanaa] Forum. It is only in 2008 that they got into a conflict with Eritrea.'[644] Yohannes Gebremeskel, who was then the head of Ethiopia's Military Intelligence, confirms that the conflict with Eritrea brought Djibouti closer to Ethiopia.[645] He explained that: 'Djiboutians are closer to us after the conflict with Eritrea in 2008…The alignment in 2008 between Ethiopia and Djibouti was initiated by both states. We had significant interests in Djibouti as it was our only access to the sea, we

[639] United Nations Security Council, 'Update Report No. 7: Djibouti/Eritrea : Update Report : Security Council Report', June 23, 2008. https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/update-report/lookup-c-glKWLeMTIsG-b-4279729.php?print=true

[640] US Embassy in Djibouti, Subject: 'Djibouti: ICRC Reports 19 Eritrean POWS in Djiboutian Custody', August 26, 2006.

[641] American Association for the Advancement of Science, *Monitoring Border Conflicts with Satellite Imagery and Eritrea*, 6-12.

[642] Jeffrey Gettleman, 'A Conflict's Buffer Zone: Rocks, and Inches'. The New York Times, May 25, 2008. https://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/25/world/africa/25djibouti.html.

[643] Sudan Tribune, 'Ethiopia Ready to Secure Route to Djibouti Port – Zenawi', May 16, 2008. http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?iframe&page=imprimable&id_article=27162.

[644] Mesfin Amare: Major General (Ret.), former Commander of the Eastern Division in the Ethiopian Armed Forces and Liaison Officer to Eritrean groups for the Ethiopian government, interview with author, May 17, 2017

[645] Yohannes Gebremeskel: Lt. General, Head of Mission and Force Commander of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (2013-2014), Head of the Military Intelligence Department in the Ethiopian Ministry of National Defence, interview with author, May 12, 2017

would be directly affected by instability in Djibouti…After the conflict with Eritrea in 2008, Somalia became a secondary priority for Djibouti.'[646]

After Eritrea's conflict with Djibouti, IGAD lobbied the AU to take the unprecedented act of requesting the UNSC to impose sanctions on a fellow member state. In May 2009 an IGAD emergency meeting was convened to discuss Somalia. In a communiqué it made the following declaration:

[IGAD] Condemns also in the strongest terms possible all the individuals, organizations and countries in particular the Government of Eritrea and its financiers who continue to instigate, recruit, train, fund and supply the criminal elements in and or to Somalia… Condemns further acts of the Government of Eritrea calling for the overthrow of the TFG and attacks on AMISOM which are acts of aggression against a sovereign country and legitimate government and forces, and calls upon the UN Security Council (UNSC) to impose sanctions on the Government of Eritrea without any delay.[647]

Two days later the Peace and Security Council of AU convened a meeting to consider 'the situation in Somalia in light of the outcome of the 33rd Extraordinary Session of the IGAD Council of Ministers on the security and political situation in Somalia, held in Addis Ababa on 20 May 2009.'[648] It requested that the UNSC:

impose sanctions against all those foreign actors, both within and outside the region, specially Eritrea, providing support to the armed groups engaged in destabilization activities in Somalia, attacks against the TFG, the civilian population and AMISOM, as well as against all the Somali

[646] Ibid.

[647] IGAD, 'Communique of the 33rd Extra-Ordinary Session (Extra-Ord. No. 1) of the IGAD Council of Ministers on the Security and Political Situation in Somalia – Somalia,' ReliefWeb, May 20, 2009. https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/communique-33rd-extra-ordinary-session-extra-ord-no-1-igad-council-ministers-security

[648] AU Peace and Security Council, 'Communiqué of the 190th Meeting of the Peace and Security Council,' May 22, 2009. https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2009/May/10840/communique_of_the_190th_meeting_of_the_peace_and_security_council.aspx

individuals and entities working towards undermining the peace and reconciliation efforts and regional stability.[649]

In 2009 the AU Assembly requested the UNSC to impose sanctions 'against all foreign actors…especially Eritrea, providing support to the armed groups engaged in destabilization activities in Somalia.'[650] Based on the AU request and UN Monitoring Group on Somalia's reports, the UNSC imposed sanctions on Eritrea, which included an arms embargo and travel ban on political leaders, for its conflict with Djibouti and role in the conflict in Somalia.[651] In 2011 the UN Monitoring on Somalia was also mandated to report on Eritrea. Eritrea applied for re-entry into IGAD in 2011, a request that was not processed. Eritrea accused Ethiopia of using its role as Chair of IGAD to sabotage its request to re-join the regional community.[652] The two organizations, AU and IGAD, for which Asmara had in the past shown contempt and disregard, were ironically used effectively by Ethiopia in its diplomatic efforts at isolating Eritrea.

While sanctions had been imposed due to Eritrea's foreign policy in the region, Eritrea increasingly gained global attention for its domestic humanitarian and human rights conditions. A key factor that brought Eritrea into the limelight was the Eritrean migration crisis. The number of people who fled Eritrea every month reached 5000 in 2013-2015.[653] By 2014, the number of Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia and Sudan had reached around 200 000.[654] These conditions led the UN Human Rights Council to establish a Commission of

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[649] Ibid.

[650] AU, 'Decision on the Report of the Peace and Security Council on Its Activities and the State of Peace and Security in Africa (Doc. Assembly/AU/6(XIII)) – Burundi', ReliefWeb, July 3, 2009. https://reliefweb.int/report/burundi/decision-report-peace-and-security-council-its-activities-and-state-peace-and.

[651] United Nations, 'United Nations Official Document.' December 23, 2009. https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1907(2009).

[652] Tesfa-Alem, Tekle. 'Eritrea Accuses Ethiopia of Obstructing Its Efforts to Rejoin IGAD', *Sudan Tribune,* November 4, 2012. http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article44412.

[653] Mallett, Richard, et al. *Journeys on Hold: How Policy Influences the Migration Decisions of Eritreans in Ethiopia*, ODI, March 2017. https://www.odi.org/publications/10728-journeys-hold-how-policy-influences-migration-decisions-eritreans-ethiopia.

[654] UNHCR, 'Sharp Increase in Number of Eritrean Refugees and Asylum-Seekers in Europe, Ethiopia and Sudan.', November 14, 2014. http://www.unhcr.org/news/briefing/2014/11/5465fea1381/sharp-increase-number-eritrean-refugees-asylum-seekers-europe-ethiopia.html

Inquiry on Eritrea in 2014.[655] Ethiopia had in the past tried to initiate this process, but faced opposition from Western states who found it problematic that this resolution would be sponsored by Ethiopia, which had a long history of hostility with Eritrea.[656] For this reason, Ethiopia coordinated with Djibouti and Somalia to have them sponsor the resolution,[657] and mobilized the support of the African group in the Human Rights Council to push it through.[658] The Commission of Inquiry (COI) published its report in 2015, which accused high-ranking government officials including President Isaias Afwerki of committing human rights violations that amounted to crimes against humanity.[659] The crimes included rape, torture, enforced disappearances and the enslavement of up to 400,000 individuals. According to the UN Special Rapporteur on Eritrea, Sheila B. Keetharuth, the 'high frequency of occurrence of the human rights violations documented and corroborated…the number of victims and the replication of the violation during a certain period of time,' led the COI to conclude that the violations were widespread and systematic.[660] The Special Rapporteur further stated that the main perpetrators of gross human rights violations were 'the Eritrean Defence Forces, in particular the Eritrean Army; the National Security Office; the Eritrean Police Forces; the Ministry of Information; the Ministry of Justice; the Ministry of Defence; the People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ); the Office of the President; and the President.'[661]

[655] OHCHR, 'CoI Eritrea Commission Inquiry on Human Rights on Eritrea', https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBODIES/HRC/COIERITREA/Pages/commissioninquiryonhrinEritrea.aspx

[656] Anonymous (No. 9): Lawyer who took part in the UN COI on Eritrea, interview with author, August 29, 2018. The individual was an Eritrean civil society activist and an opponent of the Isaias Afwerki's regime.

[657] Ibid; Tom Miles, 'Eritrea Escapes U.N. Security Council Referral over Human Rights', *Reuters,* July 1, 2016. https://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFKCN0ZH5GW.

[658] Anonymous (No. 9): Lawyer who took part in the UN COI on Eritrea, interview with author, August 29, 2018.

[659] OHCHR, 'Statement to the Media by Mr. Mike Smith, Chair of the UN Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in Eritrea.' June 8, 2016. https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/NewsDetail.aspx?NewsID=20068&LangID=E.

[660] OHCHR, 'CoI Eritrea Report of the Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in Eritrea', (June 4, 2015): 5. https://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/hrc/coieritrea/pages/reportcoieritrea.aspx.

[661] Ibid.

4.4.5. Ethiopia's Diplomacy of Coercive Isolation

It is apparent from this narrative that Eritrea's agency and foreign policy choices played a significant role in its path towards isolation. Ethiopia's agency was nevertheless important in this process. Ethiopia's strategy of coercive isolation, which was a function of the Developmental State orientation, comprised three tactics: it nudged Eritrea into a confrontation with other states and then aligned with the affected states; it confronted states that tried to develop diplomatic partnerships with Eritrea;[662] and it invested in developing and maintaining the image of a responsible actor in the international community.

Alignments and Nudging

Ethiopia's initial tactics centred on nudging Eritrea into conflict with the West. Instead of rejecting the EEBC and abandoning the political process, Meles created the 5PPP as a third alternative and set the stage for further dialogue. This strategy seemed to be based on expectations of how Isaias would react. US diplomatic accounts of their discussions with Meles Zenawi suggest that isolation was Meles' long-term plan to deal with Isaias as early as 2003, and that he also already then understood Isaias to be a person who could not easily back down when challenged by someone.[663] Meles was therefore likely to have expected Isaias to react aggressively when he refused to implement the EEBC ruling. After proposing the 5PPP, which made it possible for Meles to present himself to the international community as a constructive actor seeking a solution to this problem, all he needed was to do nothing and wait for Isaias to start confronting the various international actors for not taking coercive measures against Ethiopia. After this, Meles took advantage of the situation to create new or strengthen existing alignments and portray Eritrea as a 'rogue state' and collective threat. This required only small inexpensive diplomatic gestures from Ethiopia, such as being willing to host UN and US officials who had been refused entry into Eritrea, or making public statements in support of Djibouti as soon as conflict erupted in 2008. Being able to take advantage of these situations was also predicated on having acted with restraint during past disputes with states such as Djibouti.

The different value given to international institutions by Eritrea and Ethiopia was also critical. In the end, it was the organizations, IGAD and AU, for which Eritrea had shown

[662] This is also what Eritrea was doing; but while Eritrea chose to confront big states, Ethiopia confronted small ones.

[663] US Embassy, Addis Ababa, Subject: 'Meles on Next Steps: Let Things Evolve Naturally', August 10, 1998.

disdain and abandoned, which Ethiopia used to formally sanction Eritrea. Ethiopia was the chair of both IGAD and the AUPSC at the time of the sanctions in 2009.

Diplomatic Coercion of Third Parties

Another proactive tactic employed to isolate Eritrea was confronting states that maintained good diplomatic relations with it or its regional proxies. Norway had maintained close relations with Eritrea, and favoured approaching Ethiopia and Eritrea as equals.[664] In August 2007, Ethiopia ordered the Norwegian embassy to cut its diplomatic staff in Ethiopia, due to its 'pampering' of 'spoiler forces' in the region.[665] US diplomats state that in a meeting with Jendayi Frazer, Meles had: 'noted that Norwegian groups were providing indirect support for Eritrean funds to Sudan and other areas which have proven unhelpful to peace and stability; the Norwegian government has been involved with the OLF beyond its coordination with the Ethiopian government, as well as with other insurgent groups; and support for Eritrean policy positions.'[666] In April 2008, Ethiopia broke diplomatic ties with Qatar after it aired a critical documentary about Ethiopia's Somali region, about which the Ethiopian government said: 'This has gone beyond Qatar's strong ties with Eritrea,' [667] thus acknowledging that support for Eritrea was a factor. In 2010 Meles announced that the Ethiopian diplomatic mission to Sweden would be shut, and explained the rationale of this policy as: 'There is no development cooperation program of any substance between us and Sweden," he said. "There is no major trading relationship between us and Sweden, and no significant investment coming from Sweden to Ethiopia. At the same time we don't have an embassy in Brazil. Brazil is a huge emerging country, and so we are now reassessing our diplomatic presence globally, and the first to go was Sweden because it was not worthwhile to have an embassy there.'[668] While this particular dispute was based on Sweden's criticism of Ethiopia's human rights record rather than Eritrea, Meles' coercive diplomatic actions

[664] US Embassy in Addis Ababa, Subject: 'Ethiopia-Eritrea: Norwegian Thoughts', September 27, 2005.

[665] BBC News, 'Norwegian Envoys to Leave Ethiopia', August 28, 2007. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/6966597.stm

[666] US Embassy in Addis Ababa, Subject: 'Assistant Secretary Frazer and Prime Minister Meles Discuss Ogaden, Somalia Norway and Eritrea', September 10, 2007.

[667] Sudan Tribune, 'Ethiopia breaks diplomatic relations with Qatar over TV reports on Ogaden', April 22, 2008.

[668] VOA, 'Ethiopian Leader Says "Rough Stretch" in Ties with US Over', August 10, 2010. https://www.voanews.com/a/ethiopian-leader-says-rough-stretch-in-ties-with-us-over-100484749/155581.html

against Sweden (as with Norway and Qatar) were meant to signal to the targeted states and others in the international community that it would not compromise on certain regional and domestic issues. These were all small states incapable of and with little interest in making a major push-back against Ethiopia on these matters, and this was thus a way of signalling – that did not compromise economic interests – to the international community that Ethiopia's policies on certain issues would not be dictated by outside forces.

Self-Representation through Lobbying and Diplomacy

Ethiopia's ability to isolate Eritrea to some extent also depended on its status as a regional power and a responsible member of the international community. Ethiopia's autocratic system made it vulnerable to being categorized as a 'rogue state' like Eritrea. This became a problem particularly after Ethiopia took a decisive turn towards autocracy after the disputed parliamentary elections in 2005. In 2007 the US House of Representatives passed HR 2003, a bill that would withhold aid to Ethiopia if it did not improve its human rights and democracy track-record.[669] In December 2007, Meles held a meeting with a delegation from the US led by Senator James Inhofe in Addis Ababa, during which US diplomatic sources claim that he stressed the extent and importance of Ethiopia's security cooperation with the US (particularly on counter-terrorism), and asked that 'the U.S. express its legitimate constructive criticism of Ethiopian actions in a fair and respectful manner and refrain from legislating about the "minutiae of internal politics in Ethiopia".'[670] Senator Inhofe played a key role in blocking the bill in the Senate after this meeting.[671] The EPRDF also invested significantly in lobbying efforts to prevent US legislators from passing bills that would put pressure on the EPRDF.[672] The Ethiopian

[669] Alemayehu Mariam, 'How Ethiopian Americans Changed US Policy on Their Homeland', *The Hill*, April 30, 2018. https://thehill.com/opinion/civil-rights/385448-how-ethiopian-americans-changed-us-policy-on-their-homeland

[670] US Embassy in Addis Ababa, Subject: "Meles Tells Codel Inhofe HR2003 Insulting," December 3, 2007

[671] Alemayehu Mariam, "Ethiopia at Tipping Point as Congress Mulls Human Rights Bill." *The Hill*, May 29, 2017. https://thehill.com/blogs/pundits-blog/international-affairs/335559-ethiopia-at-tipping-point-as-congress-mulls-human

[672] Addis Fortune, "During Its Rule of over Two Decades, the EPRDF Government Faces Occasional Condemnation and at Times Threats from Foreign Entities," February 1, 2016. https://addisfortune.net/columns/during-its-rule-of-over-two-decades-the-eprdf-government-faces-occasional-condemnation-and-at-times-threats-from-foreign-entities/.

government hired DLA Piper to lobby US officials at key junctures such as after the 2005 elections, when sanctions had been in the pipeline.[673]

4.4.6. The Critique of Coercive Isolation

Meles Zenawi, the architect of Ethiopia's Developmental State and containment strategy, passed away in 2012. A peaceful transition to Hailemariam Desalegn's Prime Ministership took place. However, the EPRDF's power structure would gradually fractionalize and it would have significant implications for foreign policy towards Eritrea. Political fragmentation and policy change would unfold in two stages: first an institutional rivalry between the intelligence apparatus and the military would lead to different views on how to manage relations with Eritrea;[674] in the second stage an inter-party rivalry amongst the EPRDF parties would culminate in the marginalization of the TPLF and the coming to power of Abiy Ahmed in 2018 and subsequently the peace process with Eritrea.

Meles' death had opened up the political space for debating and adopting a new policy. Although the EPRDF officially declared that the status quo would continue, behind the scenes divergent approaches to managing relations with Eritrea were developing. Everyone in government seemed to agree the containment strategy had reached its limits, but officials associated with the national intelligence adopted a cautious approach to policy change, while those from the military were very critical and wanted swift change.

The rivalry was not a critical burden on Ethiopia's economy as a whole, but had significantly depressed economic development in the Tigray region.[675] The transit route through Tigray for goods coming and going to Assab was an important source of revenue for inhabitants of cities like Adigrat and Zalambessa, which after the war have been

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[673] Ibid.

[674] Of my interviewees those on the military side include: Lt. General Abraha Woldemichael (EDF Chief of Staff Samora Yunus' closest ally), Major General (ret.) Mulugeta Gebrehiwot, and Lt. General (ret.) Yohannes Gebremeskel; while Sebhat Nega and Mesfin Amare were both close allies of intelligence chief Getachew Assefa. Party officials such as Tedros Adhanom and Bereket Simon did not participate in the institutional rivalry.

[675] Awramba Times, 'PM Hailemariam Desalegn's Controversial Speech That Captivated Public Attention on Social Media (Audio),' April 27, 2017. http://www.awrambatimes.com/?p=16257

deprived of a critical source of revenue.[676] Ethiopia's economic growth and mineral extraction projects in the Afar Regional State had made additional access to the sea an economic imperative.

By 2013 there was also a consensus in the Ethiopian government that Eritrea no longer constituted a conventional threat.[677] Eritrea's economy had been stagnant for decades, and Eritrea was under an arms embargo, and regionally and internationally isolated. On the other hand, Isaias Afwerki remained unyielding and by 2015 regime change from within also increasingly looked like an improbable scenario. A significant portion of Eritrea's youth population was contained in military barracks through the indefinite and universal military conscription policy. Others had fled in high numbers and sought refuge in different parts of the world. These factors together with the effective means of repression made a popular uprising difficult and improbable. Isaias Afwerki had also effectively neutralized the PFDJ party apparatus and the military by balancing one against the other. Despite the extraordinarily bad economic, humanitarian and political conditions in Eritrea, Isaias Afwerki managed through these measures to pre-empt any challenge to his power.

One alternative was regime change through military force – a scenario considered, but nevertheless deemed detrimental to Ethiopia's national security by the EPRDF leadership and notably the the national intelligence.[678] Regime change by force could not be pursued, primarily due to the power vacuum that Isaias Afwerki would leave behind.[679] The weakness of the opposition groups, their inability to operate and establish constituencies inside Eritrea made them fear a scenario wherein Eritrea would end up in a protracted situation of civil war where external actors would support various proxies. As Sebhat Nega put it: 'we would support our generals, Sudan and Saudi, their own.'[680] In

[676] Anonymous (No. 3): Ethiopian residents of Zalambessa, Tigray, interview with author, January 27, 2013.

[677] Sebhat Nega: Executive Director of Ethiopian International Institute for International Peace and Development and first Chairman of the TPLF, interview with author March 19, 2014.

[678] Ibid.

[679] Mesfin Amare: Major General (ret.), former Commander of the Eastern Division in the Ethiopian Armed Forces and Liaison Officer to Eritrean groups for the Ethiopian government, interview with author, May 17, 2017.

[680] Sebhat Nega: Executive Director of Ethiopian International Institute for International Peace and Development and first Chairman of the TPLF, interview with author March 19, 2014

addition to South Sudan and Somalia, this would have been Ethiopia's third neighbour in a condition of civil war.

The second alternative to containment was a demarcation of the EEBC without prior dialogue. This was in the eyes of many officials in the EPRDF and the national intelligence tantamount to rewarding Isaias' behaviour. Sebhat Nega said 'we cannot give him this victory'.[681] They feared that it would embolden him further, and that lead to a continuation of the rivalry in a different form. The value of Badme did not seem to be the primary motivation or concern. They indicated that they would be willing to give that up under the right conditions, but that they wanted to use it as a bargaining-chip.

As the EPRDF leadership debated these issues, Isaias' behaviour continued to fuel suspicion. For example, in 2014 Foreign Minister Tedros Adhanom stated that:

> Isaias is supporting Riek Machar. It is clear evidence that flights are going from Asmara over Sudan to South Sudan. His whole objective from the very start is to destabilise the region…. Asmara is still continuing the support to Al Shabaab…However there are no genuinely reform interest in this renewed international engagement. It is purely pragmatic. Isaias wants to lift the UN sanctions. He wants to change that, without changing himself. Just tactical – if he wants change he has to start from inside. They are very active in international relations, just to soften the sanctions regime. We see increased fragility in Eritrea. And the renewed international relations are purely a pragmatic move by Isaias.[682]

Bereket Simon echoed the same sentiments: 'We would like to start dialogue and negotiations. But Isaias will not negotiate without Badme. But Isaias can change opinion at every corner. We get mixed signals now. Like last fall on buying electricity from us – he later changed his mind on that. But if he is sufficiently pressured, he might change and negotiate with us, without preconditions.'[683]

An increasing number of regime insiders, particularly from the military, were becoming critical of the containment policy. The main criticism was that the policy had no clear

[681] Ibid.

[682] Tedros Adhanom: Foreign Minister of Ethiopia (2012-2016), interview with ILPI staff, March 4, 2014.

[683] Bereket Simon: Founding member of EPRDF and former Minister of Government Communications), interview with ILPI staff, March 5, 2014.

way out of an indefinite stalemate.[684] High-ranking military officials have communicated their dissatisfaction with the strategy (not in public but in personal correspondences with the author). One official described it as the worst of all options: 'the no-war-no-peace is the worst because it's a slow death' (not just to Eritrea but also Ethiopia).[685] When asked about the problem of giving up Badme, he said: 'we have in the past been willing to give up all of Eritrea, so why not Badme?'[686] Nor were they particularly impressed by the counter-insurgency measures by the intelligence agency in 2015, when they infiltrated the opposition groups based in Eritrea and co-opted them. This operation was dismissed by one Lieutenant General as a 'childish' measure.[687] They did not formulate a clear alternative, and so this critique could have simply reflected the institutional rivalry between the two agencies. Individuals who were formally or informally attached to the intelligence in the EPRDF however seemed to fear the consequences of both alternatives to containment: regime change through war or demarcation without dialogue. The party apparatus, outside the TPLF, did not seem to have a vested interest in the Eritrea policy.

The critique of the containment policy was intensified in 2014-2015, when it seemed that Isaias was making some progress in coming out of isolation. According to the Ethiopian government, Isaias was engaged in a new diplomacy with various Middle Eastern and global powers. Sebhat Nega claimed that Eritrea: 'is re-connecting to Saudi, for Saudi to mediate between Eritrea and US to normalise relations'.[688] Foreign Minister Tedros Adhanom echoed this by saying: 'The last few months no significant changes. We know Eritrea is actively engaging to renew their international relations, and are contacting Russia, Finland, Uganda, Kenya and even Sweden and Norway. …Isaias is engaging with

[684] Mulugeta Berhe: Major General (ret.), responsible for demobilization of the Derg's Armed Forces, interview with author, April 27, 2017; Yohannes Gebremeskel: Lt. General, Head of Mission and Force Commander of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (2013-2014), Head of the Military Intelligence Department in the Ethiopian Ministry of National Defence, interview with author, May 12, 2017; Anonymous (No. 4): Lieutenant General in the Ethiopian Armed Forces and former Commander of Western Division, interview with author, October 27, 2015.

[685] Yohannes Gebremeskel: Lt. General, Head of Mission and Force Commander of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (2013-2014), Head of the Military Intelligence Department in the Ethiopian Ministry of National Defence, interview with author, May 12, 2017.

[686] Ibid.

[687] Anonymous (No. 4): Lieutenant General in the Ethiopian Armed Forces and former Commander of Western Division, interview with author, October 27, 2015.

[688] Sebhat Nega: Executive Director of Ethiopian International Institute for International Peace and Development and first Chairman of the TPLF, interview by IPLI staff, March 5, 2014.

Kenya and Uganda to break the IGAD consensus. Also Russia Sweden and Norway are engaged to break the UN impasse.'[689] According to Bereket Simon: 'Internationally Isaias is undergoing a facelift'.[690] Eritrea made a serious leap out of its isolation when the UAE established a military base in Eritrea in 2015. This provided Asmara with new allies, and more political and financial leverage. The security establishment did not seem to be worried by this development, in the wider public, however, the presence of Arab states in Eritrea led to a resurgence in two features of the Irredenta: the siege mentality and suspicion of Arabs.

The end of the containment policy and the government's plan for a new direction was announced in April 2017, when Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn declared that his government was working on a new policy towards Eritrea.[691] The Developmental State's strategic restraint and coercive isolation had managed to avoid conventional war, isolate Eritrea, and reduce its power projection capacity, but after almost two decades had not managed to move beyond the no-war no-peace rivalry. The domestic developmental state economic model then began incentivising the search for an alternative foreign policy that could better serve Ethiopia's developmental needs.

4.4.7. Policy Change and Rivalry De-escalation

The Developmental State orientation had set in motion a policy revision process, but the most proximate cause of foreign policy change on Eritrea would be the internal conflict in the EPRDF that resulted in Abiy Ahmed becoming Prime Minister in 2018. This was in turn to a great extent a function of mass protests that had been taking place since 2015. The Oromo protests that began in 2015 had not halted, despite multiple state of emergency decrees and the deployment of security forces that used live ammunition. The protestors specifically held the TPLF responsible for their political grievances, which served to empower the ANDM and OPDO against the dominant TPLF.[692] On April 2,

[689] Tedros Adhanom: Foreign Minister of Ethiopia (2012-2016), interview with ILPI staff, March 4, 2014.

[690] Bereket Simon: Founding member of EPRDF and former Minister of Government Communications), interview with ILPI staff, March 5, 2014.

[691] Yohannes Anberbir, 'Ethiopia to Reorient Policy on Eritrea', *The Reporter*, April 22, 2017. https://www.thereporterethiopia.com/content/ethiopia-reorient-policy-eritrea.

[692] Nizar Manek, 'Ethiopia's Next Leader Could Come From Protest-Hit Region', *Bloomberg*, February 21, 2018.

2018 this culminated in a leadership change in the EPRDF that gave Abiy Ahmed from the OPDO the post of Prime Minister in Ethiopia. In June, Abiy declared that his government would accept and implement the EEBC without any pre-condition.[693] After a two-week period of silence Isaias Afwerki accepted the peace offering. This was followed-up by official visits by Isaias and Abiy to Eritrea and Ethiopia. The borders were re-opened for the first time in 20 years, and commercial air and ground transport was resumed. In September Ethiopia also began to utilize Eritrean ports for import needs.[694] Ethiopian opposition groups, notably the OLF, ONLF and G7, that had been based in Eritrea laid down their arms and agreed to move back to Ethiopia and participate in the political process.[695] Despite Abiy's promise to demarcate the border, both governments however decided to postpone this issue.

The de-escalation of the Ethiopia-Eritrea rivalry has been attributed to Abiy's personal leadership and to the mediation efforts of regional and global actors.[696] These are important but partial explanations. Three additional factors were critical and should be considered: the enabling structural conditions created by the Developmental State, the scapegoating of the TPLF that allowed both Isaias Afwerki and Abiy Ahmed to sell the rapprochement as a victory to domestic audiences, and finally Abiy Ahmed's gradual abandonment of the Developmental State governance model and foreign policy orientation.

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https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-02-21/ethiopia-s-next-leader-could-come-from-protest-hit-oromia-region.

[693] Paul Schemm, 'Ethiopia chooses new leader from protest-hit region in break from past', *Washingtonpost,* March 28, 2018. https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/ethiopia-chooses-new-leader-from-protest-hit-region-in-break-from-past/2018/03/28/58ae9fae-3275-11e8-8abc-22a366b72f2d_story.html?utm_term=.f481c572778c

[694] Aaron Maasho, 'Ship docks, road upgrade planned as Eritrea, Ethiopia ties strengthen', *Reuters,* September 5, 2018. https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ethiopia-eritrea-port/ship-docks-road-upgrade-planned-as-eritrea-ethiopia-ties-strengthen-idUSKCN1LL0UW

[695] Abdur Rahman Alfa Shaban, 'Like PG7, Ethiopia govt welcomes Oromo Liberation Front back home', *Africa News,* September 16, 2018. http://www.africanews.com/2018/09/16/like-pg7-ethiopia-govt-welcomes-oromo-liberation-front-back-home//

[696] Martin Plaut, 'Eritrea and Ethiopia have made peace. How it happened and what next', *The Conversation*, July 10, 2018. https://theconversation.com/eritrea-and-ethiopia-have-made-peace-how-it-happened-and-what-next-99683; Jason Burke,'"These changes are unprecedented": how Abiy is Upending Ethiopian Politics', *The Guardian*, July 8, 2018. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jul/08/abiy-ahmed-upending-ethiopian-politics

The peace agreement was preceded by high-profile diplomatic visits by US officials to Eritrea. Prime Minister Abiy had also indicated before the peace process was in motion that he hoped the US and Saudi Arabia would mediate between him and Isaias Afwerki.[697] It is therefore likely that third-parties served as channels of communication. But much like the process of the no-war no-peace rivalry, the role of outside actors was however secondary to factors from within the region.

Most accounts neglect the processes that had been taking place within Ethiopia prior to Abiy Ahmed's rise to power. The Developmental State played a critical yet indirect role in producing this outcome. First of all, the Developmental State had created the enabling structural conditions for rivalry de-escalation. Ethiopia's policy of coercive isolation had significantly transformed the power balance between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Eritrea's power had significantly decreased since the rivalry began in 2000. The gap in GDP had increased from a ratio of 7/1 in 2004 to 15/1 in 2015, and while there is no data available on Eritrea's military spending, it is likely to correspond somewhat to the growth in the overall economy.[698]

The diplomatic standing of Ethiopia and Eritrea had also diverged significantly during this period. Ethiopia became one of the biggest contributors of peace-keeping troops and influential peace mediators on the African continent,[699] and was in general increasingly seen as a regional hegemon and as an anchor of stability by global powers like the US and EU. Eritrea on the other hand left IGAD, was sanctioned by the UNSC at the behest of the AU, and was in other words, regionally and globally isolated.

Counterfactual reasoning can help us make sense of how these conditions might have affected both Ethiopia and Eritrea's decision-making. First of all, it has to be recalled that Eritrea backed down in 2018 from its position of no diplomatic talks before the common border had been demarcated, and went on with normalizing relations with Ethiopia without this prerequisite being met. Would Eritrea have reneged on this prerequisite in 2003 – when its relative power viz-a-viz Ethiopia was better off – even in a situation

[697] Aiga Forum, 'Group Conversation with PM Abiy', May 22, 2018. http://www.aigaforum.com/news2018/conversation-with-pm-abiy.htm

[698] See chart on page 167 for detail.

[699] See chapters on Somalia and Sudan for detail.

wherein the TPLF had been marginalized? Its past behaviour indicated that it would not and that the power balance in 2018 was likely to have served as an incentive for Eritrea. The power-balance in 2018 had also significantly affected Ethiopia's sense of security. As we have seen in this chapter as far back as 2013 the EPRDF had concluded that Eritrea no longer posed a conventional military threat. This means that it is less likely that Abiy Ahmed would have taken the measures he did in 2018 with similar ease and confidence in 2003 when Eritrea was seen as a conventional threat. The new power balance was not a decisive factor, but it was an enabling factor and a different power balance condition would have made a peace deal more difficult.

As this chapter has illustrated, the EPRDF had been under pressure from both the party and the wider population to formulate a new policy on Eritrea, and had been in the process of producing an alternative policy for more than a year. Ethiopia's economic need for additional access to the sea, and developing its northern regions, were becoming more imperative as its economic development was maturing. While, the end of TPLF hegemony and the rise of Abiy Ahmed made the rivalry de-escalation fast-paced and problem-free, the structural and ideological incentives generated by the Developmental State had however set in motion processes that would have led to some change in the status quo even if Abiy Ahmed had not come to power.

Abiy Ahmed's personal agency was critical in the peace-process primarily because he represented a credible break with the history of TPLF dominance in Ethiopia. This was important because it had implications for the framing of who won the rivalry and the justification for the human and economic costs of the rivalry. Abiy dismissed the senior TPLF figures Getachew Assefa and Samora Yunis from their positions as heads of the national intelligence and armed forces on June 9, and his conflict with the TPLF made it possible for Isaias to portray the peace deal with Eritrea as part of his victory over the TPLF. In a speech addressing crowds in Asmara, Isaias declared that this was 'game-over' for the TPLF and that Eritrea had emerged as victorious.[700] A peace-deal with a TPLF-dominated EPRDF would have been more difficult to sell domestically. By directly or indirectly blaming the TPLF, both the Abiy and Isaias could claim victory.

[700] Eritrea Ministry of Information, 'President Isaias' Speech on Martyrs Day', June 20, 2018. http://www.shabait.com/news/local-news/26520-president-isaias-speech-on-martyrs-day

The agent that actually pushed through the deal was Abiy Ahmed and its important to consider the broader motives behind his foreign policy. There are many indicators that the Developmental State orientation was beginning to be abandoned under Abiy's leadership, chief amongst these was his domestic economic policy reforms.[701] The management and progress of key projects of the Developmental State were publicly being questioned and undermined by Abiy Ahmed's administration.[702] The government also declared that they would privatise state owned enterprises and liberalize some sectors of the economy. Personally, the Prime Minister also declared that he self-identified as a liberal.[703] The main driver of the Developmental State orientation – i.e. the developmental state economic model – was beginning to wane under Abiy Ahmed's leadership. This was also accompanied by changes in foreign policy. This includes the initiating the formulation of a new foreign policy strategy.[704] And secondly, practical measures such as building a navy to have a military presence in the Red Sea.[705] These measures and aspirations indicate a move away from the principle of strategic restraint and minimizing defence expenditure.

4.5. Conclusion

Under the Revolutionary orientation, the EPRDF initially pursued a strategy of accommodation in relation to economic and security policies. This was partially due to

[701] Financial Times, "My model is capitalism': Ethiopia's prime minister plans telecoms privatisation' 24.02.2019, https://www.ft.com/content/433dfa88-36d0-11e9-bb0c-42459962a812.

[702] Ahram Online, 'Ethiopian PM says GERD 'may never see light of day' if delays continue,' 26.08.2018. http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/0/310270/Egypt/0/Ethiopian-PM-says-GERD-may-never-see-light-of-day-.aspx

[703] Financial Times, "My model is capitalism': Ethiopia's prime minister plans telecoms privatisation' 24.02.2019, https://www.ft.com/content/433dfa88-36d0-11e9-bb0c-42459962a812.

[704] Fana, 'Stakeholders Discuss Ethiopia's Revised Foreign Policy,' 06.07.2019, https://fanabc.com/english/2019/07/stakeholders-discuss-ethiopias-revised-foreign-policy/

[705] Reuters, 'Landlocked Ethiopia plans new navy as part of military reforms,' 03.06.2018, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ethiopia-military/landlocked-ethiopia-plans-new-navy-as-part-of-military-reforms-idUSKCN1IZ0ML

the fact that the two states had a unique and intimate history, as well as an expectation that Ethiopia and Eritrea would be re-integrated in the future.

Policies were in this period based on assumptions about compatible interests and driven to some extent by the intimate history of the Tigrigna speaking peoples of Eritrea and Ethiopia and the parties in power. But seen in a comparative perspective, policies towards Eritrea had many similarities with policies towards Somalia and Sudan. This indicates that while the idiosyncratic nature of the bilateral relationship was important, a broader ideational world-view was also an important driver of foreign policy towards Eritrea, a factor that has been neglected in the literature.

These assumptions and values were enabling factors for the war in 1998. It was based on the Revolutionary orientation and trust that the EPRDF had postponed the demarcation of the border and demobilized much of its armed forces. And it was unrealistic assumptions about common interests that led to an inability to foresee the incompatible political and economic interests that would emerge.

The Revolutionary orientation was a peace-time orientation, and thus once Ethiopia was at war, it was both discredited and could provide no orientation. The border war not only enabled but also encouraged a return to the Irredenta. The EPRDF needed to swiftly mobilize resources and people for the war. The Irredenta discourse included a siege mentality, a high value attached to territory, and idolization of military force, all of which made it an effective tool for mobilization. Meles and a few of his colleagues in the EPRDF however only espoused this orientation for tactical reasons. During the war this group displayed a different approach to the role of diplomacy and military force in pursuing national interests. Meles' group, as opposed to the rest of the EPRDF, wanted to use military force only for the limited purposes of retaking lost territory. Meles' strong commitment to his doctrine were displayed in May 2000 when he decided to defy public opinion and most of the EPRDF by settling the dispute through arbitration.

Meles consolidated his grip on power in the EPRDF after the war, and subsequently adopted a new strategy towards Eritrea that had three components: strategic restraint from conventional war, deterrence, and coercive isolation. All three were rooted in the priorities of the Developmental State. Ethiopia restrained itself from utilizing its military power to pursue its objectives of regime or policy change, and instead chose to pursue these objectives through the strategies of diplomatic isolation and proxy-war. These

strategies offered a way of managing the rivalry without jeopardizing the Developmental State economic project. The diplomatic containment strategy utilized by Ethiopia inflicted a great deal of humanitarian, economic and political harm on Eritrea. The resort to diplomacy should therefore not be confused with a pacifist or morally motivated foreign policy; these tools were chosen based on their compatibility with a foreign policy orientation that prioritized economic development.

Ethiopia's strategy of coercive isolation led to a feed-back loop of cooperation in the region. On the one hand, the strategy required building and maintaining good relations with other states in order to mobilize them against Eritrea; on the other hand, Eritrea's behaviour – which was partly a function of Ethiopia's strategies – made it a collective threat that encouraged regional cooperation. Ethiopia ended its rivalry and initiated alignments with Sudan and Djibouti due to Eritrea. It also deepened its alignments with Uganda, Kenya and the US in this process. Containing Eritrea was therefore a strategy that shaped Ethiopia's overall regional strategy, in that it required a general stance of restraint on other disputes (such as with Djibouti in Somalia or Sudan on territorial issues), and in general proactive building of alignments in the region and continent.

Although Ethiopia managed to isolate Eritrea, it however failed to achieve either regime or policy change. Isolation was not supposed to be an end in itself, but rather a means to induce more fundamental change within Eritrea that could lead to a sustainable peace. Containment failed to achieve policy change primarily because of the regime-type in Eritrea. In Sudan and Somalia, containment policies had generated divisions between hardliners and moderates in the UIC and Sudanese government. In both cases, pressure led to the emergence and/or the empowerment of moderates who sought to end the rivalries. Isaias Afwerki however had created a system in which all potential contenders within the regime had been eliminated, and also made public uprisings difficult. In this system, Isaias had also assumed such a central role that his departure would have led to a power-vacuum.

By 2015, the EPRDF increasingly faced calls for a policy change domestically, but the alternative of regime change through war was undesirable due to the danger of a political vacuum that would be left by Isaias Afwerki, while demarcation of the border without dialogue would potentially embolden Isaias and lead to a continuation of the rivalry. In 2017 Hailemariam Desalegn declared that a new policy was being prepared by the

EPRDF, but before the policy was publicized Abiy Ahmed became Ethiopia's Prime Minister in April 2018. Prime Minister Abiy's decision to demarcate the border without any preconditions and his conflict with the TPLF led to a formal ending of the rivalry between the two states.

The Developmental State orientation had played an important role in this process. Firstly, the Developmental State had generated economic development incentives that led to the conclusion that after almost two decades a solution to the stalemate was necessary. Consequently, some form of change to the no-war no-peace stalemate was likely regardless of the change in the EPRDF leadership. Secondly, the orientation had been an enabling factor by substantially increasing the gap in military power and diplomatic influence between the two rivals. That is, by isolating and weakening Eritrea it incentivised it to make concessions such as agreeing to talks before the demarcation of the border. While the new power balance incentivised Ethiopia by making it less insecure. The impact of the Developmental State was however only indirect. The scapegoating of the TPLF was an important enabling factor that allowed both Isaias Afwerki and Abiy Ahmed to sell the peace deal as a victory to their domestic audiences. Finally, Abiy Ahmed displayed signs of moving away from both the developmental state economic model as well as foreign policy orientation. While an ideological alternative has not been fully formulated yet, Abiy Ahmed's administration has been extensively deconstructing the old EPRDF's governance, economic and foreign policy models.

Chapter 5. Ethiopia's Policy towards Sudan

5.1. Introduction

Ethiopia and Sudan have one of the longest histories of conflict on the African continent. In the 19th century Mahdist Sudan sacked the Ethiopian city of Gonder and killed its Emperor Yohannes VI. In the 20th century the two biggest states in the Horn of Africa rivalled for control over the Nile and undermined each other's security through proxy-warfare. This was an important enabler of the secession of South Sudan and Eritrea, which would have been much less likely without regional support.

This political trajectory changed under the EPRDF, and apart from a brief interlude of rivalry in 1993-1998, the relationship has been characterized by an incremental deepening of cooperation in most sectors. Some studies have noted this progress, but this relationship has rarely been taken into consideration in most assessments of the overall state of stability in the Horn of Africa.[706] Moreover, when this rapprochement has received attention, the focus has been limited to particular sectors.[707] This neglect is puzzling given that Ethiopia and Sudan are the two biggest states in the Horn of Africa, and have accounted for a significant portion of both civil and inter-state conflicts in the region since World War II. The mechanisms through which cooperation has evolved, and the strategies Ethiopia has utilized to pursue cooperation with Sudan, remain under-explored. This chapter seeks to address these gaps.

Although the initial triggers of the rapprochement between Ethiopia and Sudan in 1998 were environmental factors – Egyptian rapprochement with Sudan in 1997, and the war between Eritrea and Ethiopia in 1998 – the successful deepening and expansion of the cooperation with Sudan over a period of two decades can primarily be attributed to the Developmental State foreign policy orientation that was adopted after 2002. This orientation led to the formulation of three strategic priorities. Its primary objective was to

[706] See: Volkert Mathijs Doop, 'How to Handle Your Neighbours' Conflict: Ethiopia's Relationship with Sudan and South Sudan.'

[707] Embiale Beyene, Aslam Khan, and Mohammed Seid Ali, 'The Dynamics of Ethiopia-Sudan Relations Over the Hydro-Politics of Nile', *Insight on Africa* 10, no. 2 (2018).

maintain and deepen the alignment with President Bashir's government, that is, at the minimum avoid conflict. Secondly, the EPRDF was concerned about the spill-over of instability from Sudan, and therefore sought to contain and pre-empt conflict in Sudan. Thirdly, they had a long-term objective of pursuing economic cooperation with Sudan, particularly on utilizing the Nile waters for hydro-power.

In order to pursue these interests, the EPRDF would primarily rely on linkage diplomacy. Ethiopia was able to cultivate diplomatic capital by catering to Sudan's interests in one sector, and then use that capital to draw on its support in other sectors. By adopting a favourable position towards Sudan during international mediation processes, and acting with restraint on controversial issues such as territorial disputes, Ethiopia was able to over time develop trust and deepen its alignment with Sudan. The EPRDF then used this diplomatic capital to garner Khartoum's support for challenging Egypt's hegemony on the Nile.

This case-study illustrates how changes in foreign policy objectives and tactics correlate with the influence of the different foreign policy orientations. The objectives and tactics the Revolutionary and Developmental State orientations led to in regards to Sudan were also similar to those the EPRDF pursued in relation to Somalia and Eritrea. This lends credence to the argument that the EPRDF's policies towards Sudan were driven by ideational frameworks, aspirations and principles. The EPRDF's foreign policy towards Sudan can best be understood when examined in relation to domestic ideological politics and in the context of its broader regional policies.

This chapter begins with an account of the policy towards Sudan under the brief phase dominated by the Revolutionary orientation, which lasted from 1991 to 1993. Ethiopian strategy towards Sudan under the Revolutionary orientation was not based on clearly formulated national interests, but did however lead to foreign policy behaviour characterized by restraint, unilateral concessions and symbolic gestures that signified trust and solidarity. This was a clear departure from the suspicion and hostility that had been the basis of the Derg's policies towards Sudan.

Part two examines the initiation and de-escalation of rivalry in 1993-1998. It first accounts for Turabi's project of spreading a particular brand of Islam across East Africa,

and how this put Sudan at odds with the wider region and instigated a rivalry with Ethiopia. Then it examines the containment policy adopted by Ethiopia to manage this threat. Containment had the strategic purpose of dividing the moderates from the hardliners in the Sudanese regime by applying diplomatic and military pressure. Finally, it accounts for the de-escalation of the rivalry, which was caused by three factors. Containment led to political upheaval that led to the empowerment of Bashir, and the political demise of Turabi and Sudan's Islamist regional policy. Egypt's détente with Sudan in 1997 and Ethiopia's war with Eritrea in 1998 were the two other factors that led to the rapprochement between Sudan and Ethiopia.

Part three accounts for the evolution of the alignment between Ethiopia and Sudan in 1998-2017 under the Developmental State foreign policy orientation. This section is divided into five parts that examine Ethiopia's policies in the following sectors: international mediation, institutionalized security cooperation, economic cooperation, territorial demarcation and hydro-politics. Ethiopia had no rivalry with South Sudan, which is therefore not treated as a case-study, but due to its impact on the Ethiopia-Sudan relationship it will figure extensively in this chapter.

5.2. Revolutionary Orientation, 1991-1993

5.2.1. Historical Legacies from the Liberation War

The EPRDF's bilateral relationship with Sudan in 1991 was not the initiation of new relations, but the transformation of old personal and organizational bonds into formal inter-state relations. The legacies from the liberation war had a significant influence on the EPRDF's foreign policy towards Sudan when it came to power in 1991. The Revolutionary orientation towards Sudan was therefore rooted both in historical experiences and revolutionary ideology.

The TPLF had used Sudan as a political base during much of the 17-year guerrilla war against the Derg. Sudan was the TPLF's gate to the outside world by serving as a base for conducting foreign relations. Officials report that they 'could navigate freely and autonomously' in and out of Sudan, and most importantly 'could import arms,

ammunitions and medicine through Sudan without any obstacle'.[708] The Tigrayan rebels were also able to establish and operate elaborate governance structures and agencies inside Sudan, such as, the Relief Society of Tigray. All of these were essential for the operations, survival and eventual success of the organization.

This relationship was complicated in 1989 however when a coup took place in Sudan in which the National Islamic Front (NIF) together with military officers led by Omar Hassan al-Bashir assumed power. The NIF established an Islamist regime that had a clear foreign policy objective of exporting its revolution. There was a tension between the TPLF's friendship with the Sudanese and the ideological contradiction between it and the NIF, but their incompatible foreign policies did not lead to suspicion or insecurity in the EPRDF leadership. The uncritical embrace of the Sudanese regime by the EPRDF despite the latter's explicit radical Islamist orientation is one of the most puzzling features of the Revolutionary orientation phase.

5.2.2. Revolutionary Orientation: Interests, Strategies and Outcomes

The influence of the Revolutionary orientation on foreign policy towards Sudan was short-lived and lacked the guidance of clear strategic objectives. Ethiopia's policies were broadly motivated by solidarity and based on trust, which manifested itself through symbolical gestures, unilateral concessions and acts of restraint in the face of provocations.

EPRDF officials often point to symbolic gestures which in their view reflected the degree of trust and affinity between the two governments. One such gesture was that the first ambassador of Sudan to Ethiopia was chosen by the EPRDF rather than the Sudanese government.[709] The ambassador was a senior intelligence officer in the Sudanese government, and had been the liaison officer to the TPLF when they were based in Sudan; according to one official he had become 'an honorary member of the TPLF' during the

[708] Mulugeta Berhe: Major General (ret.) and responsible for demobilization of the Derg's Armed Forces, interview with author, April 27, 2017; Mulugeta Berhe was one of the officials, alongside Chief of Staff of the EDF, that was pushed into early retirement from the EDF after the TPLF-split in 2000-2001. He nevertheless maintained good relations with Meles Zenawi afterwards.

[709] Ibid.

liberation war.[710] Another popular anecdote is the story of Meles Zenawi's trip to Addis Ababa in May 1991 to establish the transitional government, on a plane from Sudan piloted by a Sudanese military officer.[711] This event was a symbolic conclusion of the support that the TPLF had received in their war to topple the Derg. The fraternal sentiments were mutual. According to a Sudanese diplomat: 'The decisive help rendered [during the struggle] helped take away any suspicion…Political assistance rendered to the new rulers in Ethiopia helped to create a psychology of friendship.'[712]

Under the Revolutionary orientation, concrete policies such as allowing visa free entry to Ethiopia for Sudanese citizens were also implemented,[713] as well as an overall de-securitization of the bilateral relationship. Sudanese NGOs were central in Turabi's Islamization project, and a number of these were established in Ethiopia after 1991. The activities of these NGOs were viewed upon with great scepticism by the EPRDF, but not taken seriously enough to warrant any diplomatic action.[714] Sudanese rebel groups were no longer allowed to operate on Ethiopian territory. Peaceful coexistence with Sudan required the EPRDF to compromise its principled stance on the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) struggle for self-determination. The EPRDF therefore told 'the SPLM that they could operate politically, but not militarily in Ethiopia'.[715] The EPRDF also immediately began demobilizing the armed forces of the Derg regime, and de-securitized the border with Sudan.[716] These policies were not reciprocated however. As one Ethiopian diplomat noted: Sudan did not provide Ethiopian citizens the same visa policy.[717] This was one of the EPRDF's policies that the diplomatic establishment found unreasonable. Despite the EPRDF's active efforts to de-securitize the relationship between the two states, the Sudanese government engaged in provocative actions such as

[710] Ibid.

[711] Ibid.

[712] Daffa-Alla Elhag Ali Osman: Sudan's Ambassador to the UN, interview with author, April 28, 2016.

[713] Daniel Yifru: Ethiopian diplomat and Director of Peace and Security Division IGAD (2000-2011), interview with author, July 5, 2016.

[714] Ibid.

[715] Ibid.

[716] Mulugeta Gebrehiwot Berhe, 'The Ethiopian Post-Transition Security Sector Reform Experience: Building a National Army from a Revolutionary Democratic Army', *African Security Review* 26, no. 2 (2017).

[717] Daniel Yifru: Ethiopian diplomat and Director of Peace and Security Division IGAD (2000-2011), interview with author, July 5, 2016. Daniel Yifru is a retired diplomat, he doesn't have a background in the EPRDF'sliberation war against the Derg, and was critical of the EPRDF's Revolutionary orientation.

hosting the rebel group OLF in Khartoum after its conflict with the EPRDF in 1992.[718] Rather than reciprocate or adopt a hostile stance, the EPRDF chose to react with restraint and do nothing. One military official describes their reaction as the following: 'we didn't care much. We thought that the OLF was so weakened that the risk was contained'.[719]

5.3. Rivalry and Containment

5.3.1. Rivalry Initiation

The dominant influence of the Revolutionary orientation on foreign policy towards Sudan lasted for no more than two years, and by 1993 the EPRDF had already identified Sudan as a security threat and adopted a containment policy towards it. The rivalry was instigated by incompatible foreign policy orientations. The revolutionary regime in Sudan aspired to spread a particular brand of Islam beyond its borders. Ethiopia, which was a secular state with around a 40% Muslim population, was naturally threatened by this foreign policy.[720] The demise of the Revolutionary orientation, just like in relation to Somalia, led to a period (until 2002) wherein foreign policy was made in the absence of a concrete foreign policy orientation, and as ad hoc reactions to changes in the external environment.

Sudanese Islamist Project

Sudanese revisionist foreign policy can to a significant extent be attributed to the vision and abilities of Hassan al Turabi as an individual.[721] Turabi had in the 1960s become the secretary general of the Sudanese branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, and propagated the idea that Sharia should be the foundation of the Sudanese state.[722] In 1985, Turabi established the NIF to appeal to a wider section of Sudanese society.[723] Turabi did not

[718] After the OLF withdrew from the transitional government and engaged the EPRDF in conflict in 1992.

[719] Mulugeta Gebrehiwot Berhe: Major General (ret.) and responsible for demobilization of the Derg's Armed Forces, interview with author, April 27, 2017.

[720] Ibid.

[721] Millard Burr and Robert Oakley Collins, *Revolutionary Sudan: Hasan Al-Turabi and the Islamist State, 1989-2000,* (Leiden: Brill, 2003).

[722] Ibid: 6.

[723] Ibid: 8; Abdel Ghaffar M. Ahmed, 'One Against All: The National Islamic Front (NIF) and Sudanese Sectarian and Secular Parties', *CMI Report,* No. 6. 2008. https://www.cmi.no/publications/file/3115-one-against-all-the-national-islamic-front-nif.pdf

assume an official role in government immediately after the coup; instead he focused on exporting the revolution to the outside world through the Popular Arab and Islamic Congress (PAIC), which he established in 1991.[724] This global religious forum set itself the objective of coordinating the activities of Islamist movements with both local and global agendas across the Muslim world. In the first congress 300 participants from 45 states as well as 200 Sudanese citizens participated, making this organization in practice more international than Sudanese.[725]

The two central features of Turabi's political programme were the ideas 'that the separation of State and Mosque was heretical at best and not Islamic at worst (*jahlil*)', and that loyalty to the Muslim Umma should precede that of loyalty to the Sudanese state.[726] These formed the objectives of his revolution beyond Sudan's borders, and meant that the objectives of the revolution could only be realized at the expense of the sovereignty of other states. In the inaugural conference of the PAIC, Turabi presented a foreign policy orientation for Sudan that would centre on exporting its Islamist revolution. Sudan would provide a safe-haven for Islamists to train, congregate and plan their activities to project Islamism from India to Algeria. Khartoum became the base for Islamists from around the world, such as the Arab-Afghan fighters returning from victory against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. The most important of these was Osama bin Laden, who had become a major investor in Sudan and also moved much of the organizational work of Al Qaeda to Sudan.[727]

The Islamization of the Horn of Africa was also part of Turabi's programme.[728] Towards this end, the NIF had in May 1993 began providing extensive financial and military support to Eritrean Islamic Jihad (EIJ) and Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF).[729] In

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[724] Burr and Collins, *Revolutionary Sudan: Hasan Al-Turabi and the Islamist State, 1989-2000,* 57; Max Taylor and Mohamed E. Elbushra, 'Research Note: Hassan al-Turabi, Osama bin Laden, and Al Qaeda in Sudan,' *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 18:3, 2006.

[725] Burr and Collins, *Revolutionary Sudan: Hasan Al-Turabi and the Islamist State, 1989-2000,* 58.

[726] Ibid: 6.

[727] James Astill, 'Osama: the Sudan years', *The Guardian*, October 16, 2001. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2001/oct/17/afghanistan.terrorism3

[728] Nhial Bol, 'Religion-Africa: Countries of the Horn Urged to Apply Sharia', *Inter Press Service,* April 19, 1998, http://www.ipsnews.net/1998/04/religion-africa-countries-of-the-horn-urged-to-apply-sharia/

[729] Burr and Collins, *Revolutionary Sudan: Hasan Al-Turabi and the Islamist State, 1989-2000,*146.

December a large delegation of Muslims from Eritrea participated in a PAIC General Assembly held in Khartoum, and soon after the meeting the EIJ conducted attacks on Eritrea from their base in Sudan.[730] According to an Ethiopian military officer, Eritrea was an easy and natural target for Turabi due to the demographics of Sudan's borderlands: 'the people occupying the borderlands of Eritrea and Sudan were mostly Muslim and somewhat both Eritrean and Sudanese, while their border with Ethiopia is mainly occupied by Christians'.[731]

When the NIF began supporting Islamist groups in Eritrea, the EPRDF acknowledged Sudan's Islamist foreign policy as a threat. As one official put it: 'We started getting worried when they started arming Eritrean groups', as they feared that they would be next in line.[732] While Sudanese power projection against Ethiopia in the first half of the 1990s was 'not well organized', this would change in 1995.[733] During his visit to Ethiopia on June 26 1995, gunmen attacked Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's vehicle.[734] Mubarak survived, and while some of the assailants were shot dead and some arrested, three of the participants were able to escape. The Ethiopian government claimed that the individuals were travelling on Sudanese passports and had fled back to Sudan.[735] The Egyptian government immediately blamed the Sudanese government for the attack. Turabi on the one hand denied any responsibility for the attack, but he on the other hand called the perpetrators 'messengers of the Islamic faith.'[736]

Ethiopia and Eritrea were not the only targets of Sudanese aggression. In East Africa Sudan was accused by the Kenyan government of supporting the Islamic Party of Kenya

[730] Ibid.

[731] Mulugeta Gebrehiwot Berhe: Major General (ret.) and responsible for demobilization of the Derg's Armed Forces, interview with author, April 27, 2017.

[732] Ibid.

[733] Ibid.

[734] John Lancaster, 'Gunmen Try to Kill Mubarak', *Washington Post*, June 27, 1995. https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1995/06/27/gunmen-try-to-kill-mubarak/19f4d0db-a1ca-4011-95cc-1003951a929a/

[735] Daniel Yifru: Ethiopian diplomat and Director of Peace and Security Division IGAD (2000-2011), interview with author, July 5, 2016.

[736] Burr and Collins, *Revolutionary Sudan: Hasan Al-Turabi and the Islamist State, 1989-2000,* 189.

(IPK).[737] They were also accused of supporting radical groups in Tanzania.[738] Turabi had close ties to the Somali AIAI. Sudanese planes were used to transport Iranian arms to Somalia from Sudan, while Al Qaeda and NIF officials provided training and strategic support in Somalia.[739] Military efforts were combined with the establishment of NGOs and thousands of scholarships to Somali students to study in Sudanese universities.[740] Egyptian Islamists who had been fighting in Afghanistan began using Sudan as a route back to Egypt, and many also made Sudan their home. In Sudan, these movements found the ideal conditions to plot the assassination of the Egyptian President. Turabi had meetings with Ayman Al-Zawahiri and other leading members of Al-Jama'at al-Islamiyah through 1994-1995, when he is likely to have been informed about the plans to assassinate President Mubarak.[741] Turabi was also implicated in terrorist activities beyond the Horn of Africa, such as training the Egyptian Jamat al Islamiya, opening a branch-office for Hamas in Khartoum, and support for FIS in Algeria and Al Nahda in Tunisia.[742] Globally, Turabi was involved in the World Trade Centre bombings of 1993, as the individuals who were behind the attacks had entered the US through Sudan.[743] The regional nature of Sudan's foreign policy project would have significant implications for Ethiopia's response.

5.3.2. Ethiopia's Containment Policy

The EPRDF's response to Sudan's Islamist power projection was to adopt a containment policy. This would to a great extent be pursued in alignment with other states and non-state actors. Alignment was a natural choice, given that Turabi's regional ambitions had been identified as a threat to a number of states in the Horn of Africa. The tactic was to expose the regime to diplomatic isolation and military pressure, which would lead to the political objective of dividing moderates from hard-liners, which in turn would make it

[737] Ibid: 112; Max Taylor and Mohamed E. Elbushra, 'Research Note: Hassan al-Turabi, Osama bin Laden, and Al Qaeda in Sudan,'

[738] Burr and Collins, *Revolutionary Sudan: Hasan Al-Turabi and the Islamist State, 1989-2000,* 189, 25.

[739] Ibid: 113-114.

[740] Ibid: 126.

[741] Ibid: 189.

[742] Burr and Collins, *Revolutionary Sudan: Hasan Al-Turabi and the Islamist State, 1989-2000,* 74; Max Taylor and Mohamed E. Elbushra, 'Research Note: Hassan al-Turabi, Osama bin Laden, and Al Qaeda in Sudan,'

[743] Burr and Collins, *Revolutionary Sudan: Hasan Al-Turabi and the Islamist State, 1989-2000,* 120-121.

possible to work out a political settlement with the former. This plan was rooted in the EPRDF's view of the Sudanese regime.[744] They refrained from seeing it as a monolithic regime, and differentiated Bashir from the NIF and Turabi. Because of this, one military official notes that they were 'following the activities of the NIF cautiously' in their first years in power, but that they at the time didn't expect them to constitute the sort of threat that they would later come to be.[745] Consequently, when they were in a state of conflict, they focused on marginalizing the NIF instead of confronting the regime as a whole.

The First Offensive: 1993-1995

Containment during the first offensive was characterized by low-level and covert support for the SPLM, and applying diplomatic pressure through IGAD. Much of the Ethiopian government's efforts in this phase focused on using IGAD to contain Sudan. As one official put it: 'we thought that this [Sudan's projection of Islamism] was a regional problem that needed a regional solution'.[746] Until then IGADD's mandate was limited to drought and environmental issues,[747] and it was not until 1995 that the mandate was formally expanded to work on peace and security, but it had already in 1993/94 begun a mediation process on the South Sudan conflict. The Ethiopian military official notes that the decision to initiate the IGAD mediation process on South Sudan was motivated by a desire to put pressure on Khartoum to desist from its Islamist projection.[748] These efforts were very effective and by 1994 they had managed to push Sudan to sign the 'Declaration of Principles', which established South Sudan's right to self-determination.[749] The SPLM had thus far in its liberation war not demanded self-determination; this is believed to have been due to pressure from Ethiopian President Mengistu Hailemariam, who was opposed to secessionism.[750] Consequently, the adaptation by the SPLM and acceptance by

[744] Mulugeta Gebrehiwot Berhe: Major General (ret.) and responsible for demobilization of the Derg's Armed Forces, interview with author, April 27, 2017.

[745] Ibid.

[746] Ibid.

[747] Healy, 'Seeking Peace and Security in the Horn of Africa: The Contribution of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development'.

[748] Mulugeta Gebrehiwot Berhe: Major General (ret.) and responsible for demobilization of the Derg's Armed Forces, interview with author, April 27, 2017.

[749] IGAD, 'The IGAD Declaration of Principles.' https://peacemaker.un.org/sudan-igad-principles94

[750] John Young, 'John Garang's Legacy to the Peace Process, the SPLM/A & the South', *Review of African Political Economy* 32, no. 106 (2005): 538

Khartoum of the right to self-determination can to a great extent be attributed to the pressure of neighbouring countries, and particularly Ethiopia, which had by 1993 changed its position on this issue.[751]

While Ethiopian military support for the SPLM was rekindled in 1993, it was covert and minor. The rivalry did not lead to a breakdown of diplomatic relations, as was the case with Eritrea for example which in December 1994 had broken off diplomatic relations with Khartoum, and in a highly symbolic gesture given the Embassy compound to the National Democratic Alliance (NDA).[752]

The Second Offensive: 1995-1998

The second offensive began in June 1995 when Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak came to Addis Ababa to attend an OAU summit. The animosity between Egypt and Sudan was mutually and tacitly recognized. Ethiopia's intelligence chief, Kinfe Gebermedhin, had therefore sought the reassurances of his Sudanese counterpart that there would be no 'incident' during the summit.[753] Despite this reassurance there was an assassination attempt on Mubarak during the summit by Sudanese agents.[754] The Ethiopian government's immediate reaction was to raid the safe-house of the group responsible in Addis Ababa, and then send an army unit across the Sudanese border to overrun the Sudanese troops stationed there and hand over the territory to the SPLM.[755]

The second offensive was characterized by direct military intervention, support for proxy forces, a coordination of Ethiopian actions with the other states through the informal alliance known as the 'Front-line States', and diplomatic efforts to isolate Sudan globally. Ethiopian troops' unilateral measures centred on taking control of Sudanese territory by military means, and operationally assisting the SPLA in their insurgency. In January

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[751] Young, John. 'Sudan IGAD Peace Process: an Evaluation', *Sudan Tribune,* May 30, 2007: 9-10. https://www.sudantribune.com/IMG/pdf/Igad_in_Sudan_Peace_Process.pdf

[752] University of Pennsylvania, 'Ethiopia/Eritrea: IRIN News Briefs', May 17, 1999, http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Hornet/irin51799c.html

[753] Alex de Waal, 'Chasing Ghosts: Alex de Waal on the Rise and Fall of Militant Islam in the Horn of Africa', *Social Science Research Council,* September 1, 2005, http://conconflicts.ssrc.org/hornofafrica/chasing_ghosts/

[754] Ibid.

[755] Ibid.

1996, for example, the SPLA took control over the border-town of Kurmuk, which Khartoum claimed Ethiopia was behind.[756] Two months later, the towns of Yabus and Pochella fell into SPLA hands, with the support of Ethiopian mechanized infantry.[757] The Ethiopian measures had a significant impact on the Sudanese government. In 1996 for example they made the following statement at the UNSC: 'Ethiopian attacks have been marked by joint operations with Sudanese rebel forces and [Sudanese government] demands that Ethiopia desist from destabilizing the Sudan.'[758]

The Frontline States' alliance was composed of Ethiopia, Eritrea and Uganda and politically and financially supported by the US, which allocated 20million USD in military aid.[759] The collective efforts of the Frontline States led to the occupation of a significant amount of Sudanese territory. As Eritrean troops invaded from the northeast, Ethiopia from the east and Uganda from the south, by 1997 a significant portion of Sudanese territory was under foreign or rebel occupation.[760] The Front Line States also trained, armed and mobilized Sudanese opposition groups, which would often accompany their troops into Sudan and administer the territory that the foreign troops had taken.

Ethiopia also aligned its efforts with other concerned states to put pressure on Khartoum through international organizations. Ethiopia, together with Egypt, lobbied the UNSC to demand that Sudan hand over the suspects of the Mubarak assassination attempt to Ethiopia to be tried. When Khartoum, refused the UNSC in 1996 unanimously passed Resolution No. 1044, which imposed sanctions on Sudan. In April Resolution 1054 was passed by the UNSC, which effectively called for an international isolation of the Sudanese government, including 'significantly reduce the number and the level of the staff at Sudanese diplomatic missions and consular posts and restrict or control the movement within their territory of all such staff who remain', and 'take steps to restrict the entry into or transit through their territory of members of the Government of Sudan,

[756] Volkert Mathijs Doop, 'How to Handle Your Neighbours' Conflict: Ethiopia's Relationships with Sudan and South Sudan', 128.

[757] Burr and Collins, *Revolutionary Sudan: Hasan Al-Turabi and the Islamist State, 1989-2000,* 208

[758] UNSC, 'Security Council Demands Sudan Act to Extradite Suspects in Assassination Attempt of Egyptian President By 10 May, or Face Limited Sanctions', April 26, 1996. https://www.un.org/press/en/1996/19960426.sc6214.html

[759] Human Rights Watch, 'Sudan: Global Trade, Local Impact, Arms Transfers to all Sides in the Civil War in Sudan.' https://www.hrw.org/legacy/reports98/sudan/Sudarm988-07.htm

[760] Ibid.

officials of that Government and members of the Sudanese armed forces'.[761] Ethiopia took a leading role in these processes. These measures were taken in reaction to external conditions, rather than being driven by a concrete foreign policy orientation.

5.3.3. Rivalry De-Escalation

The rivalry with Sudan began de-escalating in 1997 due to three reasons. Firstly, the isolation of Sudan had intensified the political divisions between Turabi and Bashir. This had the effect of empowering Bashir, whom Ethiopia saw as a moderate. Secondly, Egypt was de-escalating its rivalry with Sudan, which gave Ethiopia an incentive to seek a normalization of relations. Finally, the war with Eritrea was the final push for a full rapprochement with Sudan.

Containment and Political Divisions in Sudan

Sudan was by 1997 regionally and globally isolated, which deepened political divisions within the Islamist regime. Isolation led to a rise in food prices and a shortage of fuel.[762] Politically, the large number of foreigners that had come to occupy positions in the security apparatus and the conscription for the military offensive against the SPLA were generating resentment.[763] The price of Turabi's global revolution was getting too costly for the Sudanese people and fuelled resistance. This led to demonstrations in Khartoum where people were chanting 'Prison for Turabi', and 'the people are hungry.'[764]

The protests came at a time when Bashir and Turabi were engaged in a power struggle, and helped the former consolidate his power over the state. In 1996 Turabi had become the speaker of parliament and in 1997 Bashir had been elected as President of Sudan. The death of the vice president was used as an opportunity by Bashir to reshuffle the cabinet and promote his ally, Ali Osman Taha, to that position.[765] In 1998 Bashir managed to introduce a new constitution through a referendum, which amongst other things increased the power of the president. In 1999 Bashir dismissed Turabi, dissolved parliament and

[761] UNSC, 'Resolution 1044,' January 31, 1996. http://undocs.org/S/RES/1044(1996).

[762] Burr and Collins, *Revolutionary Sudan: Hasan Al-Turabi and the Islamist State, 1989-2000,* 197.

[763] Ibid.

[764] Ibid.

[765] Ibid: 256.

declared a state of emergency. Two years later Turabi was imprisoned for 'communicating with the enemy', after he signed a MoU with the SPLA during a foreign trip.

Egypt-Sudan Rapprochement

The rivalry with Sudan had by 1997 according to Ethiopian officials began to de-escalate from the Ethiopian perspective.[766] One of the causes behind Ethiopia's interest in normalizing relations was Sudan's rapprochement with Egypt in 1997.[767] As one diplomat put it: 'The Egyptians quickly mended their relations with Sudan. This put us in an awkward situation. As the main victim of the incident was willing to forgive [Mubarak assassination attempt], we could no longer hold a grudge'.[768] The fact that the Sudanese were getting closer to Egypt worried the Ethiopians for another reason, according to the diplomat: 'we also considered the Nile question. In which, we always saw Sudan as a potential partner for challenging Egypt's hegemony. While they were supporting Egypt's stance officially, behind the scenes they were telling us that they were interested in a partnership with Ethiopia on this issue'.[769] The need to draw Sudan away from an alliance with Egypt served as another incentive to mend relations with Sudan.

War with Eritrea in 1998

In May 1998 the final push towards normalizing relations with Sudan came when the war with Eritrea broke out. Khartoum and Addis Ababa immediately restored their diplomatic relationship to the pre-1995 levels, and formed an informal security alignment against Eritrea. There was an interest from both Sudan and Ethiopia to fully restore the relationship. An Ethiopian general states that in a conversation with a Sudanese counterpart during the war, he was told: 'the break-up of the habasha brothers was divine intervention for Sudan'.[770] Sudan, which was isolated and under siege from all corners,

[766] Anonymous (No. 6): Ethiopian diplomat, former Director General for Africa, interview with author, June 1, 2017. The diplomat was a senior diplomat of Tigrayan origin and who had spent most of his career working on African affairs. He doesn't have a background in the TPLF armed struggle and didn't venture into domestic Ethiopian politics during the interview.

[767] Ibid.

[768] Ibid.

[769] Ibid.

[770] Mesfin Amare: Major General (ret.), former Commander of the Eastern Division in the Ethiopian Armed Forces and Liaison Officer to Eritrean groups for the Ethiopian government, interview with author, May 17, 2017.

was desperate to gain friends and ease the pressure. Ethiopia had played an important role in its isolation through its role in IGAD and through its role in the pushing for sanctions in the UNSC, and equally important through its direct invasion and occupation of Sudanese territories and support for SPLA. Ethiopia's interests in relation to Sudan and those of the West and other regional states had begun to diverge significantly.[771] David Shinn, who served as US Ambassador to Ethiopia at the time, notes the following: 'Once war broke out between Ethiopia and Eritrea, everything changed, our foreign policy was put on its head … Ethiopia lost all interest in US lead on hostility towards Sudan'.[772]

Normalizing Diplomatic Relations

From 1998 onwards a normalization of relations between Ethiopia and Sudan was initiated. The nature of Ethiopia's containment strategy was an important factor in the swift restoration of relations. For example, after the assassination attempt on Egyptian President Mubarak in Addis Ababa in 1995, instead of totally severing diplomatic relations, Ethiopia only ordered Sudan 'to reduce its embassy staff from 70 to 6'.[773] This was in contrast to the Eritrean government, whose reaction was to close the Sudanese Embassy in 1994 and give the compound to Sudanese opposition groups.

In 1999 Bashir made a visit to Ethiopia, after which a joint communiqué was issued, stating amongst other things: 'The two leaders noted with satisfaction the on-going efforts to normalize the relations between Ethiopia and the Sudan after passing through a period of difficulty in their diplomatic relationship. In this regard, they expressed their conviction after having drawn the necessary lessons from the recent experience'.[774] In addition to the candid recognition of the nature of their relationship in the recent past, the two states agreed to institutionalize their relationship by restarting the Joint Ministerial Commission and facilitating communication and cooperation between the regional governments of their borderlands. After official visits by the heads of states of both states,

[771] David Shinn: US Ambassador to Ethiopia (1996-1999), interview with author, April 14, 2017; Anonymous (No. 5): Senior US intelligence officer former Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict, interview with author, April 22, 2016.

[772] David Shinn: US Ambassador to Ethiopia (1996-1999), interview with author, April 14, 2017.

[773] Mulugeta Gebrehiwot Berhe: Major General (ret.) and responsible for demobilization of the Derg's Armed Forces, interview with author, April 27, 2017.

[774] University of Pennsylvania, 'Ethiopia-Sudan: Joint Communique [19991122]', November 19, 1999. http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Hornet/irin_112299.html

the Joint Ministerial Commission and the Joint Border Commission were reactivated in 2001. The JMC provided a framework for the two governments to discuss and communicate 'outstanding issues' with each other.[775] From then on 'adjacent regional governments began meeting regularly', this 'interaction built trust' according to a diplomat.[776]

While there was a successful and significant de-escalation that came about as a result of mutual gestures that signalled an interest in rapprochement, the Ethiopian government was not entirely confident in its relationship with Sudan, as it was in the relationship with Kenya for example. While the departure of Turabi was a great relief for Addis Ababa, Sudan was still seen as an 'Islamist' state that had an inclination to favour other Muslim societies and states.[777] The rapprochement did therefore not mean an immediate and total de-securitization of the relationship and the restoration of trust in 1998. Instead, both states recognized that they had a mutual interest in working towards this objective.

5.4. The Developmental State Strategy

5.4.1. Sudan Policy in the 2002 White Paper

The EPRDF began its 2002 foreign policy white paper by noting that Ethiopia's long history of relations with Sudan had been characterized by conflict. The conflict between the two states, it claimed, had primarily two components. The first was the projection of religious extremism from the Sudan into Ethiopia, about which the strategy states: 'besides attempting to spread religious extremism in our country, there were various efforts aided by The Sudan that were designed to make our country a victim of terrorist attacks.'[778] It is claimed that in contrast to ethnic relations, religious conflict had historically been rare in Ethiopia. Nevertheless, the EPRDF feared that historical injustices by the previous governments and poverty had made Ethiopia vulnerable to such

[775] Ibid.

[776] Anonymous (No. 6): Ethiopian diplomat, former Director General for Africa, interview with author, June 1, 2017.

[777] I asked the diplomat when the regime led by Omar Al Bashir ceased to be seen as an Islamist regime by Ethiopia, and he responded by saying: 'did it ever stop being Islamist?'. Anonymous (No. 16): Ethiopian diplomat, interview with author, May 25, 2017. The diplomat was early in his career but his years in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were spent working on Eritrea, Sudan, Somalia and South Sudan. He was also one of the few diplomats willing to speak about the domestic politics of foreign policy.

[778] Ethiopia Ministry of Information, *Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and Strategy*, (November 2002): 83.

conflict, and that for these reasons Sudan's policies constituted a serious threat. The mutual support to armed groups operating in each other's countries had led to a condition of mistrust, it also noted. The second cause of discord emanated from Sudan's policy on the Nile River. The EPRDF found Sudan's policy on the Nile to be irrational and perplexing. It pointed out that Ethiopia was the biggest and Sudan the second biggest source of the Nile waters. Despite these facts, the white paper noted that Egypt, which contributes no water to the Nile, had through its 1959 agreement with Sudan been allocated the lion's share of the rights to these waters.[779] Sudan moreover had geographical features that were conducive to large-scale agriculture along the Nile, which neither Ethiopia nor Egypt has. Consequently, they concluded that 'The Sudan's national interest cannot be said to have been respected in the 1959 agreement.'[780]

As opposed to other Horn of Africa countries, Sudan was considered to be a potentially beneficial economic partner not just in the future, but also at the time of publishing the white paper. It was both a potential export destination and a source of investment. It stated:

> The Sudan has rich natural resources and the potential to go far in development. Presently its GDP is higher than that of Ethiopia, and when compared with others in the Horn of Africa, the Sudanese market is quite substantial. Seen from the market perspective, The Sudan offers substantial advantages for Ethiopia's development. Servicing the Sudanese market will have a significant contribution to enhancing our development. One could also expect investment from The Sudan, although in a limited scale.[781]

It moreover noted that there was a potential for cooperation on hydro-power and on utilization of Sudan's port services: 'Similarly, The Sudan can play a constructive role regarding the utilization of the waters of the Nile. In the process, Ethiopia, by developing its electric power potential, can provide this service to The Sudan and reap considerable benefits.'[782] The white paper also noted that 'while we exert our efforts to secure Sudanese support for the fair and equitable utilization of Nile waters, we should follow a

[779] Ibid: 85.

[780] Ibid.

[781] Ibid: 86.

[782] Ibid.

policy that supports the establishment of strong ties between the two countries without waiting for a change in The Sudan's position on the matter'.[783] The obstacles for realizing these potentials however were Sudan's domestic conditions, and in this regard it was similar to the rest of the region. Particularly, its undemocratic character and its intimacy with religious extremism was a source of concern for the EPRDF. Despite these challenges, realizing the positive potential of the relationship with Sudan was considered of utmost importance for Ethiopia. A strategy that centred on infrastructure building, 'such as roads, railways (in due course), telephone lines, electric power', was formulated in order to stimulate bilateral integration.[784] Realising these developmental potentials required regional peace, which in turn depended on the unity of Sudan.

Linkage Diplomacy to Deepen Alignment

By the time the Developmental State foreign policy orientation was officially adopted as a policy by Ethiopia in 2002, the rapprochement between Ethiopia and Sudan had already been on-going for four years. The Developmental State orientation provided direction for a strategic expansion of cooperation in many sectors. Ethiopia's primary interests under the Developmental State were firstly to contain instability and conflict in Sudan, so that it did not spill over into Ethiopia; secondly, Ethiopia sought to take advantage of the complementarities of Ethiopia and Sudan's economies. Consequently, Sudan would gradually become Ethiopia's main source of oil, an export destination for Ethiopia's electricity, and a provider of port access to the sea. Thirdly, and most importantly, Ethiopia sought to attain Sudan's support for challenging Egypt's hegemony on the Nile, by building a hydro-power dam on the Blue Nile.

To pursue these interests, Ethiopia actively sought to construct a relationship of mutual dependence with Sudan. It did so by pursuing a strategy of linkage diplomacy towards Sudan, which involved adopting favourable positions towards Khartoum in international mediation and border demarcation processes, developing institutional security cooperation and energy interdependence. This developed trust and diplomatic capital, which in 2011 culminated in Sudan's support for Ethiopia's Grand Renaissance Dam (GERD) hydropower project on the Nile.

[783] Ibid: 90.

[784] Ibid.

5.4.2. Strategic Use of Mediation Processes

The most important way the EPRDF actively constructed interdependence with Sudan was by strategically utilizing international mediation processes in Sudan's civil wars. Although Ethiopia's containment policy towards Sudan ended in 1998, much of the international community continued to pressure and isolate President Bashir's government. While Sudan ceased its Islamist foreign policy projections, its internal conflicts continued to attract political and military intervention. The pressure from the international community had the effect of pushing Sudan towards Ethiopia, while Ethiopia's lenient diplomatic positions in the mediation processes served as a pull-factor that further strengthened the alignment between the two states. There were therefore two incentives at work that drew Sudan closer to Ethiopia in this sector.

Ethiopia engaged in mediation diplomacy on the South Sudan and Darfur conflicts, and later also took a diplomatic stance on the dispute between the ICC and Sudan. Ethiopia took effectively took advantage of these conditions to progressively accumulate trust and diplomatic capital in relation to Sudan. Beyond the strategic use of mediation processes and Sudan's diplomatic situation, Ethiopia's policy was also driven by a fear of insecurity in Sudan spilling over to Ethiopia. The Developmental State's pragmatic prioritization of stability led Ethiopia to generally favour peace over justice, and to prefer a united Sudan rather than a partitioned one. The pragmatic need to maintain good relations with all conflicting parties in Sudan led the EPRDF to pursue their peace diplomacy in bilateral over multilateral talks, and to rely on persuasion over coercive diplomacy.

South Sudan

Ethiopia's diplomacy on the South Sudan mediation processes took a swift turn after its rapprochement. Addis Ababa refrained from assuming a leadership role, and adopted a cautious and almost inactive role in the IGAD talks. Kenya – which did not have the same strategic constraints as Ethiopia – took a leading and more autonomous mediation role. Under its leadership the Machakos protocol was signed in 2002.[785] The deal required the

[785] John Young, 'Sudan IGAD Peace Process: An Evaluation', *Sudan Tribune*, May 30, 2007: 14. *https://www.sudantribune.com/IMG/pdf/Igad_in_Sudan_Peace_Process.pdf*

SPLM to abandon its demand for a separation of religion and state, while Khartoum had to accept South Sudan's right to govern itself autonomously for an interim period of six-years and then hold a referendum on independence. The Machakos agreement was an improvement from the DoP for the Sudanese government – an outcome which may partially be attributed to the changes in Sudan's relations with its neighbours and its impact on the IGAD process.[786]

In the period 2002-2005, the six protocols of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) were agreed to, and a six-year interim period was initiated. Ethiopia continued to prioritize its overall relationship with Sudan during the CPA talks, and consequently its inability to confront Khartoum was noted by other participants in the mediation process. According to Young:

It was noted by observers that while Ethiopia played a leading role in the earlier period of the mediation, its level of engagement steadily declined. One diplomat explained this by noting the difficulty in confronting Khartoum when Addis Ababa was anxious to maintain good relations with the regime. However, Eritrea did not appear to have the same problem and its ambassador-envoy, Mohamed Ali Omaro, was considered by many to be one of the strongest diplomats in the peace process, in large part because of his experience in dealing with the SPLM/A and the NCP GoS. On the government's side, however, he was viewed as being 'totally biased in favour of the SPLM/A'.[787]

In addition to Ethiopia's reluctance to put pressure on Khartoum during the mediation, the fact that Khartoum was facing hostility from Eritrea and Uganda, during both the Machakos and CPA negotiations, served as a push-factor that made Ethiopia's benign attitude and diplomatic inaction much more valuable for Sudan.[788]

While Ethiopia's diplomacy did not involve applying pressure, it was seen as taking an active role in the process in order to ensure that the CPA did not fail. US diplomats described their engagement as the following: 'The Ethiopian government's growing alarm

[786] Ibid: 15.

[787] Ibid: 36.

[788] Gaim Kibreab, 'Eritrean-Sudanese relations in historical perspective' in *Eritrea's External Relations: Understanding Its Regional Role and Foreign Policy*, Richard Reid, (ed.), Chatham House, 2009.

at the potential consequences for Ethiopia if the Comprehensive Peace Agreement should fall apart is clearly motivating their increasing engagement in Sudan. Ethiopia appears capable of upholding the delicate balance of trying to please both the North and the South without appearing to favor one over the other.'[789]

Another cable described Ethiopia's role as the following:

Prime Minister Meles has consistently made it clear to us and others that peace in Sudan is of strategic importance to Ethiopia…The Prime Minister has been speaking with President Bashir on a regular basis while Foreign Minister Seyoum and State Minister Tekeda have been the point people on working with the Government of Southern Sudan. The importance of Ethiopia to Sudan was underscored during the visit of Vice President Salva Kiir in late-December who pressed Meles on a more active high profile facilitation effort between Bashir and Salva Kiir's SPLM.[790]

Darfur

As the CPA was being negotiated, Khartoum's management of the civil war in Darfur became another area in which the international community intervened. President Bashir and his government came under a great deal of scrutiny and pressure for their role in this conflict.[791] The AU had sent a small contingent of peace-keeping forces in 2004. The international community were pushing for an additional UN force to complement the AU troops, which was initially rejected by President Bashir,[792] who however eventually agreed to merge the small AU mission in Darfur with the 19, 000 strong UN force.[793]

By 2007, Ethiopia's cautious diplomacy in the South Sudan peace process seemed to have paid off, as Sudan invited Ethiopia as a troop contributor to the Hybrid UN-AU

[789] US Embassy in Addis Ababa, Subject: 'Ethiopian State Minister Tekeda on Sudanese Relations and Darfur Rebels', May 2, 2008.

[790] Ibid.

[791] US Embassy in Khartoum, Subject: 'Sudan Presses Opposition to International Intervention on Multiple Fronts,' February 21, 2006.

[792] US Embassy in Khartoum, Subject: 'Darfur's Agony and Bashir's Plan', November 28, 2006.

[793] Simon Tisdall, 'Darfur Mission Faces US Funding Hurdle', *The Guardian*, June 18, 2007. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2007/jun/18/usa.sudan

peacekeeping mission in Darfur. An advisor to the Chief of Staff of the Ethiopian Armed Forces explained that: 'we didn't have much of an interest initially. We feared the repercussions of getting involved in the conflict of a neighbouring state. And so we didn't immediately accept the offer'.[794] They however judged the mission to be in accordance with national security objectives, and decided to contribute between 2000-3000 troops annually to the mission.[795] Ethiopian military officials interpreted Sudan's invitation to be motivated by their faith in their professional capacity and most importantly they thought it reflected their trust in the political relationship, that is, a belief that Ethiopia would be an ally they could rely on in the event of any international political or diplomatic discord related to the conflict.[796]

International Criminal Court

The UNSC had in 2005 referred the Darfur case to the International Criminal Court (ICC), which in 2008 indicted President Bashir for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.[797] Ethiopia had argued at an AU Summit in Addis Ababa that the atrocities in Darfur did not constitute genocide, and opposed the ICC charges in 2008, as one mid-ranking military official noted: 'We opposed the ICC. Ethiopia advocated against genocide charges on the Darfur conflict at the AU.'[798] While this stance was adopted together with other African states and the AU, Ethiopian officials nevertheless saw their policy as a positive gesture of solidarity and expected that it would also be perceived as such by their counterparts in Khartoum, and consequently that it would have the effect of strengthening the relationship.[799] Beyond the instrumental pursuit of diplomatic capital, this stance was also motivated by a fear that Sudan could become more destabilized if Bashir was put under too much pressure. An Ethiopian military official explained their

[794] Anonymous (No. 17): Colonel in the Ethiopian Army, former advisor to the Samora Yunis, Chief of Staff of the Ethiopian Armed Forces, interview with author, May 13, 2017. The Colonel is a veteran of the TPLF armed struggle. He refrained from talking about the domestic politics of Ethiopia during the interview.

[795] Ibid.

[796] Ibid.

[797] Mohamed Abdel Salam Babiker, 'The International Criminal Court and the Darfur Crimes: The Dilemma of Peace and Supra-National Criminal Justice', *International Journal of African Renaissance Studies* 5, No. 1 (June 2010): 82–100. https://doi.org/10.1080/18186874.2010.500033.

[798] Anonymous (No. 17): Colonel in the Ethiopian Army, former advisor to Samora Yunis, Chief of Staff of the Ethiopian Armed Forces, interview with author, May 13, 2017.

[799] Ibid.

thinking as follows: 'Ethiopia wanted to engage Bashir for a solution. Because we believed that Bashir had support from a significant constituency. We also feared the Islamists could fill the vacuum in the event of regime change.'[800]

Peace-keeping in Abyei

The disputed border area of Abyei, whose fate had been left to be decided after the CPA through a referendum, became a source of conflict in the months preceding South Sudan's formal secession in July 2011.[801] In 2008 after fighting between the SPLM and Khartoum over the town of Abyei, both parties had agreed to refer the matter to the Permanent Court of Arbitration. The court determined the boundaries of Abyei, and ruled that the contested oil-rich territory of Heglig was within Sudanese jurisdiction. In May 2011 Sudanese forces seized the contested territory.[802] In June, the AUHIP mediated an agreement between Khartoum and the SPLM to demilitarize the area, and to deployment the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA). UNIFSA was composed almost entirely of Ethiopian troops and commanded by an Ethiopian officer.[803] In 2012 South Sudanese forces crossed into Sudanese territory and a new round fighting was ignited. Both Khartoum and the SPLM sought Ethiopia's mediation in this conflict,[804] which culminated in a peace-agreement mediated by Ethiopia and signed by Presidents Kiir and Bashir in Addis Ababa.[805] In 2013, troops from both states withdrew from Abyei, making it a demilitarized zone.[806]

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[800] Ibid.

[801] Michael Woldemariam and Alden Young, 'After the Split: Partition, Successor States, and the Dynamics of War in the Horn of Africa', *Journal of Strategic Studies* 41, no. 5 (June 2, 2016): 684–720, https://doi.org/10.1080/01402390.2016.1182909.

[802] Ibid.

[803] Solomon A. Dersso, 'Peacekeeping Contributor Profile: Ethiopia', *Providing for Peacekeeping*, November 2017. http://www.providingforpeacekeeping.org/2014/04/03/contributor-profile-ethiopia/.

[804] Tesfa-Alem Tekle, 'Khartoum Looks to Ethiopia for Heglig Mediation', *Sudan Tribune*, April 19, 2012, http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?iframe&page=imprimable&id_article=42307

[805] Mireille Affa'a-Mindzie, 'Negotiating Peace in the Sudans: The Addis Ababa Agreement', IPI Global Observatory, October 9, 2012, https://theglobalobservatory.org/2012/10/negotiating-peace-in-the-sudans-the-addis-ababa-cooperation-agreement/

[806] UN News, 'UN Mission Verifies Start of Sudan, South Sudan Withdrawal from Zone in Abyei', March 26, 2013. https://news.un.org/en/story/2013/03/435502-un-mission-verifies-start-sudan-south-sudan-withdrawal-zone-abyei

Ethiopia's strategic use of mediation process to strengthen its alignment with Sudan had not come at the expense of its relationship with the SPLM. Ethiopian officials interpreted Sudan and South Sudan's request that Ethiopia take a leading role in this mission to be an indicator of the level trust both parties had in Ethiopia.[807] They also considered it an outcome of their strategic diplomacy in preceding years.

Attaining Sudan's support for challenging Egypt's hegemony on the Nile was Ethiopia's primary strategic objective when the Developmental State orientation was adopted in 2002. At the time however Ethiopia did not have any leverage or capital to incentivise Sudan to change its stance on this issue. Ethiopia's diplomacy in Sudan's mediation processes offered a way of generating diplomatic capital and to take the first steps in the process of deepening the alignment.

5.4.3. Institutionalized Security Cooperation

A gradual institutionalization of security cooperation between Sudan and Ethiopia ensued under the Developmental State policy. This cooperation was driven by a number of common domestic and regional threats. The Sana'a Forum, which was a tactical alignment against Eritrea, was the first instance of security alignment after the rapprochement. The cooperation took on a tripartite and institutional form with the establishment of the Sana'a Forum in 2002. While there were efforts to formalize and institutionalize the forum, it remained a relatively ad hoc endeavour. From Ethiopia's side, it was only allocated one liaison officer, Major General Mesfin Amare, who had been a very senior officer in the army.

A Joint Ministerial Defence Committee (JMDC) was established in 2005 and provided an overarching institutional framework for managing the many forms of security cooperation.[808] The JMDC led the security agencies of the two states to meet biannually to identify common problems, formulate solutions, formally commit to these through

[807] Anonymous (No. 17): Colonel in the Ethiopian Army, former advisor to Samora Yunis, Chief of Staff of the Ethiopian Armed Forces, interview with author, May 13, 2017.

[808] Ethiopia Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 'The Ethiopia - Sudan Joint Defense Committee Meeting.' *A Week in the Horn,* October 6, 2012. https://hornaffairs.com/2012/10/06/the-ethiopia-sudan-joint-defense-committee-meeting/.

agreements, and review progress in the implementation.[809] EDF staff report that these mechanisms led to increased trust between the institutions, and that their relationship with the Sudanese Armed Forces was the security partnership that they had the most confidence in.[810] They described their relationship as being characterized by a sense of fraternity and friendliness that went beyond mere institutional cooperation.[811] One official described it as the following: 'The joint activities together, like training, do contribute to trust. As of now, there is no distrust between us. They approach us like brothers. We feel that that this attitude is at the societal level. They don't have any negative intentions toward us.'[812]

Collectively securing the common border was one of the key areas that Ethiopian and Sudanese security agencies would cooperate on. For more than a century rebel groups operating in these areas have been a source of insecurity and a key element in the bilateral rivalry. For example, during Haile Selassie's rule rebel activity along the border contributed to suspicion and rivalry between the two states.[813] Bandits and farmers regularly clashed along the border over many but small plots of land. In 2015, for example, 16 Sudanese citizens were killed by 'gangs', leading the Sudanese parliament to ask the military to deploy troops along the border.[814] The Ethiopian armed groups were operating from the Amhara state, and had according to Sudanese media also abducted several dozen Sudanese farmers during raids in Sudan.[815] In other cases, the abducted farmers have been released after a ransom had been paid. To manage these challenges, the two governments agreed to establish a Joint Border Patrol during the 11th joint defence

[809] Ibid.

[810] Anonymous (No. 17): Colonel in the Ethiopian Army, former advisor to Samora Yunis, Chief of Staff of the Ethiopian Armed Forces, interview with author, May 13, 2017.

[811] Ibid.

[812] Ibid.

[813] Belete Belachew Yihun, 'Setit-Humera: A Blister on Ethio–Sudanese Boundary Disputation', *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 31, no. 1 (2016): 109–10

[814] Sudan Tribune, '16 Sudanese Killed by Ethiopian Gangs in El-Gadaref State: Minister', October 29, 2015, http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article56884

[815] Ibid.

ministerial meeting in 2014.[816] The troops were to be deployed on eight fronts along the 800 km long border. The Joint Border Patrol became operational in 2017.[817]

Another important feature of the growing security cooperation was intelligence sharing and counter insurgency in a regional setting. Intelligence sharing with Sudan was essential for Ethiopian efforts to foil operations by rebel groups based in Eritrea. The Benishangul Gumuz Liberation Movement (BGLM) for example was apprehended by the Sudanese government in an operation to conduct an attack in March 2017 and handed over to the Ethiopian authorities.[818] In May the BGLM, which had been based in Eritrea, eventually defected to Ethiopia through Sudan. The most notable instance of this type of security cooperation was Sudan's involvement in the defection of the largest Ethiopian rebel group from Eritrea, the Tigray People's Democratic Movement (TPDM), to Ethiopia in 2015. The TPDM leader Molla Asgedom fled together with more than 800 of his troops from Eritrea in September 2015. Molla and his troops fought their way through Eritrean defence-lines and entered Sudan.[819] The Sudanese authorities then refused to hand them over to Eritrea and instead facilitated their travel to Ethiopia. The TPDM had brought intelligence about Ethiopian opposition groups in Eritrea and conditions inside Eritrea.[820] The TPDM's defection and the Sudanese government's indirect complicity in the process was a significant strategic blow to Asmara; the fact that Sudan so openly sided with Ethiopia on a security issue of paramount importance indicated the depth of Sudan's security alignment with Ethiopia. Institutionalized security cooperation was however more a manifestation of the success of the linkage diplomacy and the deepening of the alignment, rather than a factor used by Ethiopia in the linkage process.

[816] Tesfa-Alem Tekle, 'Ethiopia and Sudan Set to Launch Joint Military Operation', *Sudan Tribune*, August 15, 2014, http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article52044

[817] ENN Television, 'Ethiopia, Sudan Start Joint Border Patrol,' May 4, 2017. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vD1QyAiVttE

[818] Song Lifang, '95 Ethnic Rebels Surrender to Ethiopian Government', *Xinhua*, July 7, 2017, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-07/10/c_136432612.html

[819] *Sudan Tribune*, 'Addis Ababa Praises Sudan for Repatriating Ethiopian Rebels', September 14, 2015, http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article56378

[820] Ibid.

5.4.4. Territorial Dispute, Irredenta and Restraint

The EPRDF's effort to deepen its alignment with Sudan was threatened by the need to demarcate Ethiopia's long border with Sudan. The EPRDF faced the dilemma of responding to domestic irredentist demands and their legal commitments (through treaties signed by their predecessors). The EPRDF chose to prioritize their relationship with Sudan, ignore the popular irredentist demands and pursue a policy of restraint. This was a domestically unpopular decision and was another indicator of how the EPRDF prioritized economic development and stability considerations over territory, which was the primary value of the Irredenta.

The coordinates for demarcating the border between Sudan and Ethiopia had been agreed to under Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie in 1972.[821] The coming to power of the EPRDF in 1991 created a new opening for a physical demarcation of the border, but no action was taken at the time. The matter was again put on hold in 1993, when the rivalry was resumed. During Ethiopia's second offensive against Sudan in 1995, territorial acquisition was used as a weapon to pressurise Sudan. Ethiopian troops penetrated Sudanese territory and the old trend of Ethiopian farmers settling on Sudanese territory was escalated.[822] The Ethiopian forces also turned a blind eye to territorial encroachment by Ethiopian farmers along the borderlands due to the rivalry.[823] As part of the rapprochement in 1998, the two governments agreed to physically demarcate the border.

The EPRDF's predecessor had agreed to a border that put large territories occupied by Ethiopian farmers under Sudanese jurisdiction. The Ethiopian government feared the domestic reactions of implementing the agreement signed by Haile Selassie's government, but nevertheless went on with the demarcation.[824] This led to the establishment of two diplomatic mechanisms for managing the Ethiopia-Sudan borderlands: a Joint Boundary Commission (JBC) tasked with implementing the

[821] Belete, 'Setit-Humera: A Blister on Ethio–Sudanese Boundary Disputation', 115.

[822] Anonymous (No. 7): Ethiopian diplomat, Desk Officer for Sudan, Somalia and Eritrea in Ministry of Foreign Affairs, interview with author, May 25, 2017.

[823] Ibid; The Ethiopian government acknowledged officially in 2015 that Sudanese territory had been occupied by Ethiopians in 1996. See: Tesfa-Alem Tekle, 'Ethiopia denies land giveaways to Sudan', *Sudan Tribune,* June 21, 2015, www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article55423.

[824] Ibid.

agreement from1972, and a Joint Border Development Commission (JBDC), which had the objective of developing the borderlands as a shared space, which included amongst other things giving the people occupying both sides of the border access to the public services of the neighbouring state.[825] In 2005 a Memorandum of Understanding was signed to find a solution to the 'contentious settlement areas and farm lands'.[826] The MoU also led to the establishment of the Joint Field Work Committee.[827] In 2007 parts of the border was demarcated by the JFWC and a substantial quantity of territory that was inhabited by Ethiopians was formally conceded to Sudan. According to Belete, the JFWC in 2007 concluded the following actions:

(a) in an area known as 'No. 3', 'Shaded Area' or 'Hilat khatir', it equally divided 3450 hectares of land between 167 Ethiopian and 170 Sudanese farmers; (b) from Abdulmejid village (Sudan) to the Guang (Atbara)—Angreb (Bahreselam) Rivers confluence, in a territory west of the land owned by Ethiopian farmers (including grazing and forest land owned by Ethiopians), a total area of 15,000 hectares was allocated to 1,998 Sudanese farmers. These areas were previously farmed by Ethiopian farmers; (c) Ethiopia proposed to designate 12 ;Traditional Access Routes; to Ethiopian farmers to the Guang (Atbara) River, which would be identified using a Global Positioning System (GPS). Unfortunately, despite Ethiopia's insistence for such face saving concessions, the Sudanese side declined this proposal, obviously sensing an overwhelming kill in the boundary deal. In addition, the JFWC had previously decided to hand over 740 hectares in the Dalello locality, specifically known as No. 3, and around Abdulmejid some 1300 hectares to Sudan.[828]

Despite these formal agreements between the two governments, informal territorial encroachment on Sudanese territory by Ethiopians continued. According to one military official: 'There are conflicts along the border from time to time. Ethiopian and Sudanese farmers often lay claim to new territory. This leads to conflicts, but the expansionisms are not state-backed.'[829] But while the Ethiopian federal government opposed this, a diplomat

[825] Demissiew Kebede: Ethiopian diplomat, desk officer on Sudan in Ministry of Foreign Affairs, interview with author, May 31, 2017.

[826] Belete, Setit-Humera: A Blister on Ethio–Sudanese Boundary Disputation', *loc.cit.*, 117.

[827] Ibid.

[828] Ibid: 117-118.

[829] Anonymous (No. 17): Colonel in the Ethiopian Army, former advisor to the Samora Yunis, Chief of Staff of the Ethiopian Armed Forces, interview with author, May 13, 2017.

claimed that the Ethiopian territorial expansion had in fact tacit support from individuals and groups within the Amhara Regional State.[830] On the Sudanese side, 'dealers' allocated territory for money and facilitated the Ethiopian territorial expansion.[831] Over time this led to aggressive reactions from the Sudanese public. The Sudanese regional state of Gedarif, for example, took their claims to the national parliament in 2015 and demanded action. Sudanese President al-Bashir has for his part regularly brought up the issue with his Ethiopian counterparts.[832] Officials from Gedaref have publicly accused Ethiopian militias of occupying extensive areas of Sudanese land, and consequently that several villages had been evacuated and occupied by Ethiopian farmers.[833] The Sudanese have sometimes implicated the Amhara Regional State in the territorial expansion by supporting the armed militias. Sudanese media write about this on a regular basis, and one Ethiopian diplomat said that 'we suspect that they do so with consent of the government'.[834] The Ethiopians saw the media statements on these issues as the Sudanese way of signalling their growing discontent with the violence along the border.

The handover of territory to Sudan in 2007 became known to the Ethiopian public, despite attempts to conceal it.[835] Sudanese officials announced the process to their media, while Ethiopian PM Meles denied that any such process had taken place.[836] The absence of a formal acknowledgement by the government meant that the public had to primarily rely on unverified and often exaggerated narratives about the nature of the process.[837] The

[830] Anonymous (No. 7): Ethiopian diplomat, desk Officer for Sudan, Somalia and Eritrea in Ministry of Foreign Affairs, interview with author, May 25, 2017.

[831] Ibid.

[832] Ibid.

[833] Sudan Tribune, '16 Sudanese Killed by Ethiopian Gangs in El-Gadaref State: Minister', October 29, 2015. http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article56884

[834] Anonymous (No. 7): Ethiopian diplomat, Desk Officer for Sudan, Somalia and Eritrea in Ministry of Foreign Affairs, interview with author, May 25, 2017

[835] Mulatu Wubneh, "This Land Is My Land: The Ethio-Sudan Boundary and the Need to Rectify Arbitrary Colonial Boundaries," *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 33, no. 4 (October 2, 2015).

[836] Ibid: 459-460.

[837] ECADF Ethiopian News, "Petition Letter to UN Secretary General: Ethiopia and Sudan Border Demarcation," December 16, 2015. https://ecadforum.com/2015/12/16/petition-letter-to-un-secretary-general/

issue became a rallying point for opposition groups both in Ethiopia and in the diaspora.[838]

The demarcation of the Sudanese border led to a resurrection of Irredenta sentiments such as historical notions of territorial rights and belligerent nationalism. According to Mulatu, the boundary between Sudan and Ethiopia was a cultural construct rooted in the imperial history of the Ethiopian state. Mulatu claims that:

For instance, farmers in the Humera–Metema corridor maintain that the Gwang River (Atbara) has always been the boundary that separated their territory from the Sudan. This belief goes back many years to the time of Dejazmach Kinfu of Dembia who scored a decisive victory with the Egyptians at the Battle of Wad Kaltabu in 1837 (Zewde 2003), Emperor Tewodros who fought against the Egyptians at Debarki in 1848, and Yohannis who died in Metema in 1889 defending his empire.[839]

The EPRDF did not accommodate the domestic irredentist demands, or try to negotiate a more favourable outcome for Ethiopian in the border demarcation process with Sudan. They chose to act with restraint and prioritize deepening their alignment with Sudan.

5.4.5. Trade, FDI and Infrastructure

Ethiopia and Sudan achieved modest progress in trade, FDI and infrastructure integration. By 2017, economic integration remained largely an aspiration, but significant investments had nevertheless been made towards realizing these aspirations. Where there has been significant progress in these sectors, this was tbrough state-driven initiatives rather than private sector development, and thus can be attributed to the Developmental State model.

The first trade agreement between Ethiopia and Sudan was signed as soon as the war with Eritrea ended in 2000.[840] In 2003 a preferential trade-agreement was signed, which eliminated

[838] "Awramba Times, 'Prof. Mesfin Speaks out on Ethio-Sudan Border Demarcation Issues,' January 27, 2014. http://www.awrambatimes.com/?p=11380.

[839] Mulatu, 'This Land Is My Land: The Ethio-Sudan Boundary and the Need to Rectify Arbitrary Colonial Boundaries', 456.

[840] Ethiopian Legal Brief, 'Proc No. 221-2000 Ethio-Sudan Trade Agreement Ratification', November 17, 2018, https://chilot.me/2000-01-1993-g-c-proclamations/proc-no-221-2000-ethio-sudan-trade-agreement-ratification-3/

tariffs on trade in agricultural and industrial goods produced in both countries.[841] Ethiopia also began importing oil from Sudan, which quickly grew to cover around 85% of its total fuel imports.[842] In 2013 its fuel imports from Sudan cost 1.2 billion USD.[843] The trade in goods (non-fuel) has been minimal however. In 2015 Ethiopian exports to Sudan were at 110 million USD, and constituted 2.19% of its total exports.[844] An ambition to boost trade led the Sudan-Ethiopia Joint Technical Committee to approve a plan to establish a free trade zone in 2015.[845]

Sudan was also part of Ethiopia's regional strategy for diversifying its access to the sea. Ethiopia began using Port Sudan for a small portion of its imports in 2003.[846] In Port Sudan the government of Sudan allocated a plot of land to the Ethiopian government to use as a dry port without charge,[847] while Ethiopia expressed plans to increase its imports through Port Sudan, investing in infrastructure linkages to boost trade between the two states. In 2015, the foundation of a railway that links Sudan and Ethiopia was laid by Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam.[848] After the construction of the third trans-border highway was finished in 2017, a public land transportation service between Khartoum and Addis Ababa was established.[849]

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[841] Addis Chamber, 'Ethiopia and Sudan Preferential Free Trade Agreement (PTA)', January 23, 2017, https://addischamber.com/ethiopia-and-sudan-preferential-free-trade-agreement-pta/

[842] IRIN, 'Ethiopia to Import Oil from Sudan', January 7, 2003, http://www.irinnews.org/report/40652/ethiopia-ethiopia-import-oil-sudan

[843] Tesfa-Alem Tekle, 'Ethiopia Imports $1 Billion in Fuel from Sudan via Djibouti', *Sudan Tribune*, March 31, 2013, http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article46020

[844] Global Edge, 'Ethiopia: Trade Statistics.' https://globaledge.msu.edu/countries/ethiopia/tradestats

[845] Tesfa-Alem Tekle, 'Ethiopia, Sudan Approve to Launch Free Trade Zone', *Sudan Tribune*, November 25, 2015, http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article57153url

[846] Anonymous (No. 7): Ethiopian diplomat, Desk Officer for Sudan, Somalia and Eritrea in Ministry of Foreign Affairs, interview with author, May 25, 2017.

[847] APA News, 'Ethiopia to Construct Railway Route Linking Sudan: Premier', April 05, 2017, http://apanews.net/en/news/ethiopia-to-construct-a-railway-route-linking-sudan-premier#sBd5l2tTqBvtPzDH.99

[848] Ibid.

[849] Tesfa-Alem Tekle, 'Ethiopia and Sudan to Launch Land Transportation Service', *Sudan Tribune*, March 10, 2017, http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article61843

5.4.6. Hydro-Political Cooperation

While Sudan was of strategic importance to Ethiopia for many reasons, it was the possibility of attaining Sudan's support for challenging Egypt's hegemony on the Nile that was Ethiopia's main motivation for deepening the alignment. Hydro-politics had been a major consideration for Ethiopia since the rivalry began de-escalating in 1997.[850]

GERD and the Developmental State

The GERD was central to core aspects of the Developmental State governance model. It was central to Ethiopia's development vision of becoming a middle-income country by 2020–23.[851] The GERD's output was expected to more than double Ethiopia's electricity production. This would play an essential role in developing its manufacturing sector, and thereby facilitate Ethiopia's leap towards structural transformation – the primary objective of the Developmental State. The GERD would also contribute to developing internal technological capacity. For example, the task of manufacturing the turbines for the dam was outsourced to the state-owned Military Electrical Engineering Corporation.

The biggest obstacle to utilizing the Nile for hydropower generation in the past had been Ethiopia's lack of financial resources and its inability to attain loans for such projects. The GERD could therefore only be financed by domestic resources. This was a decision that symbolized Ethiopia's increasing economic strength and political autonomy. In order to generate the needed funds, the government had to sell bonds to its population. In doing so it would engage in mass mobilization campaigns to persuade people to invest in this project. In the process the GERD became a legitimizing tool for Ethiopia's autocratic Developmental State.

The GERD was also central to Ethiopia's vision for regional integration. This involved a division of labour between Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia, where each would utilize the Nile for different purposes: Egypt for industrialization, Sudan for agriculture and Ethiopia for electricity production.[852] Ethiopia began selling electricity to Sudan in 2012, and by the

[850] Anonymous (No. 6): Ethiopian diplomat, former Director General for Africa, June 1, 2017.

[851] Rawia Tawfik, 'The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam: A Benefit-Sharing Project in the Eastern Nile?' *Water International,* Vol. 41, no. 4 (2016): 577

[852] Rawia Tawfik, 'Reconsidering Counter-Hegemonic Dam Projects: The Case of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam', *Water Policy* 18, no. 5 (October 1, 2016): 1046.

time the Ethiopia-Sudan Transmission Line Project was finished in 2013, 1.4 million households in Sudan were receiving electricity from Ethiopia.[853] In 2016 the construction of a 500 Km transmission-line that would connect the GERD and Khartoum was also begun. In 2015, Ethiopia and Sudan started negotiating an energy deal, whereby Khartoum agreed to increase its electricity imports once the GERD was finished.

Trajectory of Ethiopia's Counter-hegemonic Diplomacy

Conflicting interests in relation to the utilization of the Nile waters had been one of the main sources of suspicion and conflict between Ethiopia and Sudan throughout the 20th century. Ethiopia and Sudan had conflicting views on the validity of two historical legal treaties: one from 1902 signed by Ethiopia and Britain (on behalf of Sudan), which prohibited any construction activity that might decrease the flow of the Nile on the Ethiopian side, and the second treaty was signed in 1959 by Sudan and Egypt, which allocated 18.5 BCM to Sudan and 55.5 BCM to Egypt.[854] Sudan and Egypt essentially entered into a formal alliance over the Nile, as they 'committed themselves to not negotiate unilaterally with any third party over the Nile waters'.[855] Egypt, referring to these agreements and to the legal principle of the obligation not to cause significant harm, argued that any activity that might impact the flow of the Nile waters would be illegal.[856] Due to lack of resources and other priorities, Ethiopia had not made the utilization of the Nile a central agenda in its relationship with Sudan during the 1990s.

The Ethiopian-Sudanese dispute over the Nile was part of a larger complex involving some eight additional countries. Ethiopia pursued its interests through an institutionalized alliance with other states in the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) that was launched in 1999, when a 10-member forum was founded with the purpose of finding a permanent legal and institutional framework that would allow an equitable allocation of the river's water resources. After eight years of negotiation, a draft Cooperative Framework Agreement

[853] Nile Basin Initiative, 'Harnessing the Nile to increase Connectivity: The Ethiopia-Sudan Transmission Interconnection Project', December 2014. http://www.nilebasin.org/images/docs/Ethiopia-Sudan%20interconnection%20success%20story.pdf

[854] Salman M. A. Salman, 'The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam: The Road to the Declaration of Principles and the Khartoum Document', *Water International,* Vol. 41, no. 4 (2016): 513.

[855] Ashok Swain, 'Ethiopia, the Sudan, and Egypt: The Nile River Dispute', *The Journal of Modern African Studies,* Vol. 35, No. 4 (1997): 679.

[856] Article 7 in the UN's Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses

was submitted to Nile-Com in 2007. The basin states were however divided on the wording of article 14 (b), which initially stated 'Nile Basin States therefore agree, in a spirit of cooperation: . . . not to significantly affect the water security of any other Nile Basin State.'[857] This was rejected by Egypt and Sudan who instead suggested the alternative formulation: 'not to significantly affect the water security and current uses and rights of any other Nile Basin State'.[858] The upstream states could not accept this however as they were of the view that '"the current uses and rights" phrasing would entrench the concept of prior rights, including those created by the Nile Waters Agreements, and effectively retain the inequity and unfairness that has characterized the allocation and utilization of water in the Nile River Basin since the 1920s.'[859] Due to this disagreement, Sudan walked out of the CFA talks in 2009 in protest. In 2010 however Ethiopia, Burundi, Tanzania, Uganda and Rwanda signed the CFA.[860]

On April 2011, Meles Zenawi laid the foundations for the GERD. It had storage capacity of 74 BCM, and was expected to generate 6000 MW. Once completed, it would be the largest hydroelectric station in Africa. Egypt was alarmed by Meles' announcement and claimed that the project violated international law, but was paralyzed by an on-going revolution at the time. Sudan initially made its reservations public, but was within months emphasising the potential benefits of the dam for all affected riparian states.[861] Disputes over the impact of the dam led the three states to agree to establish a 10-member panel of experts to conduct an environmental impact assessment of the project on Sudan and Egypt.[862] The experts published a report in 2013, which concluded that more studies ought to be conducted to determine the environmental impact of the GERD.[863]

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[857] Mwangi S. Kimenyi and John Mukum Mbaku, "The Limits of the New 'Nile Agreement,'" *Brookings*, April 28, 2015. https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2015/04/28/the-limits-of-the-new-nile-agreement/

[858] Ibid.

[859] Ibid.

[860] Ibid.

[861] Ana Elisa Cascão and Alan Nicol, 'Sudan, "Kingmaker" in a New Nile Hydropolitics: Negotiating Water and Hydraulic Infrastructure to Expand Large-Scale Irrigation', *Land and Hydropolitics in the Nile River Basin*, (eds) Emil Sandström, Anders Jägerskog and Terje Oestigaard, (2016): 108-109.

[862] Salman M. A. Salman, 'The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam: The Road to the Declaration of Principles and the Khartoum Document', *Water International* 41, no. 4 (June 6, 2016): 518, https://doi.org/10.1080/02508060.2016.1170374

[863] Ibid.

In 2012 Bashir said that the construction of the GERD would not affect the water security of downstream states.[864] Egypt on the other hand became increasingly belligerent. When Ethiopia diverted the Nile waters in 2013, there was uproar across Egypt,[865] leading amongst other things to Egyptian parliamentarians – unaware that their TV debate was being broadcast live – suggested to sabotage the GERD by supporting Ethiopian rebels.[866] As the gap between the Ethiopian and Egyptian positions were widening, Sudan assumed the role of a mediator. In November 2013 a tripartite ministerial committee was established, but there was a deadlock between Ethiopia and Egypt, the latter insisting that the construction of the GERD be halted until environmental studies had been carried out; Ethiopia however retorted that the experts had not made any such recommendations.[867]

A change of government in Egypt provided a new opening for progress in the diplomatic talks. The new Egyptian President al Sisi and Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam decided to find a modus vivendi.[868] During the seventh Tripartite Ministerial meeting in Khartoum in March 2015, the three states signed the Declaration of Principles, which formalized Egyptian recognition of Ethiopia's right to utilize the Nile waters for developmental purposes, and Ethiopia's commitment to the principle of not causing significant harm to downstream states.[869] From then on the diplomatic negotiations shifted from questioning the legitimacy of the project to how fast the dam should be filled, in order not to cause significant harm to downstream states, and which consultants should make this assessment.

The Evolution of Sudan's Stance on the Nile

[864] Cascão and Nicol, 'Sudan, "Kingmaker" in a New Nile Hydropolitics: Negotiating Water and Hydraulic Infrastructure to Expand Large-Scale Irrigation,' 109.

[865] Salman, 'The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam: The Road to the Declaration of Principles and the Khartoum Document,' 517.

[866] Ibid.

[867] Ibid: 518.

[868] Ahram Online, 'Egypt and Ethiopia Agree That Tripartite Dam Committee Will Resume Its Work', June 27, 2014. http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/104937/Egypt/Politics-/Egypt-and-Ethiopia-agree-that-tripartite-dam-commi.aspx

[869] Salman, 'The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam: The Road to the Declaration of Principles and the Khartoum Document,' 521.

Due to its geographic features between the main source and the consumer of the Nile waters, Sudan's position was seen by Ethiopia to be amendable through diplomacy and other incentives. And when Sudan's relations with Egypt – and the conditions within Egypt also – had changed, it was possible for Sudan to change its alignment posture viz-a-viz Ethiopia and the Nile. In other words, Sudan's interests on the Nile were not tied to a particular hydro-regime, in the way Egypt's and Ethiopia's interests were, and it could be as much or even more in its interests to support the hydro-regime pushed by Ethiopia in 2011 rather than the old regime favoured by Egypt.

Sudan's support was critical to Ethiopia's hydro-political aspirations, and was likely consulted prior to the announcement in 2011. The GERD is located 20 Km from the border with Sudan. The geographic location of the dam means that Sudan's active support was crucial to protect the security of the project. Given that Sudan was a down-stream state, and the only ally of Egypt and signatory to the 1929 and 1959 agreements, also meant that it was in a position to tip the diplomatic-power balance in favour of Ethiopia. Although Sudan initially objected to the GERD, this was probably a diplomatic stance aimed at not agitating certain domestic constituencies and Egypt. Cascao and Nicol claim that: 'Interviews conducted with high-level officials from Ethiopia and Sudan (on several occasions in 2011) indicated that Sudan's support at the highest political level actually preceded the announcement, namely during meetings between Prime Minister Zenawi and President Bashir in 2010.'[870] During a visit to the GERD in 2014, Bashir publicly stated that he had been informed by Meles of the plans to construct the GERD before the public announcement in 2011.[871]

Sudan's policy on the Nile should be seen in the context of the broader web of overlapping and competing interests that Sudan shares with Ethiopia. Despite the fact that Sudan's geography made it less tied to a particular hydro-political regime like Egypt, its position throughout the 20th century was vehement opposition to a change in the status quo. One reason for its change of policy was its growing alignment with Ethiopia in multiple sectors. This decision was not a sudden change in the relationship between the

[870] Cascão, Elisa and Nicol, 'Sudan, "Kingmaker" in a New Nile Hydropolitics: Negotiating Water and Hydraulic Infrastructure to Expand Large-Scale Irrigation,' 109.
[871] Ibid.

two governments; rather it took place after a decade of growing interdependence and cooperation in various sectors. While this study cannot provide any concrete evidence for what motivated Khartoum's re-orientation on the politics of the Nile, the evolution and sequencing of events indicate that growing interdependence with Ethiopia shaped its decision.

5.5. Conclusion

Ethiopia and Sudan's first rapprochement under the Revolutionary orientation was both ideologically motivated and a function of the support the TPLF had received from the Sudanese government as a liberation movement. Peace under the Revolutionary orientation was not driven by any concrete strategic interests, and was short-lived. The EPRDF's naïve view of Sudan's Islamist regime and its inability to recognize early on how its foreign policy orientation and nation-building project was incompatible with that of Sudan's eventually backfired, and the inevitable rivalry between the two states erupted in 1993.

The EPRDF managed this rivalry through a containment policy that centred on diplomatic isolation and proxy-warfare. These were pursued both unilaterally and through alignments with other states. By applying military and diplomatic pressure on the regime in Khartoum, the EPRDF aimed at empowering moderates in the Sudanese regime, whom they expected would pursue a different form of foreign policy orientation. The containment policy was successful, and led to social and political unrest, which empowered Bashir and enabled him to side-line Turabi and end Sudan's Islamist power projections towards Ethiopia. The de-escalation of the Ethiopia-Sudan rivalry preceded foreign policy and political change in Sudan. The Sudanese-Egyptian détente and Ethiopia's war with Eritrea in 1998 were the primary reasons that motivated Ethiopia to actively pursue a rapprochement with Sudan in 1998. But the rapprochement would probably not have been sustainable and progressive without political change in Khartoum. Turabi's downfall made it possible for Ethiopian-Sudanese interests to align beyond a tactical cooperation against a common enemy.

Ethiopia pursued, under the Developmental State orientation, three core strategic interests: to deepen its alignment with Khartoum, to contain insecurity and conflict in

Sudan, and to realize the potential for economic cooperation. These interests differed from the traditional interests of the Irredenta, which would have prioritized attaining primacy over Sudan and territorial acquisition (policies that were propagated by Ethiopian opposition groups). The EPRDF's priorities were also in contrast to the polices of the international community, which sought to pursue justice and accountability even at the expense of stability.[872] To pursue these interests, the EPRDF primarily relied on linkage diplomacy. In terms of linkages to other rivalries Ethiopia actively took advantage of external push-factors, in the form of common enemies such as Eritrea, which served as one form of incentive for cooperation. Internal and external actors that applied pressure on Sudan, such as the SPLM or the US, served as another form of incentive for Sudan to align closer to Ethiopia. Linkage diplomacy across sectors also played a role in this evolution of cooperation. Trust and diplomatic capital accumulated in the security sectors by Ethiopia were applied to attain Sudan's support for its ambitions to utilize the Nile. The EPRDF actively adopted a benign position towards Khartoum in international mediation processes, which served as a pull-factor and a third form of incentive for the alignment. In situations where there were conflicts of interests, such as, territorial demarcation, Ethiopia chose to ignore domestic calls for belligerence and react with restraint. These processes led to a gradual evolution of trust and a convergence of interests. The cooperation was also gradually institutionalized through committees and joint ventures such as border patrols, which led to regular interaction, communication and cooperation between the security and other agencies of Sudan and Ethiopia – a factor that Ethiopian officials believed contributed to the growing trust.

[872] Ivar A. Iversen, *Foreign Policy in God's Name: Evangelical Influence on US Policy towards Sudan,* Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies, (2007): 78.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This thesis has provided an in-depth study of the EPRDF's regional security policy. Through an analysis of the EPRDF's foreign policy towards Eritrea, Somalia and Sudan in 1991-2018, it makes three assertions. Firstly, understanding Ethiopia's foreign policy orientations is central to understand its rivalry management strategies. Secondly, diplomatic tools, notably co-optation, coercive isolation and linkage-diplomacy, have been central to rivalry management under the Developmental State orientation. Thirdly, Ethiopia's rivalry management strategies have been relatively successful, and have resulted in relative peace and security interdependence.

6.1 Foreign Policy Orientations and Rivalry Management

Analyses of Ethiopian foreign policy have tended to take historical continuity for granted, and have overlooked essential differences amongst Ethiopia's political elites about what Ethiopia's interests and role in the world ought to be. This study has made an effort to fill this lacuna. As described in Chapter Two, the major cleavages in foreign policy orientations after the Cold War have been between the Irredenta on the one hand, and the two alternatives formulated by the EPRDF, the Revolutionary and the Developmental State, on the other. The target of the EPRDF's revolution in 1991 was the Irredenta orientation, which was subscribed to by both the communist and monarchical regimes of Ethiopia, and by many of the political opposition parties under the EPRDF. The two primary values of this orientation were territorial revisionism and the pursuit of status, while military force was the preferred foreign policy tool. The irredentism, a manifest destiny and hegemonic aspirations that characterized the Irredenta approach were based on a conception of the Ethiopian nation that was rooted in its imperial history.

The Revolutionary orientation had the sole purpose of dismantling the ideology on which the Irredenta orientation was based. The basis for this foreign policy revolution was not a normative view of international order; instead it was motivated by a polemic view of Ethiopian history and politics. This was also its critical flaw: it did not clearly formulate Ethiopia's interests viz-a-viz the outside. The revolution of the EPRDF was so focused on internal enemies that its view of the outside world was almost depoliticised. Cooperation

and peaceful co-existence were taken for granted as a natural outcome after domestic change within Ethiopia. Because it did not formulate clear objectives, a distinct self-prescribed role for Ethiopia in the Horn of Africa cannot be identified.

The Developmental State orientation that was formulated after in 2002 was a departure from the Revolutionary orientation. It formulated clear foreign policy objectives and priorities, it did not take cooperation for granted, and it formulated a security management strategy. This foreign policy however maintained its opposition to the Irredenta orientation. Its point of departure was that Ethiopia was a poor and fragile state, and consequently that its primary national interest must be to escape this condition as soon as possible. The purpose of foreign policy was to serve this core objective. This led to two strategic principles: instead of prestige and status, the diplomacy of the Ethiopian state would focus exclusively and proactively on pursuing development cooperation in the region and globally pursue capital, in the form of aid and FDI. Rivalry and security management would be guided by the second principle of strategic restraint. Strategic restraint meant avoiding as much as possible getting involved in armed conflict. In terms of foreign policy objectives, this meant that territorial revisionism – particularly in relation to attaining access to the Red Sea by annexing Eritrean territory – could not be pursued, due to the consequences associated with conflict and international isolation, which such actions would entail. Particularly in relation to rivalry management, this meant that the state would have to rely as much as possible on other means of containing threats than military force. The restraint generated by the Developmental State was therefore based on a prioritization of economic development, rather than the ethics of the use of force. In this way this thesis has drawn attention to a hitherto overlooked phenomenon: the significant departure from the traditional Ethiopian way of approaching security and foreign policy that the Developmental State orientation represented.

The broader implications of these findings is that it is essential to take into consideration ideational factors to understand Ethiopia's foreign policy making. In this regard it is important to move beyond the idea of trans-historical 'Ethiopian' interests and roles, and take seriously the sub-national variations in elite-belief systems. There is a broad consensus in Ethiopian studies that the very notion of Ethiopian nationhood is politically highly contested, studies on Ethiopian foreign policy should also reflect this as these

domestic ideational variations also lead to variations in the formulation of foreign policy objectives and strategies.

The findings from this case-study also supports the literature on strategic studies that argues that ideational factors like culture and norms are important to understand decision-making on security policy. Consequently, these findings illustrate the limitations of adopting exclusively rationalist and structural approaches to understanding rivalry management strategies and policies.

6.2. Managing Rivalry through Diplomatic Means

The second contribution of this thesis is to illustrate how Ethiopia's foreign policy orientations have shaped its rivalry management strategies and tactics. All three case-studies have demonstrated that the Revolutionary orientation, due to its inability to appreciate Ethiopia's conflicts of interests with its neighbours and anticipate aggression, not only lacked a rivalry management strategy, but was also partially a cause of rivalry initiation. The Irredenta, as the chapters on Sudan and Eritrea have illustrated, encouraged pursuing a victor's peace through military force. Under the Developmental State orientation, coercion and unilateral military force have been marginal features of Ethiopia's security strategy. Strategic restraint necessitated focusing on non-military means of managing rivalries, which led the EPRDF to primarily rely on the diplomatic tools of alignments, coercive isolation, co-optation and linkage-diplomacy.

6.2.1. Co-optation

Co-optation was a non-military tactic employed extensively by the Ethiopian government to manage threats in Somalia, where Ethiopia and other states competed for influence amongst non-state actors. Co-optation of key individuals and groups was essential to control institutions and institution-making processes. The ability to influence who was elected to the parliaments and councils in the TFG in 2004, and convince Islamists to join the TFG in 2008, and the subsequent federation-making process, have been a critical aspect of influencing politics in Somalia. The EPRDF's successful co-optation diplomacy in these processes can partly be attributed to the involvement of Ethiopian-Somalis, who utilized Somali clan and political networks from Ethiopia to reach out to the necessary

politicians and communal leaders to co-opt individuals in Somalia. The high number of individuals and groups that openly opposed Ethiopia in these processes is both an indication of hostility to Ethiopia by many Somalis, but more importantly indicates that co-optation is not equivalent to coercion, and that the option of rejection was available to Somalia's political elites. Military power also played a role in the co-optation process, not in direct coercive ways but through indirect means. Somali actors faced the following situation: not aligning with Ethiopia meant that they would support your rivals, while aligning with it meant that you would have political and military resources at your disposal.

Co-optation was way of containing regional and Somali non-state rivals in-line with a foreign policy orientation that prioritized economic development, in the sense that it was an alternative to full-scale military force. Its effectiveness was not automatic, however. While Ethiopia managed to sabotage the Arta process and control the TFG process, co-optation also had the effect of disturbing the local balance of power, and co-opting one actor often resulted in a nationalist backlash. The success of co-optation as a strategy required developing a network that was so broad and powerful that others had an incentive to join it. Secondly, it required a regional political settlement that involved a broad section of regional states. Thirdly, it required involving the Islamists from ARS. It was when the EPRDF broadened the 'winning coalition' that co-optation became an effective power tool.

6.2.2. Linkage-Diplomacy

By the time the Developmental State was adopted in Ethiopia, its rivalry with Sudan had begun to de-escalate. The purpose of foreign policy towards Sudan in this period was to consolidate this rapprochement, and take advantage of the developmental potential of the relationship. Linkage diplomacy was the tactic of choice to pursue these objectives, and led the EPRDF to strategically utilize its role in mediation processes to accumulate diplomatic capital and deepen its alignment with both Khartoum and Juba. Linkage diplomacy was not utilized as a bargaining method in relation to a particular transaction, nor was it explicitly framed. Instead, the EPRDF strategically assumed a favourable position on issues such as international mediation processes and acted with restraint – at a high domestic audience cost – on issues such as territorial demarcation, and in this way

developed a relationship and accumulated diplomatic capital that was later leveraged. After a decade of relationship-building, Addis Ababa attained Khartoum's support in 2011 for its dam (GERD) on the Blue Nile. Ethiopia's ability to sway Sudan away from its historical alignment with Egypt was a major achievement. This linkage-diplomacy was in addition to consolidating Ethiopia's rapprochement with Sudan, and therefore also successfully managing its rivalry with Egypt.

6.2.3. Alignment and Coercive Isolation

Alignments have been the most important foreign policy tool applied by Ethiopia and have been part of all its efforts at containing its rivals. Alignment is a strategy that is not mutually exclusive with military force or other diplomatic tools. It should primarily be differentiated from unilateral action. Successful containment of rivals has almost exclusively been achieved when conducted in alignment with other states. A comparison of containment efforts before and after alignment reveals such a pattern. Sudan's Islamist projection was managed through an alignment with Eritrea, Kenya and Uganda. Through the concerted effort of the Front-Line States alignment in 1993-1998, Ethiopia managed to push Sudan to cease its Islamist foreign policy. Ethiopia's unilateral military intervention in Somalia in 2006 is also likely to have had a very different fate without alignment diplomacy. A Kenyan, Ugandan or Sudanese objection would have been sufficient to diplomatically and strategically challenge Ethiopia's mission. While it quickly managed to dismantle the UIC, it is unlikely that it would have been able to contain an Islamist takeover and make the relative progress it has in state-building without the strategic support of IGAD and the international community, which both provided legitimacy and covered the financial costs. The rivalry with Eritrea was managed primarily through coercive isolation. This involved putting pressure on Eritrea and reducing its power, mostly by engaging third-parties. By mobilizing other states against Eritrea, it managed to gradually decrease its power projection capacity. Eritrea's isolation after 2009 came about only through cooperation with Djibouti, Sudan, Uganda and Kenya, who used IGAD to influence the AU to call upon the UNSC to sanction it.

6.3. Relative Stability Based on Security Interdependence

Ethiopia's rivalry management strategies have been relatively successful under the Developmental State period. Addis Ababa was able to successfully isolate its rival

Eritrea, and avoid a conventional war. It was also able to prevent Al Shabaab and other Islamists from taking over the Somali state. But most importantly, it has been able to transform rivalry relationships into alignments, increase security co-operation and orchestrate regional collective action.

A number of relationships have improved and transformed the Horn of Africa between 1991 and 2018. Ethiopia and Sudan began in 1998 a rapprochement process that was consolidated. Ethiopia and Djibouti also transformed their relationship from rivalry over state-building in Somalia in the early 2000s, to a positive peace and partnership in 2008. Various Somali Islamists and former warlords in southern Somalia transform their relationship with Ethiopia from conflict to a security-interdependence from 2008 onwards. In the process Ethiopia also deepened its security and economic alignments Kenya, Puntland, Somaliland and Uganda.

6.3.1. Expanding the 'winning coalition' on Somalia

Ethiopia's Developmental State also directly or indirectly contributed to increased regional cooperation and collective action. Chapter Three has illustrated how Ethiopia's alignment politics led to a regional settlement on Somalia. The importance of this settlement can be appreciated by comparison with the conditions that preceded it. Until 2008 the IGAD region was divided over Somalia. In 2004, for example, Kenya, Sudan and Uganda were neutral, while Ethiopia was supporting the TFG, and Djibouti and Eritrea were supporting the opposition. In 2008, a regional consensus emerged where the IGAD region was united behind the TFG, leaving Eritrea as the only opponent. The deal reached between the ARS and TFG was as much a regional settlement as it was Somali. This was an important indicator of the regional community's ability to compromise, cooperate and coordinate their actions to manage regional problems. The settlement managed to involve regional states such as Djibouti and Islamists such as sheikh Sharif's ARS into the 'winning-coalition'.

6.3.2. Containing a Regional Pariah: Eritrea

The international isolation of Eritrea from 2009 was an outcome of regional cooperation and was also possible due to its linkages to the Somali conflict complex. Eritrea was not initially seen as a regional threat. It was only after its involvement in Somalia and conflict

with Djibouti that it assumed the role of a regional pariah. Eritrea's actions in Somalia were not novel, but came at a time when the region and international community had come close to a consensus on supporting the TFG, and identified at least the hardliner faction of the UIC as a collective threat. The combination of Eritrea's policy on Somalia and the suspension of its membership in IGAD in 2007 constituted a defiance of the collective and the multilateral system.

IGAD states developed mechanisms or practices for competing for influence in subtle ways that did not lead to a breakdown of relations or violence. They acted with restraint at key junctures and compromised. Ethiopian, Kenyan and Djiboutian engagement in Somalia in 1991-2017 is an example of this. The three states had different interests and often undermined each other, but maintained the competition within certain limits. Examples of this include: Ethiopian restraint against Djibouti during the Arta process; Djiboutian acceptance of the Ethiopian intervention in 2006; and Kenyan and Ethiopian peaceful competition for influence in Jubaland. Throughout the many disputes, no state ever suspended its membership in IGAD. The purpose of the collective effort to isolate Eritrea can therefore be seen as the regional community through coercive diplomacy seeking to deter a member state from a particular behavioural pattern. This collaboration added an element of interdependence in the Ethiopia-Djibouti-Sudan relationships. As the chapter on Eritrea has illustrated, Ethiopia and Djibouti were also dependent on the support from Kenya, Uganda, and Somalia to push this agenda through.

6.3.3. Changing Hydro-Political Norms: The Nile

The chapter on Sudan has demonstrated how Ethiopia managed to successfully challenge Egypt's hegemony on the Nile through an alignment with Sudan. The management of the Nile was one of the most central and oldest regional disputes in Northeast Africa. The dispute had since the Cold War been over what legal norms should dictate the management of the Nile. The GERD was a practical challenge to Egyptian hegemony and the prevailing hydro-political norm it was promoting. The GERD forced Egypt to gradually change its position on hydro-politics, from unwillingness to entertain the idea of any dam on the Nile in Ethiopia, to negotiating the details of the filling-up processes of the GERD. It initiated a trilateral negotiation process where the positions of the three parties grew increasingly closer and closer. This case had two dimensions of collective

action: first, it involved the emergence of a common stance and collective action between Ethiopia and Sudan (two states that had opposing views on this issue for decades); secondly, it led Egypt, the third and remaining opponent of a new hydro-political settlement, to gradually change its position from threatening war to accepting that GERD was a legitimate project (if filled within a certain timeframe). Instead of the widely anticipated water-wars scenario, this dispute over norms and vital natural resources was resolved without violent conflict. The politics over the GERD also had a dimension of region-building. Sudan, which has historically been an ally of Egypt on this matter, now supported Ethiopia. Egypt, which had historically played an influential role in Horn of Africa politics, lost what was arguably its most important and longstanding ally to Ethiopia. The influence of extra-regional actors was limited and intra-regional alignments strengthened.

6.4. Areas for Further Research

The analytical narrative provided in this thesis provides an alternative account of the Ethiopian state's agency. Instead of a dominant hegemon pursuing primacy by force, it portrays an economically and politically fragile regional power that has pragmatically come to terms with its dependence on the outside world, and systematically utilized financial and diplomatic support from the outside to contain its rivals and construct a web of alignments. The picture of the Horn of Africa that emerges in this study also contradicts the conventional image of a region bound in perennial and never-ending cycles of conflict. Instead, it portrays a region that has incrementally been improving, and that has been characterized by a significant degree of collective action and cooperation.

There are a number of issues raised in this thesis that would benefit from further research. The first issue is that this study of regional change in the Horn of Africa is heavily Ethiopia-centred. Thematically, it has drawn attention to the importance of alignment behaviour in this process. It would in this regard be interesting to gain a better understanding of the alignment diplomacy of other large states in the Horn of Africa, such as Kenya, Uganda and Sudan. The diplomacy that takes place within IGAD would be central to better understand these processes. For example, questions such as why the member states agreed to support Ethiopia's occupation of the Chairmanship between 2008 and 2018, and what bargaining processes were involved, would be very interesting.

This thesis has also provided a long-term perspective of Ethiopia's rivalry management strategies, but more detailed studies of the decision-making processes that account for how specific decisions were taken and for the organizational politics in the state apparatus would be interesting.

The findings of this thesis have implications for both Horn of Africa studies and the study of IR. The first implication of these findings is that the dynamics of inter-state relations in the Horn of Africa have primarily been driven by internal regional factors. The initiation, escalation and de-escalation of rivalries were predominantly shaped by the agencies of African states rather than external actors. External actors such as the US had an impact on these processes by aligning with particular states and tilting the balance of power in favour of its allies. The initiatives for peace and conflict however have come from the regional states. Horn of Africa politics has often been analysed through the lens of the US war on terror or Middle Eastern rivalries, but as this thesis has illustrated the regional rivalries were not driven by a US or Middle Eastern agendas. We should therefore not underplay the agency of regional actors in favour of global powers.

Secondly, successful rivalry de-escalation and termination processes in the Horn of Africa also illustrate that inter-state peace can be generated in the absence of the liberal or Kantian tripod of democracy, economic interdependence and effective regional/international organizations. Democratic peace theory, economic interdependence and international institutions have been the most influential theories of inter-state cooperation in IR. Influenced by these general IR theories – as the literature review illustrated – Horn of Africa scholars have often deemed all or some of these elements as necessary for a move towards peace in the region. The case-studies in this thesis however illustrate how fragile authoritarian governments pursue and successfully make peace.

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29. Mustafa Sa'ed: Somaliland civil society, interview with author, March 1, 2016
30. Sebhat Nega: Executive Director of Ethiopian International Institute for International Peace and Development and first Chairman of the TPLF, interview with author March 19, 2014
31. Tedros Adhanom: Foreign Minister of Ethiopia (2012-2016), interview with ILPI staff, March 4, 2014,
32. Tekeda Alemu: Ethiopia's State Minister of Foreign Affairs (1991-2011) and Ambassador to the UN (2011-2017), interview with author, April 28, 2016
33. Tewolde Woldemariam: Head of organisational affairs in the TPLF, interview with author, May 1, 2014
34. Yohannes Gebremeskel: Lt. General, Head of Mission and Force Commander of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (2013-2014), Head of the Military

Intelligence Department in the Ethiopian Ministry of National Defence, interview with author, May 12, 2017

35. Yusuf Ibrahim: Deputy Commander of Somaliland Navy, interview with author March 1, 2016

Anonymous Interviewees

1. Anonymous: Ethiopian diplomat, former Ethiopian Liaison Officer to IGAD, interview with author, November 4, 2015
2. Anonymous: Colonel in the Ethiopian armed Forces and staff at Ethiopian Peace Support Training Center, interview with author, May 31, 2017
3. Anonymous: Ethiopian residents of Zalambessa, Tigray, interview by author, January 27, 2013
4. Anonymous: Lieutenant General in the Ethiopian Armed Forces and former Commander of Western Division, October 27, 2015
5. Anonymous: Senior US intelligence officer former Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict, April 22, 2016
6. Anonymous: Ethiopian diplomat, former Director General for Africa, June 1, 2017
7. Anonymous: Ethiopian diplomat, Desk Officer for Sudan, Somalia and Eritrea, interview with author, May 25, 2017
8. Anonymous: Colonel in the Ethiopian armed Forces and former member of UN peacekeeping mission to Darfur, interview with author, May 13, 2017
9. Anonymous: Lawyer who took part in the UN COI on Eritrea, August 29, 2018
10. Anonymous: Ethiopian diplomat based in Ethiopian Embassy in Mogadishu, February 4, 2014
11. Anonymous Ethiopian: retired major general April 28, 2016
12. Anonymous: Ethiopian diplomat Director General on African Affairs, October 30, 2015
13. Participant observation, Annual Somaliland-Ethiopia Summit, February 28-March 2, 2016
14. Anonymous: Eritrean refugees in the Hitsats Refugee Camp, Tigray, July 9, 2013
15. Anonymous Ethiopian diplomat interview with author, June 1, 2017
16. Anonymous Ethiopian diplomat, interview with author, May 25, 2017
17. Anonymous Colonel in the Ethiopian Army, interview with author, May 13, 2017
18. Anonymous: Ethiopian diplomat, former Head of Africa Directorate in Ministry of Foreign Affairs, interview with author June 28, 2016