External Interventions and Civil War Intensity in South-Central Somalia (1991-2010)

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External interventions in conflicts are prescribed to be peace-promoting mechanisms, but their effects seldom de-escalate conflict intensity. Based on the balance of capabilities theory, this paper tests the effects that the type of intervention, military or diplomatic, and the target of the intervention, partisan or neutral, has on conflict intensity. In the case of Somalia, for the period 1991 to 2010, the results suggest that neutral interventions, either military (humanitarian) or diplomatic, can lead to lower conflict intensity, but if partisan and military they lead to higher conflict intensity. If partisan and diplomatic and provided to both sides of the conflict they have no effect on conflict intensity. The conclusion is that peace competes with other objectives of external interventions.

Intervenções externas e intensidade da guerra civil no centro e sul da Somália (1991-2010)

Apesar de as intervenções externas em conflitos armados serem consideradas mecanismos para a promoção da paz, estas raramente diminuem a intensidade do conflito. Este artigo utiliza a teoria do equilíbrio de forças num conflito para testar os efeitos que as intervenções têm na intensidade do conflito, diferenciando-as por tipo de intervenção, militar ou diplomática, e objetivo da intervenção, partidário ou neutro. No caso da Somália, no período entre 1991 e 2010, os resultados sugerem que as intervenções neutrais, quer sejam militares (com fins humanitários) ou diplomáticas, podem diminuir a intensidade do conflito. No entanto, se as intervenções forem partidárias e militares podem conduzir a uma intensificação do conflito. Por outro lado, se partidárias e diplomáticas e providenciadas para ambos os grupos em conflito, as intervenções não têm efeito sobre a intensidade do conflito. A conclusão é que os objetivos de promoção da paz concorrem com outros objetivos das intervenções externas.

External interventions are a mechanism the international community uses for conflict management in a country. Intervention effects are determined by the motivations of the intervening parties and the effectiveness of the military, economic or diplomatic initiatives undertaken. But, at the same time, the relationship between interventions and conflict is endogenous, which makes it difficult to determine when interventions are causing a conflict pattern or when interventions are responses to conflict patterns.

It has been suggested that the expected effect of external interventions on civil wars is to de-escalate conflict intensity in order to allow a mediation process to unfold. This is attributed directly not only to diplomatic initiatives but also to military and economic initiatives. The underlying assumption is that interveners' motives, regardless of the type of intervention, are primarily "peace promoting" (Regan, 2002a).

This paper questions this assumption by examining how military and diplomatic interventions and interveners' motivations are associated with conflict intensity. The paper aims to contribute to the broader literature in international interventions and conflict management.

The paper starts by presenting the theoretical formulation that external interventions are mainly conflict management mechanisms; we then propose three expected mechanisms for military and diplomatic interventions and interveners' motivations. The proposed mechanisms are then tested on a case study of Somalia for the period 1991 to 2010. For the sake of clarity, the conflict-interventions analysis is sub-divided into four periods. The data is based on secondary sources relying on a conflict event dataset for a monthly account of battle-related deaths as a measure of conflict intensity.

In the final section we present the results which show that it is the combination of type and target of interventions which determines the effect of interventions on conflict intensity. We also show that conflict intensity does not seem to determine interveners' interventions, meaning that more bloodshed does not increase the chance of more interventions.

External interventions and conflict intensity

A broad conceptualisation of interventions would consider that they can be forcible or non-forcible, direct or indirect (through the use of a proxy state), open or clandestine (covert) operations perpetrated by state and non-state actors and are not necessarily lawful or unlawful but should break the conventional pattern of international relations (Vincent, 1974, p. 13).

More specifically, for the case of intra-state conflict, Regan (2002a) and Rosenau (1971) define external interventions as convention-breaking military, economic or political activities in the internal affairs of a foreign country that are targeted at the authority structures of the government (biased, in support of the government or the opposition, or neutral), with the aim of affecting the balance of power between the parties in the conflict. There are different types of interventions, for instance the traditional peacekeeping operations normally with a neutral mandate, and military, economic or diplomatic interventions which can be both in support of only one side or neutral[2].

This definition is associated with the traditional conceptualisation of civil war as a state (with a government) that is challenged by at least one political group using armed force over a sustained period and producing a minimum threshold of deaths. Battle deaths are a clear indication of the extraordinary nature of the period under review (even if the conflict is protracted) and of the intensity of conflict (Gleditsch *et al.*, 2002).

Since 1991 Somalia has usually been referred to as an extreme case of "state collapse", a country characterized by a constellation of commercial city-states and villages separated by areas of pastoral statelessness without a central authority (Menkhaus, 2006). In this sense, the identification of a state is more formal than de facto in Somalia, where there is a more decentralized form of conflict. In this way, the civil war in Somalia is not only of a state-based type, associated with conflict involving an internationally recognized group representing the "state", which in Somalia was the case with two transitional governments, being challenged by other group(s), but involves conflicts of other types.

Despite the ethnic homogeneity, Somalian society is characterised by a clan system structured around six major clan families (the Darod, the Isaaq, the Dir, the Hawiye, the Rahanwein and the Digil), which then break down into sub-clans. The clan families are "communities of relations" with common genealogy and complex networks of relationships (Ssereo, 2003). Typically, clan militia respond to clan elders but operate in a decentralised and opportunistic guerrilla fashion. Linked to both "state collapse" and clan politics are the warlords, who are characterised by their personal rule paradigm, the monopolization of economic resources and the extensive use of coercion through militias (Clapham,

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[2] In this definition interventions are neutral in the sense that they are provided to both sides or do not directly increase the fighting capabilities of the parties. Examples of the former are the provision of economic support to both sides and military support to both sides to oversee a ceasefire or a demilitarized zone. A classic example of the latter is the provision of mediators.

2002). They also oppose any effort to impose government in the capital, in this way avoiding predatory government practices (Menkhaus, 2007)[3].

In this context, conflict in Somalia is not only state based but also, significantly, of two other types. One type is conflict involving actors fighting each other without the state's involvement (normally called non-state conflict or communal violence); the other type is groups (or the state) attacking civilian populations (normally referred to as one-sided conflict). Such specificity of conflict can be accommodated in the above definition of external interventions, where the "authority" is the diverse groups competing for control of different levels of power in pastoral areas, communities, towns, regional administrations, states or the central government[4].

Within this definition of external interventions, it has been proposed that interventions attempt to control hostilities, and *ceteris paribus*, interventions should reduce conflict (Regan, 2002a). Therefore the success of interventions is assessed in terms of their capacity to lower conflict intensity, as in the number of battle deaths, or decrease the duration of conflict, as in the days, months or years the conflict is active (Högbladh, Pettersson & Themnér, 2011). In Regan (2002a) the point of "departure for outlining the goals of the interveners works from the assumption that states intervene to stop the fighting between groups in conflict" (p. 10). Furthermore,

> it is assumed that third parties do not intervene to exacerbate or prolong the fighting. The key issue here is the desire by the intervener to bring stability to a specific region; one approach for achieving this – and the one that is under consideration – is the active intervention by a third party into the ongoing conflict (p. 11).

One way to achieve this is by the intervener trying to bolster one side to compel the opposing side to quit fighting, which can come about through a ceasefire or one side's defeat (Regan, 1996, p. 340). The missing link in this argument is that the peaceful objectives of interveners are conditional on who would be the possible winner in a conflict. An intervention indifferent to the outcome of a conflict and focused solely on de-escalation or ending the conflict would primarily support the strongest side so that victory would be more likely. It has been proposed that a victory is the most decisive outcome to a conflict and the one type

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[3] It is relevant to highlight that it is not clear if "state collapse" precedes or is a consequence of warlordism and that warlords in Somalia are not necessarily clan based (Marchal, 2007).

[4] State collapse cannot be equated with criminality and armed conflict as areas of non-existent state authority have enjoyed peace and the rule of law at the same time that areas with state authority have been prone to conflict. This means the assumption is not that "state collapse" leads to conflict in Somalia, but that in the context of "state collapse" different types of conflict occur. The three types of conflict: state based, non-state based and one-sided violence will inform the empirical analysis.

less likely to lead to conflict recurrence, specially in identity civil wars (Licklider, 1995). In the cases where a military victory seems unlikely, an alternative strategy could be to support the weaker side to the extent that a military stalemate is reached (possibly by increasing its fighting capability), forcing both parties to engage in negotiations, which could eventually lead to a lasting peace agreement. Studies also suggest that a comprehensive peace agreement implemented through a peace operation has a better success rate in securing peace than a military victory (Doyle & Sambanis, 2006).

In either case, interveners are more likely to pay close attention to the conditions of the conflict and simultaneously to which parties would better represent the interests of the interveners. If a preferred party is losing the war, it is more likely it will be supported to remove the possibility of its military defeat. Additionally, if negotiations are being pursued, external parties can add extra conditions on the political solutions to be found and therefore make it more difficult to reach an agreement.

Even the sub-set of interventions that occur after the end of intense fighting, especially the ones targeting the implementation of a peace agreement but also following a victory or a de-escalation of the conflict, can be prone to conflict. The adoption of the liberal peacebuilding model by international organisations since the end of the Cold War rests on the claim that liberalization promotes self-sustainable peace. But even these peacekeeping and peacebuilding interventions, promoting a governance model based on market democracy, can have a destabilizing effect if implemented too quickly (Paris, 2002, 2004). Other critics of peacebuilding process consider instead that the failure to reach peace is the consequence of interventions that are not localized – responsible to local conditions –, which do not engage the subject of the intervention in a contract with an understanding of what is viable in the specific context (Richmond, 2010). These conflict prone outcome can be identified even if the neutral interventions are not intended to promote the fighting capacity of the parties or exacerbate the conflict.

Therefore, on the one hand, the assumption is that interventions are not intended to exacerbate the fighting, but on the other hand, an intervention may have unintended consequences or may intentionally bolster one side of the conflict, regardless of its effect on the conditions that would lead to a faster peace.

This paper looks precisely at this tension and proposes that interveners may not be motivated initially to stop the fighting (in this case by lowering intensity). It considers that external interventions in conflict processes refer mainly to the balancing of capabilities between groups (Regan, 2010) connected to the goals or

objectives of interveners and combatants. The interventions can aim to ensure a group's victory or its demise, to enhance the position of the groups in negotiation processes or to reach a stalemate so that negotiations can begin. This may mean an escalation (e.g. through direct military support or imposing unattainable negotiation positions) or de-escalation (e.g. by withholding military support or promoting mediation) of the conflict. This definition departs from Regan (2010) in the sense that it more clearly formulates that interveners promote peace if they can but through conflict if they must.

Effects of external interventions on conflict intensity

The focus of the analysis is the effect of external interventions on conflict intensity. Because of the focus on conflict intensity, the choice of a single case study is appropriate, as variation of intensity can be observed across time. Nevertheless, quantitative studies of conflict have focused more on conflict duration than on conflict intensity. Because of this research scarcity and because conflict duration can be considered a measure of (sustained) intensity, this literature is used as a reference for inference on expected mechanisms.

The classical type of military intervention involves the deployment of military personnel across recognized borders, with other less intrusive actions being the provision of military equipment or aid, provision of technical support or intelligence information or withholding military support. This type of support is considered more conflict prone as it directly increases the fighting capacity of the groups. Comparatively, economic interventions impact more indirectly on the fighting capacity of the parties. Nevertheless, the provision of loans, grants, non-military equipment, expertise or the imposition of economic sanctions can significantly affect the resources and resolve of the conflicting groups. Also, both military and economic interventions can be associated with a de-escalation of conflict, for instance, when neutral military interventions have a mandate to oversee a ceasefire or secure a buffer zone.

Overall, studies identify a positive association between military and economic interventions and conflict duration (Regan 2002a; Elbadawi & Sambanis, 2000). Some research suggests that these results are driven by a subset of cases where external interventions were made by actors pursuing their own agenda, which results in longer conflicts (Cunningham, 2010). The issue of the intentions of the interveners is therefore relevant and is analysed separately ahead.

Regarding conflict intensity, findings on low-intensity conflict confirm previous results that military interventions increase the likelihood of conflict escala-

tion, while economic interventions increase the likelihood of stagnation (Regan & Meachum, 2014).

Furthermore, it is difficult to ascertain whether it is the high intensity that attracts interventions or it is the interventions that cause the high intensity conflict. Studies have identified that bloodier wars attract more interventions (Elbadawi & Sambanis, 2000), which is in contrast to the proposal that interventions are more likely to end conflict in high-intensity conflicts but are less likely to occur (Regan, 2002a).

In one study military interventions have been found to decrease conflict duration when the support is provided to the challenging group (Collier, Hoeffler & Söderbom, 2004).

The majority of findings support the proposition of an association between military interventions and higher conflict intensity, although the causality of the process is less certain. The effect of economic interventions is less pronounced and therefore no hypothesis is formulated.

Hypothesis: Military interventions are associated with, and lead to, higher conflict intensity.

The most frequently used diplomatic intervention is mediation, which occurs with the consent of both parties and is therefore closer to the conflict management intended to de-escalate the conflict (Regan, 2002b). Mediation is defined as initiatives for the settlement of disputes "without resort to physical violence" (Bercovitch, Anagnoson & Wille, 1991, p. 8). This conflict mitigation criterion occurs equally in other interventions. Elbadawi (1999) distinguishes the military and economic types of interventions with what he calls an "external agency" type of intervention, which is defined as a "multilateral and essentially neutral mode of intervention that is aimed at promoting or facilitating peaceful resolution of conflicts" (p. 4).

Results show that diplomacy facilitates the termination of civil war (Regan, Frank & Aydin, 2009) even when used alongside economic or military intervention (Regan & Aydin, 2006). Furthermore, longer wars and those with higher numbers of deaths attract more mediation initiatives (DeRouen, Bercovitch & Pospieszna, 2011). More significantly, diplomacy has a de-escalating effect on low-intensity conflict (Regan & Meachum, 2014).

Considering these results, it can be proposed that there is a positive relationship between diplomatic interventions and conflict de-escalation.

Hypothesis: Diplomatic interventions are associated with, and lead to, decreased conflict intensity.

Finally, interveners' motives can be self-centred; for example, they could be related to territorial acquisition or to regional stability, protection of the intervener's diplomatic, economic or military interests, ideology, specific international politics and superpower rivalry and domestic and organisational politics. The intervener's motives might also be related to cultural affinities with people in the target countries. Interventions can be more solidarist or legalist as in the upholding of human rights, stopping genocide, promoting democracy or the moral commitment of an intervening state (Regan, 1996, 2002a, 2010). In most cases, interveners' motivations are exogenous to the conflict and even UN interventions occur for reasons other than the human catastrophe of conflict (Suhrke & Noble, 1977; Mullenbach, 2005).

Due to the difficulty of identifying motives in interventions it has been proposed that instead the main mechanisms of interests are the political objectives of interveners (Sullivan & Koch, 2009). These can be expressed operationally by the biased or neutral nature and type of interventions but also can be inferred from the context in which interventions occur.

While throughout the Cold War states valued sovereignty and order more than human rights when considering interventions, in the 1990s the case for humanitarian interventions gain adherence, to the extent that military intervention authorized by the United Nations Security Council became an acceptable option in cases of genocide or mass killing. Moreover humanitarian motivations are increasingly used to justify a range of military operations (Bellamy & Wheeler, 2005). This practice would become the norm of the "Responsibility to Protect" which gave the international community a responsibility in securing that states protect the populations from mass atrocities, in last resort by undertaking external military interventions. But, despite these formulations actors are motivated by a complexity of self-centred and altruistic factors. Since the 1990s, interventions have occurred both within and outside the realm of the "Responsibility to Protect", with often disputed humanitarian claims. An investigation of the link of each intervention to its humanitarian objectives is out of the scope of the present work, nevertheless an account of the extent to which the interventions are responsive to local humanitarian conditions is possible. Assuming that the more intense is the fighting the more acute is the humanitarian situation, it is possible to formulate that conflict intensity does not unequivocally attract interventions.

Hypothesis: High conflict intensity does not lead to more external interventions.

These hypotheses will be tested for the Somalia conflict for the period between 1991 and 2010. This period is subdivided into four periods according to patterns of conflict intensity and external interventions. The conflict intensity data is from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program Georeferenced Event Dataset (v1.5) (Melander & Sundberg, 2011) for state-based, non state-based and one-sided violence. The external interventions information is based on a dataset developed by the author based on: Regan *et al*. (2009), Dynamic Analysis of Dispute Management (DADM) and other secondary sources.

Somalia – 1991-2010

In 1991 the regime of Mohamed Siad Barre was overthrown, ending a 22-year military dictatorship. Since this date, central and south Somalia have been in a civil war with the absence of a functioning central government. The country has also been the target of several external interventions[5].

Map 1: Somalia
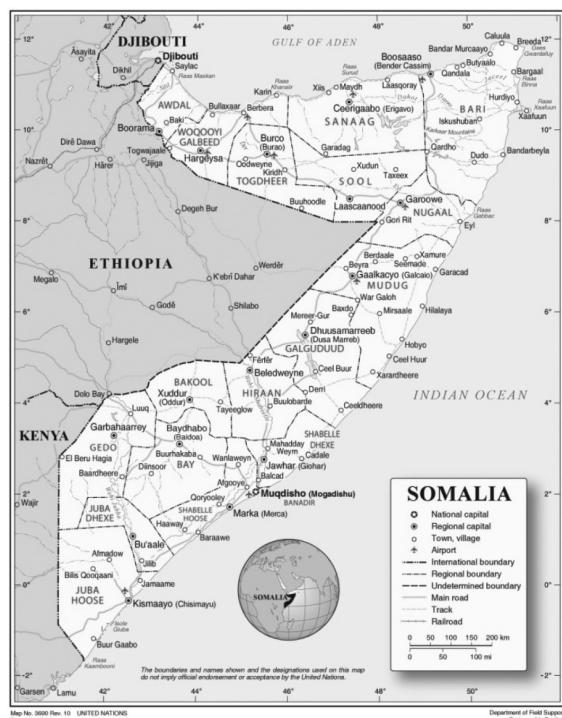
Source: United Nations (UN)

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[5] The analysis focuses on central and south Somalia where most conflict occurred after 1991, and therefore Puntland or Somaliland is referred to only in connection with it.

Map 1 presents the regions of Somalia. Somaliland comprehends the regions of Awdal, Woqooy Galbeed and the western parts of Togdheer, Sanaag and Sool where the eastern parts of these three regions, delimited in the cities of Buhoodle, Garadag and Laasqoray, are disputed areas. Puntland comprehends Bari, Nugaal and the north region of Mudug north of Gaalkacyo. All the area south of Gaalkacyo inn Mudug comprehending also the regions of Galguduud, Hiraan, Shabelle Dhexe, Shabelle Hoose, Banadir, Bay, Bakool, Gedo, Juba Dhexe and Juba Hoose are considered the south-central Somalia (see map 2 ahead for a simplified identification of Puntland, Somaliland, the disputed area and south-central Somalia). Figure 1 presents the timeline of conflict intensity and external interventions[6].

January 1991 to March 1992 – De-escalation of the conflict by international "humanitarian" intervention in the aftermath of the power vacuum left by the toppling of the Barre regime

The overthrow of the Siad Barre regime was marked by open civil war, particularly between 1988 and 1991. Despite the establishment of the interim government of the United Somali Congress (USC) led by Ali Mahdi Mohammed on January 29, 1991, the conflict continued, as identified in Figure 1.

On July 21, 1991 promoted by external actors (Djibouti, Kenya and Egypt), a ceasefire agreement was signed in Djibouti between six political groups without the participation of the Somali National Movement (SNM)[7]. The agreement recognised Ali Mahdi Mohamed, leader of the USC, as head of an interim government, but his leadership was contested within the USC, resulting in a split into his USC/Somali Salvation Alliance (SSA), which had its roots in a more sedentary lifestyle, and the USC/Somali National Alliance (SNA) headed by General Mohamed Farah Aidid, which had its roots in a nomadic lifestyle (Rutherford, 2008). The contest would lead to intense fighting for control of the capital, Mogadishu, in the last quarter of 1991 and in the south of Somalia in January 1992, which claimed more than 4,000 lives in four months (Melander & Sundberg, 2011)[8].

In January 1992 several external actors (the UN, the Arab League, the Islamic Conference, the African Union - AU and Ethiopia) mediated on the conflict, which led to a ceasefire agreement signed on March 3, 1992 with provisions for a transitional governance mechanism and a peace-keeping mission (DADM, 2012). As a result, the conflict de-escalated and crystallised into the separation of Mogadishu along the

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[6] In the narrative only relevant interventions are identified, even if Figure 1 identifies more interventions.

[7] The SNM did not recognize the Mogadishu government, and on May 18, 1991 declared the northwestern Somali regions independent as the republic of Somaliland. Ethiopia supported the SNM.

[8] In the south two rival warlords, General Siad "Morgan" and Colonel Omar Jess, fought for control of the important coastal city of Kismayo (Adebajo, 2011).
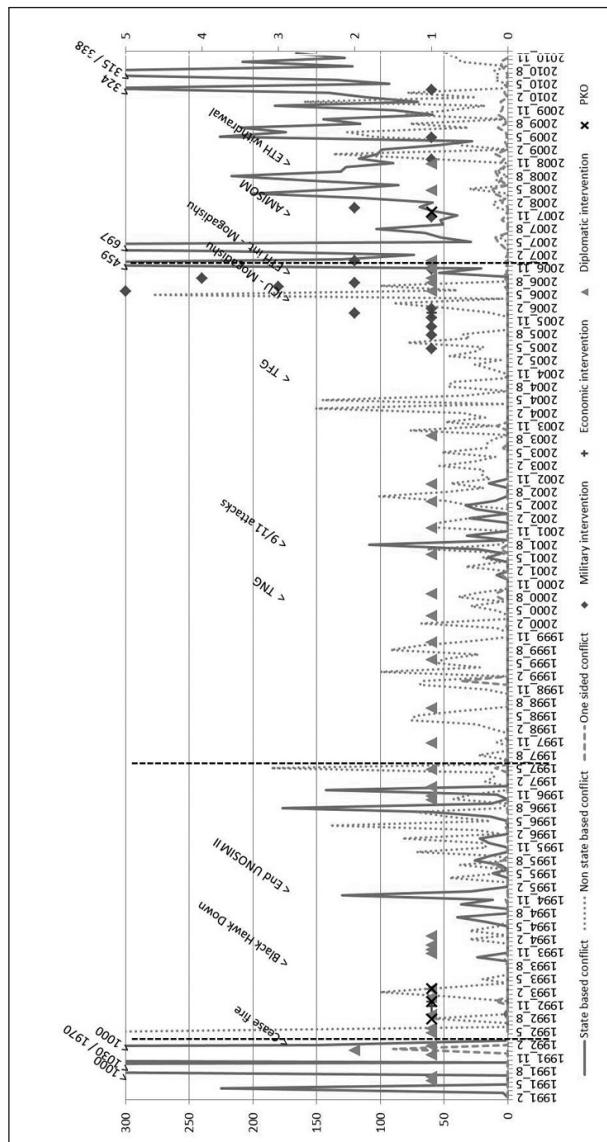
Figure 1: Battle deaths and external interventions in Somalia, 1991-2010

On the left axis are monthly battle-related deaths for state-based and non state-based conflict and monthly deaths for one-sided conflict. Number of interventions on the right axis is identified for the date of initiation. Timeline axes with year start. For months with more than 300 battle deaths, the total number of deaths is reported in a label on top of the chart in the corresponding month. The dashed lines correspond to the delimitation of the periods of analysis. Other text identifies chronologically relevant events. Legend: TNG – Transitional National Government; TFG – Transitional Federal Government; ICU – Mogadishu-Islamic Court Union controls Mogadishu; ETH Int.-Mogadishu – Ethiopian intervention controls Mogadishu. Military, economic and diplomatic interventions and peacekeeping operations (PKO) are external interventions.

Sources: Battle death data from Uppsala Conflict Data Program Georeferenced Event Dataset (v1.5) (Melander & Sundberg, 2011). Military, economic, diplomatic and PKO interventions were identified by the author.

so-called "green line" separating the territory controlled by the USC/SSA and the USC/SNA (Rutherford, 2008).

With the exception of Mogadishu, up to the early 1990s the nature of the conflict in the south was mainly inter-clan, with the Darood (SPM) and Hawiye (USC) opposing each other. This conflict, which was characterised by atrocities and looting, involved fast-moving campaigns in which large slices of land were seized (Menkhaus, 2004).

The lack of authority and the transition of governance during this period are particularly prone to conflict. There was an "end-of-hierarchy" moment (Cramer, 2002) when the fall of the Barre regime opened up a space for various parties to contest authority. The period signalled a transition (Hegre, Ellingsen, Gates & Gleditsch, 2001) from autocracy to what would become an anarchic, decentralized, stateless system in which "contenders struggle to conquer and defend durable resources, without effective regulation by higher authority" (Hirshleifer, 1995, p. 27). The possibility of reaching an agreement that would hold under these conditions came about as a result of a "military stalemate" (Zartman, 2001) and international pressure which offered incentives to the parties to allow humanitarian interventions to take place as well as guaranteeing that there would be no interference in the dynamics of the conflict.

April 1992 to October 1996 – Conflict escalation in General Mohamed Farah Aidid's bid for control and the international community's failure to manage the conflict

In April 1992 the UN approved the United Nations Operation in Somalia I (UNOSOM I), with the primary objective of averting a humanitarian catastrophe, at a time when an estimated 40 percent of humanitarian food was being hijacked by conflicting parties in Somalia. The mission was limited in strength due to the opposition of General Aidid, who reluctantly only accepted a deployment of troops smaller than authorized (Reuters, 1992). Aidid feared that the UN intended to deprive him of the presidency, a suspicion reinforced when a plane with UN markings delivered military equipment to Ali Mahdi Mohammed in north Mogadishu. Also, Aidid distrusted Boutros-Ghali, who was considered a pro-Barre person since his tenure as deputy foreign minister of Egypt (Adebajo, 2011).

Later in the same year, on December 6, the UN authorized a peace enforcement mission (UNSC 794/1992) to support the UNOSOM I. The mission, called UNITAF (United Task Force), was led by the US and had about 37,000 personnel (DADM, 2012) with a mandate to create conditions for effective humanitarian operations

in the southern half of the country, an objective that was ultimately achieved (Rutherford, 2008)[9].

Also in March 1993 and without consulting General Aidid, an expanded UNOSOM II (UNSC 814/1993) was approved (Rutherford, 2008). This time the UNOSOM II had Chapter VII enforcement powers, an authorized force for 1993 of 28,000 personnel and the mission's mandate change from feeding the population to a large nation-building project including the disarmament of militias.

This illustrates the change of policy that occurred during the 1990s from a focus on humanitarian interventions to a focus on conflict resolution and postwar reconstruction (Duffield, 2001), alongside the emergence of the third generation of peacekeeping operations operating with Chapter VII mandates but without a comprehensive acceptance by the conflict parties (Doyle & Sambanis, 2006)[10].

On June 5, 1993, the March Agreement was broken when General Aidid's forces attacked UN troops. This was a frequent occurrence and attacks were also directed at UNITAF troops (Harbom, Högbladh & Wallensteen, 2006).

In an escalation of the confrontations, a UN-mandated manhunt was initiated to capture the faction leader, General Aidid, which led to the Somalis considering the UN was a warring faction. In this process the "Black Hawk Down" incident occurred in the US-led Operation, Gothic Serpent, on October 3, 1993. Eighteen US troops died in that incident and it was estimated that there were 1,000 deaths among General Aidid's military supporters and civilians (Adebajo, 2011). This event marked the end of American involvement not only in Somalia but in humanitarian interventions elsewhere and lead to the termination of the UNOSOM II in March 1995. It was the end of the "assertive multilateralism" (Doyle & Sambanis, 2006) or also called military humanitarianism (Duffield, 1994) initiated in January 1991 with the Gulf War.

General Aidid (USC/SNA) proclaimed himself president on June 15, 1995, and Libya recognized his government on November 6, 1995 (DADM, 2012). But Ali Mahdi Mohamed (USC/SSA) contested it and the country continued to be engaged in conflict (Dow Jones, 1995). From 1995 up to the first half of 1997, intense fighting returned mainly to the cities of the administrative region of Lower Shabelle, including Mogadishu, and in neighbouring administrative regions. Most conflicts involved the USC/SNA fighting the USC/SSA or other parties (Melander & Sundberg, 2011).

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[9] Nevertheless the humanitarian achievements of the intervention have been questioned (Weiss, 1999, pp. 82-87).

[10] First generation peacekeeping are interposition forces deployed after a truce is reached under the banner of impartiality, neutrality and consent. Second generation peacekeeping are the multidimensional operations with the consent of the parties. Fourth generation are the delegated peacekeeping operations (Doyle & Sambanis, 2006).

This period was characterised by a process in which a light humanitarian intervention gradually assumed enforcement powers, to end up being a political mission attempting to remove a warlord (Betts, 1994).

Nevertheless, in spite of the failure to establish peace in the country and the continuation of a stateless conflict, the intervention decreased the intensity of the conflict significantly from early 1992 until the middle of 1996, with the exception of a few periods. Also, the conflict became more localised, briefer and less costly in terms of human lives, and with less damage to property. At the same time, atrocities and looting became less common and warlords became less of a factor vis a vis the relevance of clan conflict (Menkhaus, 2004).

From 1991 onwards centrifugal forces fragmented the clan families, which led to intra-clan rivalries, in the case of Mogadishu with conflict over a single city block (Menkhaus, 2003). Notwithstanding other relevant processes and actors, Menkhaus's (2007) proposition that since the signing of the Djibouti agreement in 1991, the conflict in Somalia could be seen as a contest for control of political and economic power in Mogadishu between two factions of the Hawiye clan (General Aidid and Ali Mahdi's clans) is confirmed in the above analysis of the process and the conflict itself.

November 1996 to May 2005 – Intra/inter clan conflict and ascension of the ICU amidst international disengagement and regional efforts for mediation

In November 1996, in Sodere, Ethiopia, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) initiated mediation initiatives between 26 faction leaders (Dagne, 2010), with follow-up meetings throughout 1997 mediated by Ethiopia.

But this negotiation process collapsed when Egypt convened a meeting of Somali groups in Cairo in December 1997, which led to the Cairo Declaration on Somalia (*ibid.*). The agreement included provisions for a ceasefire and an interim government but was not signed by some parties and would never be implemented (Harbom *et al.*, 2006). This initiative would also lose momentum when another peace conference was convened in Somalia in 1998.

The conflict between February 1998 and February 2000 featured several clashes of lower intensity, mainly in central and south Somalia, involving not only the USC/SNA and the USC/SSA but also a series of other forces. The frequency and intensity of the fighting would only decrease temporarily with the initiation of the Somali Reconciliation Conference in May 2000 (see Figure 1)[11].

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[11] In August 1998, the northeastern Somali region of Puntland declared itself an autonomous state, with Abdullahi Yussuf as its president. Puntland status as an autonomous state was different from the un-recognised self-declared sovereign states of Somaliland.

This peace process was mediated internationally (Arab League, Libya and IGAD) and involved a meeting of 400 delegates in Djibouti (it was boycotted by several powerful warlords as well as the governments of Somaliland and Puntland [Dagne, 2010]). By August participants had agreed to a Transitional National Government (TNG), with a three-year mandate, and a Transitional National Assembly (TNA) that nominated Abdiqassim Salad Hassan as president. The TNG was dominated by the "Mogadishu group", which was backed by the Arab world, was anti-Ethiopian, included Islamists in its alliance, had a vision of a strong central government and was dominated by lineages of the Hawiye clan (Menkhaus, 2007). The new government was promising for a short time when, facilitated by Libya, it was able to sign a reconciliation pact with Hussein Mohamed Farah Aidid of the USC-SNA in September 2000. As a result, the intensity of the conflict decreased for about a year (DADM, 2012)[12].

But the government was being challenged by an alliance of warlords, the Somalia Reconciliation and Restoration Council (SRRC). The SRRC was headed by Abdullahi Yusuf, president of the autonomous state of Puntland. The SRRC was backed by Ethiopia, was anti-Islamic, based mainly outside Mogadishu, federalist and dominated by lineages of the Darood clan (Menkhaus, 2007). In June 2001 Ethiopia made a failed attempt to mediate between the TNG and the SRRC (DADM, 2012), after which there was intense fighting from June to October 2001.

On September 11, 2001 the terrorists attacks in the United States would reconceptualise security concerns worldwide with implications for Somalia. The attacks were linked to an Islamist group, Al-Qaeda, which had struck before in the region on August 7, 1998, when it bombed the United States embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (Dagne, 2010).

In the aftermath of the 1993 "Black Hawk Down" incident the United States (US) ignored Somalia but its policy changed because of its need to fight Al-Qaeda. Initially the US recruited warlords to seize terrorist suspects in the country (Hartley, 2006). A consequence of this policy was a decrease in the power of the transitional government (Hartley, 2005) and in the power of clan structures, reinforcing the power of warlords. Another consequence was that the US support to warlords had a backlash by increasing Somali support for the Islamic alternative of Al-Qaeda and Al-Shabaab, which would grow in the following years (Scahill, 2011). Adding to this strategy by late 2001 the US, the largest player in counterterrorism in Somalia, increase its operations and established a military base in Djibouti, which lead to the seizure of some high profile jihadi leaders in subse-

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[12] Egypt and Sudan expressed diplomatic support for the new government.

quent years (ICG, 2005)[13]. Some accounts suggest that between 2001 and 2014 US undertook between 13 to 19 drone strikes or attacks resulting in between 50 to 165 reported killed (Bureau of Investigative Journalism, 2012).

On October 15, 2002, a two-year negotiation process started in Kenya. It was organized by IGAD and involved the TNG and representatives of 22 Somali factions; some factions and the government of Somaliland did not attend. During this negotiation process some of the conflict in the Bay region (and Puntland) related to previous tensions between the clans and leaders of the administrative region turned violent when criteria had to be used to select participants in this mediation process (Menkhaus, 2004).

The first phase of the process involved the signing of ceasefire agreements, which the parties routinely broke. Despite this, phase two was initiated. It intended to address the root causes of the conflict and focused on how to address issues related to territorial occupation and conquest in southern Somalia (Menkhaus, 2006). But negotiations were fruitless and the mediators decided to move to phase three of a power-sharing agreement (Menkhaus, 2007).

In September 2003 IGAD (with the active involvement of Ethiopia), the AU, the UN and the Arab League, organized a forum where the parties agreed to a Transitional National Charter (TNC), paving the way for a government of national unity, even if some factions were not present at the negotiations. As a result, in August 2004, a 275-member Transitional Parliament was inaugurated in Kenya; it was formed along the principle of a consociational democracy, based on clan families' representation. On October 10, 2004, Abdullahi Yusuf was elected president of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) by an electoral college based on a coalition pact instead of a national unity project. The swearing-in ceremony was attended by 11 heads of government from African countries and representatives from regional organisations and the United Nations (Dagne, 2010). Abdullahi Yusuf was closer to Ethiopia and while in office he followed a policy of imposing a victor's peace on the adversaries – the TNG and the "Mogadishu group" (Menkhaus, 2007).

The creation of the TFG and its policies provoked a reaction in Mogadishu where a militant youth – the Shabaab – developed and began assassinating TFG members and supporters (ICG, 2005). In this context, the United States reinforced the programme of capturing suspected Al-Qaeda members in the country (Bruton, 2010).

Between December 2001 and early 2006 most of the conflict involved several other parties besides the TFG and occurred throughout central and southern

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[13] Besides assault and capture, covert operations can also be of surveillance and reconnaissance.

Somalia, not only in Mogadishu, and spread to villages in the Shabelle and Bay regions. Most of the fighting was intra-clan or intra-faction rivalry, with some inter-clan and inter-factional conflict. There were fewer instances of conflict directly involving the TFG or against civilians (see Figure 1).

This period was characterised by opposing regional interests playing out diplomatic initiatives, which pre-empted any chance of successful agreement. The Somalia conflict becomes a proxy for the regional dispute between countries of the Muslim Arab world, headed by Egypt, and of the Christian Horn of Africa region, headed by Ethiopia. It was a dispute that also extended to the military support provided to the parties throughout the conflict[14]. The rivalry between Egypt and Ethiopia can be attributed to each being a regional power and the competition between both countries over the Nile's water (Dehéz & Gebrewold, 2010), with Somalia constituting a counterweight to Ethiopian control of the Nile (Bradbury, 2008).

The main diplomatic initiatives would not be directly associated to conflict intensity but occurred in the context of years of lower intensity conflict. Only when the balance of capabilities started to shift significantly in favour of the ICU in 2006, did international support for the conflicting parties become military. Despite the intensification of covert operations as a result of the "war on terror", there is no significant increase on the battle deaths in the period.

June 2005 to 2010 – Foreign regional and international intervention and conflict escalation[15]

In the first half of 2006 the conflict dynamics would change significantly with the emergence of the Islamic Court Union (ICU). The ICU was a heterogeneous group of eleven Sharia courts with some radical individuals, namely Sheik Hassan Dahir Aweys, a salafist who used to head the Al-Qaeda-linked Al-Ittihaad al-Islami (AIAI), and Adan Hashi Farah Ayro, a jihadist in charge of the Al-Shaabab militia, who was killed in a US airstrike in May 2008 (Moller, 2009)[16].

The ICU had been established in mid-2005 and its rise to power was due to the growing influence of the courts as a source of law and order, the support of the business community that was interested mainly in public security and the clan-based backlash against international efforts to counter terrorism and state

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[14] See, for instance, Egypt's involvement in 2006 (UN, 2006), the same year of the Ethiopian military intervention.

[15] During this period there were three Somali-led peace processes not identified in the narrative due to their national nature: the Idale peace process (2004-2007), the Jijeele and Gaalje'el peace process (Hiran, 2007) and the Mudug-Galgadud peace process (2005-2007) (Johnson, 2009).

[16] Salafism emerged in the second half of the nineteenth century as a reaction to the spread of European ideas demanding a return to traditional Islamic practices (Kepel, 2002), and jihadism refers to the struggle against those who do not believe in Islam.

building through warlords (Bruton, 2010). The ICU was initially aligned with the "Mogadishu group" but in 2005 a rift developed between both as a result of a regional administration dispute which led to them becoming two distinct interest groups (ICG, 2006). In the months ahead, this would enable the ICU to further capitalize on the population's desire to terminate warlords' power[17] (Hartley, 2005).

In tandem with the rise of the ICU, the United States promoted the establishment of the Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism (ARPCT), which was made public in February 2006. The alliance was constituted by Hawiye clan militia leaders and businessmen and was the main military opponent to ICU growth (Menkhaus, 2007). Despite the fact that US intelligence could not identify by 2005 that there was Al-Qaeda or Al Itihad Al Islamiya bases in the country (Menkhaus, 2005) the active support was justified by the assessment of George W. Bush's administration that the ICU was a de-facto Al-Qaeda-supporting organisation that was on the verge of controlling an African capital (Scahill, 2011).

Between February and June 2006 the ICU's bid to control Mogadishu was opposed by the TFG and the ARPCT, in what is known as the second battle for Mogadishu (Bruton, 2010). Both sides had diverse forms of military and economic support throughout 2005 and 2006, some in breach of the UN arms embargo (UNSC S/2006/229). The support for the TFG came from Ethiopia, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Uganda and the USA, and support for the ICU from Eritrea, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Djibouti, Libya, Syria and Egypt (Regan & Aydin, 2006; DADM, 2012).

By mid-June 2006 the ICU triumphed not only in Mogadishu but in much of the central and southern regions of Somalia. Sudan, Yemen and the Arab League promoted a mediation process in late June 2006 proposing a power-sharing agreement between the ICU and the TFG, but without results. In the negotiations both parties avoided serious concessions; the ICU was convinced of political and military advantage and the TFG was confident of Western backing and fearful of having to lose too much in the negotiations[18] (Bruton, 2010).

There was a series of dynamics of ICU control in the second half of 2006. One dynamic was that for the first time since 1991, Mogadishu was not immersed in the mayhem of warlords' wars; some order and security had been established and some services were reported to have been provided (Scahill, 2011; Hartley, 2006). This was largely the result of an authoritarian ICU, concentrating power by: replacing non-central authorities with the courts; forbidding civil society groups; replacing customary law with sharia law; ending neighbourhood watch patrols;

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[17] In 2005 a short lived civic movement emerged out of the Mogadishu Security and Stabilization Plan (MSSP) against the war-prone political elite in the city (Menkhaus, 2007).

[18] Puntland and Somaliland oppose the ICU.

and marginalizing some traditional elders, civic leaders and business people (Menkhaus, 2006). Another dynamic was that within the traditionally moderate Islamic population of Somalia the ICU had become radicalized. Among the measures taken was a ban on Western cultural expressions, a prohibition of the popular stimulant qat and an increase in taxes on the business community (Bruton, 2010; Hartley, 2006). But a more significant dynamic, especially for the Ethiopian decision to intervene decisively later in 2006, was the ICU's position on calls for jihad against Ethiopia; appeals to the people of Ethiopia to overthrow its government; close links with Eritrea; the provision of logistical support and bases to two armed insurgent groups opposing the Ethiopian Government, which had increased activity in the country; and a revival of the "greater Somalia" project, with territorial claims in all of Somalia's neighbouring countries, but especially to the Ogaden region, over which Ethiopia and Somalia fought between 1977 and 1978 (Menkhaus, 2007)[19]. Moreover, the possibility of a stable Islamic-inspired country emerging in Somalia could be seen as a platform to strengthen the Muslim population of Ethiopia, the biggest group after the orthodox Christians.

Between June and October 2006 Ethiopia unsuccessfully attempted negotiations between the TFG and the UIC (Aimé, 2013). By October Ethiopia declared it was "technically at war" with the ICU, and on December 24, with an overwhelming force of about 20,000 troops fighting alongside the TFG troops, it launched an offensive against the UIC, unseating it from Mogadishu on December 28, 2006 (Menkhaus, 2007)[20]. This changed the dynamic and intensity of the conflict significantly.

Formally, the Ethiopian regime justified the non-authorised intervention in Somalia on the grounds of the right to individual and collective self-defence against a terrorist threat from a regime that could harbour terrorists. It was also argued that the intervention was in response to a request by Abdullahi Yusuf, the TFG leader, for a military force to help the government (Warbrick & Yihdego, 2006). Besides the historical and strategic reasons presented above, as well as the regime's stated motivations, a more immediate motivation was associated with the contested elections of Ethiopia's Zenawi regime in May 2005 and the subsequent crackdown on the opposition with serious human rights violations (US Department of State, 2006). This resulted in strong international criticism, particularly from the United States Congress which discussed in early 2006 the possibility of Ethiopia losing United States aid. By assuming the role of the re-

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[19] The "greater Somalia" project threat is an issue of contention among analysts, but UIC leader Sheik Hassan Dahir Aweys, in an interview on June 22, 2006, claimed Ogaden as a Somalia region (Norland, 2006).

[20] Throughout 2005 and 2006 Ethiopia proposed this mission to be executed through IGAD, but despite the backing of the AU, it failed to get the necessary regional and international support (Sousa, 2013).

gional power fighting the "war on terror" Prime Minister Meles Zenawi assumed an important role, which outweighed concerns over human rights. In the end the Ethiopian regime would continue to receive aid and diplomatic support from the international community, including the United States (Aimé, 2013).

Two specific sources of external support require highlighting. One was the US's unequivocal support for the Ethiopian intervention, even if such support was not necessarily operational (Bruton, 2010; Scahill, 2011). In either case, it is considered that the Ethiopian offensive would have occurred, regardless of the US support and therefore could not be considered per se as a subcontract of the "war on terror" (Menkhaus, 2007). But although Ethiopia intervened regularly in Somalia to weaken Islamist militant groups or strengthen allies (Bradbury, 2008), the scale of the 2006 intervention was unprecedented[21]. Another source of support for the ICU was Eritrea, which supplied equipment and training and eventually 2,000 troops (UN Monitoring Group on Somalia, 2006), although this was disputed. This support was justified solely by the enduring rivalry between Ethiopia and Eritrea, which started with the war they fought between 1998 and 2000.

When forced to retreat in December 2006, the ICU leadership stated that it would resort to guerrilla tactics, pledged alliance to Al-Qaeda (Scahill, 2011), and saw the second top figure in Al-Qaeda, Ayman al-Zawahiri, call for a jihad against Ethiopia and the TFG (Warbrick & Yihdego, 2006). The ICU would disintegrate into different smaller factions, among them the Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia/Union of Islamic Courts (ARS/ICU); the Al-Shabaab, which would join Al-Qaeda in 2012, and the Harakat Ras Kambooni.

The intensity of the conflict from January 2007 onwards increased significantly. This time the conflict was mostly against the TFG and Ethiopian troops; in 2007 mainly by the ARS/ICU and was centred mainly in Mogadishu. The warfare was based on attacks on Ethiopian convoys, military installations, TFG buildings and vital infrastructure, through classical ambushes with AK-47s, mortars and rocket-propelled grenades. Some new tactics included suicide bombings, roadside bombs and targeted assassinations (Menkhaus, 2007).

The insurgency was not exclusively Islamic and brought together different groups in a movement that could better be characterised as a "complex insurgency" of clan militia and warlords. Only from 2008 onwards did the Islamic Al-Shabaab become the main insurgent force in Mogadishu and the rest of Somalia. By the end of 2008 Al-Shabaab had been able to retake most of southern Somalia,

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[21] For instance, the intervention in Puntland in November 2001 was executed with a 1,000-strong contingent (Agence France-Press, 2001).

with its leadership concentrated on the southern coast and in the port city of Kismayo. By January 2010 insurgent groups were still in control of most of south-central Somalia (Dagne, 2010).

The foreign presence in Somalia, especially of Ethiopians and Americans, was the main contributing factor to the high conflict intensity during this period by increasing the capacity of the Al-Shabaab to recruit local and foreign jihadists. The presence of Ethiopian troops in Somalia was seen as an occupation reviving Somalian nationalism. At the same time, it was a source of serious human rights violations that were also perpetrated by the TFG and African Union (Bruton, 2010)[22]. Furthermore, the United States was perceived as a supporter of the Ethiopian troops as it had launched missile attacks against ICU leaders in January 2007 that caused numerous civilian casualties (Menkhaus, 2007).

The replacement of Ethiopian troops was a political and military priority. In order to replace them, the African Union established the African Mission for Somalia (AMISOM) on January 19, 2007. The UN Security Council endorsed the AMISOM on February 21, 2007 with a UN Charter Chapter VII mandate (UN SC 1744) mainly to support the TFG. The mission began deployment of a planned 8,000 troops, but by the end of the year it had only 1,700 troops from Uganda and Burundi. Up to the beginning of 2010 the AMISOM would never reach more than about half of its authorised strength (4,300 troops by April 2009). The failure to attract the commitment of contributing countries was due mainly to the dangerous environment of operations and the lack of stable funding and capabilities (Williams, 2009).

The UN started mediation in May 2008, which led to the signing of the Djibouti Agreement between the TFG and ARS/ICU on August 19, 2008. The agreement stipulated a ceasefire, the withdrawal of Ethiopian forces and the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping force. In January 2009 a faction of the ARS/ICU, the Djibouti branch, merged with the TFG to form a winning coalition in parliament that would elect Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, a moderate sufi and former ICU commander in chief, as president in January 2009 (Bruton, 2010).

Even though it had to rely exclusively on the poorly staffed AMISOM, the withdrawal of Ethiopian troops occurred in January 2009. At the end of the intervention it is estimated that about 6,000 Ethiopian troops were still deployed; therefore, the intervention force totalled around 10,000 troops in 2009 (Aimé, 2013). To compensate for the Ethiopian troop withdrawal, the International Conference on Somalia held in Brussels in April 2009 decided to increase the reimburse-

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[22] For instance, the TFG was involved in indiscriminate shelling of civilian neighbourhoods and withholding food aid in the midst of famine (Menkhaus, 2007).

ment rate of the AMISOM troops from US$550 to US$1028 per soldier per month, which significantly renewed the interest of countries contributing to the mission (Williams, 2009). Over the next years the deployment of troops would increase significantly, reaching 11,000 troops by 2011 and a full revised strength of 17,000 by 2012 (IPSS, 2012).

Map 2: Political map of Somalia

Source: Wiklund (2013)

The intensity of conflict would increase in 2009 and 2010, between Al-Shabaab and the TFG and between Al-Shabaab and the moderate sufi group of Ahlu Sunna Waljamaca, both of which were in Mogadishu and in the centre and south of Somalia. During this period the conflict was the most intense it had been since the overthrow of Barre's regime. At this stage the conflict had a religious configuration connected to clan politics and raged alongside an international force attempting to establish a functioning government.

Since 2010 there have been two additional military interventions, both in late 2011. One was by Ethiopia and another by Kenya, both to help the TFG and the AMISOM defeat Al-Shabaab. Kenya intervened in the south along its border to protect its national interests (it would integrate its forces in the AMISOM in 2012), while Ethiopia intervened from the West (Wiklund, 2013). By 2013 a series of actors had gained control of central and south Somalia: the AMISOM directly controlled Mogadishu, the road to Baidoa and the southern border area with Kenya; the pro-government militia, supported by Ethiopia or directly by Ethiopian troops and local militia, controlled the interior border areas with Ethiopia; Islamist groups controlled the coastal and interior areas of central Somalia and part of the south; and a pro-government administration controlled the northern region bordering Puntland (see Map 2).

More generally, and according to Merkhaus (2007), this period was also a continuation of the Hawiye intra-clan conflict, with the UIC being an Islamic cover for a Hawiye sub-clan (the Haber Gedir Ayr) to fight the equally Hawiye sub-clan of the ARPCT. Nevertheless, the confrontation with the TFG was more of an inter-clan affair as the TFG was of the Darood clan, which was dominated mainly by the Mijerteen sub-clan.

Results

In Somalia a unique combination of factors has determined internal and external actors' conflict behaviour. Internal factors (even if they have external links) are the main divisive elements in inter- and intra-clan conflictive culture, which exists in tandem with warlordism. These actors often engage in opportunistic behaviour, shortsighted politics and zero-sum views, which result in an abundance of spoilers for peace building, state building and central authority projects.

This confluence of internal and external spoiler behaviours exist together with other structural factors such as environmental degradation (drought, erosion, deforestation), poverty, legacies of colonization and Cold War geopolitics, demographic pressures, diaspora or the ethnic composition of the country. A divisive

issue in the country is the control of resources (Dias, 2013), either renewable re-sources, mainly land and water, or control of the state and economy, particularly of the livestock trade, which is associated with the pastoralist culture.

The effects of military interventions on conflict intensity depend on the nature of the conflict and the objectives of the intervention. Two main overarching peri-ods can be identified in Somalia. During the first, from 1991 to 2006, the conflict was mainly of an inter- and intra-clan nature of lower intensity and with regional links; the second period occurred after 2006 when the conflict assumed a higher intensity because of its religious Islamic nature and associations people ascribed to it with the "global war on terror" (Hoehne, 2009).

Within this context the case study shows that neutral military interventions have the capacity to decrease conflict intensity, and they normally happen after a peace agreement is established. Partisan military interventions, intended to in-crease the capacity of one side, lead to an escalation of the conflict if both sides are being supported. The early 1990s interventions by the US and UN occurred in the context of a relative stalemate in the conflict and had humanitarian objectives; therefore, they left the political-military balance in the field untouched. Such mis-sions were able to decrease conflict intensity. When the mission's mandate was changed in 1992 with potential effects on the balance of the parties' capabilities, it faced violent resistance and the intervener decided to withdraw.

The military intervention initiated in 2006 to support the TFG (which involved Ethiopia, Kenya and the AMISOM) aimed to alter the balance of capabilities in favour of the TFG. This support was counterbalanced by support for the Islamic groups (especially from Eritrea) and anti-intervention feelings from Somalis. The result was that no party was able to acquire an overwhelming capacity to defeat its opponents.

Diplomatic interventions, which are neutral, have been associated with lower conflict intensity, but have no causal effect if they are partisan. Neutral media-tions throughout the conflict period have led to periods of decreased conflict intensity, although never full peace, due to the number of spoilers. Such was the case in the early 1990s and 1997. But if the mediations are partisan, in support of one side or another, they have no impact on conflict intensity, regardless of achieving peace agreements, such as between 1998 and 2003.

Contrary to expectations, there are three situations in which diplomatic inter-ventions may lead to higher conflict intensity. The first is in determining which parties are entitled to be at the negotiation table. This had at least two mani-festations: one in 1993 when clans were favoured for negotiations in detriment of civic and traditional authority, therefore setting incentives for eligibility on

the side of militias. The other manifestation was in 2004 when parties competed for eligibility for admission to the negotiation table. A second situation refers to when an agreement is reached but is not all-inclusive and leaves out parties who then engage in high-intensity fighting to signal their relevance. Such was the case in 1991, when the agreement was rendered void. A third situation is when negotiations fail and the parties become committed to a military solution, having exhausted a political process, as happened in 2006.

High-intensity conflict attracts more neutral interventions, such as military interventions with a humanitarian objective and diplomatic interventions, as in the early post-Cold War era. But in the post-September 11 "global war on terror" higher intensity conflict with radical Islamic groups acquiring power led to partisan military interventions in support of the internationally recognised government. Diplomatic initiatives are associated with both higher and lower conflict intensity periods.

Conclusion

This study focuses on national peace processes but recognizes this as a limitation. Lowering the level of analysis to the micro level of regions' or villages' initiatives could enhance the explanatory power of interventions in conflict, especially regarding the effect of diplomatic initiatives not supported by external actors or the relevance of which peace plans are being discussed and how appropriate they are for dealing with the challenges Somalia faces (Bradbury, 2008).

The assumption that external interventions are mainly peace promoting can be traced back to the late 1990s when a framework was developed to protect people in the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide – the responsibility to protect. In this paper interventions are to be justified not only when civilian populations are targeted, but also more broadly when conflict intensity has increased significantly. Military, economic and diplomatic interventions are tools actors use to influence the outcomes of conflict. Different types of interventions affect conflict intensity differently, and different objectives of the same type of intervention have different results. Partisan military interventions escalate conflict while neutral interventions have no significant effect. Partisan diplomatic interventions that support both sides have no effect on conflict intensity, but if they are neutral, they can be associated with lower conflict intensity. The motivations of the actors did not seem to be directly linked to conflict intensity, specifically after the middle of the 1990s. Overall, the assumption that interventions promote peace is rejected. Instead, the peace objective may compete with other objectives in a constellation of external and internal actors' motivations and initiatives.

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