

## **From Celebration of Independence to Disintegration: The Somaliland Experience in the Post- Failed Union with Somalia**

*Mohamed Ahmed Barawani (Ph.D)*

### **ABSTRACT**

*The state-making of Somaliland has been borne out of the experiences gained from the aborted union between the British Protectorate of Somaliland and Italian Somalia. The driving aim behind the proclamation of statehood was to reinstate Somaliland's sovereignty and independence that was lost in 1960. Somalilanders were galvanized by the euphoria of Somali nationalism in the pursuit of the greater Somali Republic in the Horn of Africa that all five Somali territories unite into one nation-state. Their zeal merely earned them destruction. Such destruction includes the tyranny and genocide which was inflicted upon the land and people for over the thirty years whilst the failed union lasted. Therefore, this article re-examines historical mistakes in the post-colonial period and the negative consequences of the union of thirty years with Somalia. It explores Somaliland's experiences of this failed merger, and Somaliland's achievements and challenges over the past thirty years since Somaliland regained its sovereignty. The article compares and contrasts how Somaliland fared during each of the thirty-year periods. The article also analyses the challenges posed by the non-recognition on political grounds that prevented Somaliland to attain its sovereign rights. Despite the critical and difficult conditions that confronted the state-making process of Somaliland, the interplay between state and non-state actors had become the means and methods to create durable peace and political stability which prevented vengeful acts, anarchy, and political turmoil in Somaliland. The historical backdrop of the unsuccessful merger, too, has become a salient factor and thriving agenda for Somaliland to prove its internal sovereignty, statehood, and a workable political system based on multiparty, competitive elections, and a check and balance of the state organs. The Republic of Somaliland has likewise become a potent regional and international player for the fate of peace, security, and regional economic integration.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Somaliland was formed and came to being between 1884–1887 through a series of international treaties between Somali clans' traditional elders and the British Government. These treaties defined the borders of Somaliland and its size of land and sea. The country's boundaries were amply defined by, respectively, the Anglo-French Treaty of 1888, Anglo- Italian Protocol of 1894, and the Anglo-Ethiopian treaty of 1897. The Djibouti–Somaliland boundary was established by the Anglo-French agreement of February 2–9, 1888.<sup>1</sup>

These treaties delineated the Somaliland international boundaries with its neighboring countries. The Republic of Somaliland is bounded by the Gulf of Aden - Red Sea – to the north; Somalia to

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<sup>1</sup> G.T.M. (1937). Anglo-Ethiopian (Somaliland) Boundary Commission, 1932-5, *Empire Survey Review*, Volume 4, Issue 26, pp. 225–230.

the east; the Federal Republic of Ethiopia to the south and the west; and the Republic of Djibouti to the northwest. Somaliland is positioned along the Gulf of Aden near the entrance to the Bab al-Mandeb, a major sea lane through which almost one-third of the world's shipping passes.<sup>2</sup> Somaliland is an area slightly larger than England and Wales combined. It is about the size of Uruguay (177,125 sq. Km) which ranks 89<sup>th</sup> in a list of 195 world nations. Somaliland is 110,000 Square Miles or 177,000 square km.<sup>3</sup>

However, despite Somaliland having fulfilled all standards of the international law of statehood, nonetheless, the people of Somaliland opted for, and were more determined to seek the unity of, the Somali people in this region of the Horn of Africa. During these long decades under the colonial system, Somalilanders had ambition for unifying with all Somalis in the Horn of Africa. The decision to form a union was reached at a conference of British Somaliland and Italian Somalia leaders held in Mogadishu between April 16 and 22 1960.<sup>4</sup>

Although, there were some prior talks as Contini stated between Somaliland and Somalia leaders on the premise of the union preparation, however, this had been poorly performed considering the foundation of this union. Somaliland and Somalia entered into a "Union" in July 1960, based on a shared ambition among the Somalis to build a "Greater Somalia", which was to unite all the Somali regions in the Horn of Africa under the blue with a white five-pointed star of Somalia's flag. Over time, the Union malfunctioned.<sup>5</sup> On June 26, 1960, the British Protectorate of Somaliland became an independent State of Somaliland, and then Somaliland joined with neighboring Somalia, a United Nations Trust Territory under the Italian Administration, which achieved independence on July 1, 1960. Together, they formed a unitary State called the Somali Republic.<sup>6</sup>

Moreover, many scholars most notably Paolo Contini (1969), Saadia Touval (1963), Mary Jane Fox (2015), I.M. Lewis (1965) contend that the union was not sufficiently given attention for its arrangements and that it took place too rapidly. Another complicating factor was that nobody had any official responsibility for laying the legal foundation for the union. The tasks of the United Nations and the Italian Government in Somalia and the British Government in Somaliland were confined to prepare respective territories for independence and completing the transfer of power on the appointed dates.<sup>7</sup> It is interesting to note that the process of preparation for statehood in Somalia was dissimilar to Somaliland in that it was accelerated.<sup>8</sup> Their task was formidable. Somali leaders only had a few months to fashion the agreement, yet they were fully engaged in

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<sup>2</sup> Manson, Katrina (2016). *Jostling for Djibouti*. Available at <https://www.ft.com/content/8c33eefc-f6c1-11e5-803c-d27c7117d132>. Accessed May 2021.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid 1.

<sup>4</sup> Saadia Touval (1963). *Somali Nationalism: International Politics and the Drive for Unity in the Horn of Africa*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

<sup>5</sup> African Union (2005). *African Union Fact-finding Mission Report*. Available at <https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/PDFFiles/au-fact-finding-mission-to-somaliland-30-april-to-4-may-2005.pdf>. Accessed May 2021.

<sup>6</sup> Contini, Paolo (1969). *The Somali Republic: An Experiment in Legal Integration*. London: Frank Cass and Co.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid 4.

<sup>8</sup> Fox, Mary-Jane (2015). *The Roots of Somali Political Culture*. Boulder, Colorado: First Forum Press.

working out the transfer of authority from the British and the Italians in their own territories. To further complicate matters, no individual or body had any official responsibility for laying the foundation of the union.<sup>9</sup>

In the meantime, Touval has also further elaborated the disparity of the two countries' systems which can be the trajectory of the failure of both sides to maintain an effective and binding union. The unification of British Somaliland and the Trust Territory of Somalia created problems—economic, political, and administrative. These problems arose despite the underlying conditions in the two territories favoring unification, that is, the common language, culture, and religion, and the almost unanimous support for unification among the articulate persons of the two territories.<sup>10</sup> This emerging voluntary union aborted as a number of scholars testified that the integration between both sides was not appropriately framed and this has instigated the refraction of the union agenda and the overall process instantly raised the dissonance between the two sides.

In this context, Somaliland and Somalia politicians are in agreement that the union took place on an occasion of excitement and commitment that Somalilanders had made for this merger to happen. Jubilation and ideology of the Somali irredentism magnified the political atmosphere without examining the equation of the power, and this was not satisfactorily engrained in this course of the union. Both the unity and the independence of the two territories were celebrated with high emotions and national pride. The first Somali nation-state was born.<sup>11</sup> The enthusiasm for unity was such that territories with two distinct traditions of colonial administration, historical development, official languages, and no commercial ties agreed to unite without any serious negotiations on important political and economic issues, beyond a division of cabinet seats<sup>12</sup> which was not implemented equitably either.

Furthermore, the advent of the merger of both countries was elusive and improvised. And certainly, it was unfortunate that there was not more official contact and co-operation between the British and Italian authorities in the two neighboring territories before their independence and unification.<sup>13</sup> However, Somalilanders did not get what they were expecting to attain from the unification of the two countries but this had become a contrary situation. The failure to negotiate any preconditions and to foresee the potential conflict of interest would in time come to haunt Somaliland<sup>14</sup>. The unification sharpened regional cleavage between Somaliland and Somalia, reflecting the difference between colonial legacies and cultural distinctions, for example between the Rahanweyn society in Somalia on one hand, and the Hawiye, Darod, Isaq, and other major

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Dualeh, Hussein A. (2002). *Search for a New Somali Identity*. Printed in the Republic of Kenya.

<sup>11</sup> Sheikh Hassan, Mohamed-Rashid (2015). *Somali History – 1960-1991: Islam, the Clan and the State in the Somali Context*. Hargeisa: Sagaljet Publications.

<sup>12</sup> Africa Watch (1990). *A Government at War with Its Own People: Testimonies about the Killings and the Conflict in the North*. London: Africa Watch.

<sup>13</sup> Lewis, I. M. (2002). *A Modern History of the Somali: Revised, Updated, and Expanded*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition. United Kingdom: Long House Publishing.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

clans on the other hand scattered throughout the Somali state (Somaliland and Somalia combined).<sup>15</sup>

The former Somaliland Minister of Finance, who was also among the young Somalilanders who made the coup in 1961, told to the researcher that he met the first President of the Somali Republic, Adam Abdulla Osman, in Nairobi in January 1968 when he was the Somali Republic Ambassador to Kenya, during the aftermath of when Osman was defeated in the election with Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke in 1967. President Osman admitted the failure of the union of Somaliland and Somalia in relation to both the legal and political reconfiguration, and Osman added that the political grievances from the Somaliland people in the course of the union's poorly performance would be the future underlying cause of destruction and the disintegration of the Somali Republic.<sup>16</sup> Dualeh insisted what prompted the failure of the trial union was how Somalia politicians were neither conscious nor farsighted about the struggles faced by Somalilanders in the union.

Hence, if we look at the destructive consequences that this unsuccessful union brought to this context; the Africa Watch Report (1990) "A Government at War with its Own People" exposed the horrific and disastrous situation that the people from Somaliland encountered, in which gross human rights violations were constantly witnessed both by local level and international human right organizations. It is difficult to overstate the Somali government's brutality towards its own people or to measure the impact of its murderous policies. Two decades of the presidency of President Siad Barre have resulted in human rights violations on an unprecedented scale which have devastated the country.<sup>17</sup>

This Africa Watch report discloses how Barre's regime instantly transformed all policies and legal frameworks into instruments and behaviors hostile to international civil and political rights after the overthrow on October 21, 1969. Strict controls prohibited independent political activity and ensured that there were no legal avenues for the expression of dissent. These laws have been supplemented by a broad range of extra-legal forms of repression, implemented by such groups as the "Victory Pioneers".<sup>18</sup> Indeed, there were several groups of instruments that the regime used as the report indicated to oppress the people, these included the group of Victory Pioneers (Gul Wadayaal), National Security Services, the National Committee for the Eradication of Corrupt Practices in the Public, Military Court, and even Militia groups created by the regime. All such entities embodied the suppression and tyrannical actions against the people of Somaliland as regularized actions.

Africa Watch's estimated that the number of people killed by government forces, shot point-blank or killed as a result of aerial bombardment and artillery shelling, and war-related wounds,

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<sup>15</sup> Mukhtar, Mohammed H. (1997). *"Somalia: Between Self-Determination and Chaos"*. In: Mending Rips in the Sky: Options for Somali Communities in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Lawrenceville, New Jersey: The Red Sea Press.

<sup>16</sup> Interview with Ambassador Hussein Ali Dualeh, Hargeisa, Somaliland, 2021.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

were in the vicinity of 50,000–60,000.<sup>19</sup> The resistance to the dictatorship was largely fueled by this inimical, untenable background in more ways than one. The terror unleashed by the regime, the abolition of the national representative institutions, and the transformation of the remaining state bodies into an instrument of oppression and spying left the extended family and the related clan network the only relatively safe haven.<sup>20</sup> Eventually, the article wants to further explore the motives behind the search for unification between Somaliland and Somalia, the shortcomings of this political ambition of the union, the negative consequences of this hasty union, and Somaliland experiences a post failed union with Somalia.

#### MERGING WITH SOMALIA ON THE DAWN OF INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATION AND THE CATASTROPHIC SITUATION

Somaliland and Somalia did not succeed to maintain a political system that can accommodate and integrate the divergence of systems and representations that parties exhibited for the interest and hope of forming a greater Somali Republic in the Horn of Africa. Somaliland people anted up high stakes hoping that all five Somali territories will unite under one state – the Greater Somali Republic. The upshot was the frustration of Somali unity, with Djibouti, eventually, opting for its separate statehood and the borders with Ethiopia and Kenya remaining intact as left by the colonial powers. The marriage between the two original parts became unworkable.<sup>21</sup>

The disaffection of the political system immediately flawed the merger, the celebrations, and excitement of the independence turned into a catastrophic situation and tyranny. As the Somali state disintegrated in the 1980s and finally collapsed in 1991, the resulting situation produced not an only staggering human tragedy but also the need for a revised political theory.<sup>22</sup> Underlying the collapse of the state and end of the union was the collapse of a dream that bound people together and encouraged them to look forward to a future of fraternity and freedom.<sup>23</sup>

Moreover, the situation of the reconnoitered unification turned more impulsive and inspired Somalilanders to abrogate the voluntary merger in a ferocious manner opposing vicious cycles forcing through a flawed political dream. Somalia took power-sharing or the serious formation of the Somali Republic out of the equation. Instead to try to legitimize an ‘Act of Union’, it drafted and voted through an assembly it dominated 3:1 in order to keep Somaliland within a system that turned it into an underdog with no influence over events including government formation, power, and resource sharing.

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<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Samater, Ibrahim M. (1997). “*Light at the End of the Tunnel: Some Reflection on the Struggle of the Somali National Movement*”. In: *Mending Rips in the Sky: Options for Somali Communities in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Lawrenceville, New Jersey: The Red Sea Press.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>22</sup> Adam, Hussein M. (1997). “*Hobbes, Lock, Burke, Ibn Khaldun and Reflections on the Catastrophe in Somalia*”. In: *Mending Rips in the Sky: Options for Somali Communities in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Lawrenceville, New Jersey: The Red Sea Press.

<sup>23</sup> Bulhan, Hussein A. (2008). *Politics of Cain: One Hundred Years of Crises in Somali Politics and Society*, 1<sup>st</sup> edition. Bethesda, MD, USA: Tayosan International Publishing.

The attempted coup that some Somaliland military officers carried out in 1961, a year later of this aborted union, was one of the reactions indicating contrary to what is so-called voluntary union and all the dreams that lead to it were already dead – a thing of the past. An interview with Dualeh by the researcher in Hargeisa further exposes how the scale of disappointment was on the Somaliland side immediately after 1 July 1960. He explained the objective of the coup in 1961. “We aimed to bring back Somaliland on 26 June 1960 and the political independence inherited from Britain and it was also a clear reaction from the feelings of the people we as military officers represented. Regretted how our sovereignty was lost and how our brothers and sisters in Somalia were ignoring with all top positions of government, and power-sharing”.<sup>24</sup>

The union of Somaliland and Somalia law incorporating the proposed Act of Union previously sent to Mogadishu was not implemented or even discussed. Section 1(a) stated that ‘The state of Somaliland and the state of Somalia do hereby unite and shall forever remain united in a new, independent, democratic, unitary republic the thereof shall be the Somali Republic,’<sup>25</sup> given that pre-conditions were implemented as envisaged. Contini described that the ‘Act of Union’ drafted and submitted by Somaliland Parliament to Somalia underlined a lot of important issues for the benefit of the union these included power-sharing, the structure and mandate of the state branches, ‘citizenship’ and other provisions addressing some fundamental issues of the union but the Somalia parliament overlooked it.

According to Paolo Contini’s legal analysis, Somaliland and Somalia did not legitimize the union that sought to maintain the rest of Somali-speaking territories. Indeed, this bid of the union lacked mutual consent of political and legal aspects and this has undermined the two countries’ merger through moral and legal grounds. This, understandably, has become a driving, valid point of argument for Somalilanders to point out that the union between two sides aborted at the onset of its preliminary stages. There were two different judicial systems, different currencies, different organizations, and conditions of service for the army, the police, and the civil service, as well as different training, outlook, and working habits between the Somalia and Somaliland states.<sup>26</sup>

The divergences between Somaliland and Somalia have had its implications that prevented the proper union to happen and Somaliland politicians argue that despite the limited time framework, Somaliland was prepared to enter a union that legally safeguarded its validity and legitimacy while the Act of Union has comprehensively outlined the overall course of the merger. Nevertheless, Somaliland people sacrificed their sovereignty and independence in the pursuit of forming a ‘greater Somali state that unifies all Somalis. This irredentist nation in the mind was symbolized by a light blue flag at the center of which was a white five-point star, each point of the star representing each of the five Somali territories that the colonial rulers had partitioned.’<sup>27</sup> Now this ‘white five-point star’ is black in the Somaliland flag which portrays dismembering or revoking the Somalia flag.

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 23.

Likewise, it seems indisputable and has a clear indication that Somaliland politicians were honest and committed to the union to be materialized but on the Somalia politicians' side, it was reversed, and they could not hide their deception to obscure the political momentum. Case in point, the late President of Somaliland Mohamed H. Ibrahim Egal shared history with the people of Somaliland on what happened to him and other Somaliland politicians. He said: "One day while passing by the parliament we heard a commotion and a flurry of activity at the entrance of the parliament.

When we investigated, we were told that the house was voting for an 'Act of Union'. A copy was given to us. It was only of 2 articles: the two states and the two parliaments are joined. The 23-article 'Act of Union' we drafted and submitted to Mogadishu was thrown out to the winds.<sup>28</sup> Imagine, we are the leaders who took Somaliland to Mogadishu not being told of such an act. Imagine out of consternation when we realized there was no way we could reverse a prepared Somalia House shouting their approval as if the issue was theirs and theirs alone. Somaliland politicians were neither consulted nor allowed to stop the proceedings: outnumbered and outvoted.

There are clear and sufficient indications that Somalia politicians were not willing to accommodate Somaliland's desire for unity or pan-Somali ideology of the greater Somali state. When the Somaliland representatives entered the parliament, they found neither apology nor explanation. On the contrary, Somalia's ruling elite changed tactics to keep them in the dark – they used to continue their discussion in the Italian language, a language Somaliland representatives neither spoke nor understood.<sup>29</sup>

Bulhan further elaborated on the scale of dishonesty and how Somalia's politicians distorted the agenda of the union. First, this parliamentary session was held on a holiday. Second, the members of the Somaliland parliament were not informed as Egal demystified. Third, the agenda of the session was the Act of Union and changing the language of the parliamentary sessions from Somali into the 'Italian language' and without prior consultation with Somalilanders in any form or manner.

Somalilanders were sincere that the two parts come together in the search of the rest of Somalis. Nonetheless, Egal and other Somaliland leaders did not wind the clock back and reclaim the independence they hastily gave up for the dream of Pan-Somali unity. Caught in the euphoria for independence and unity, neither they nor the people they represented knew then that this first denial of equality and reciprocity was a harbinger of worse things to come. Yet, for the sake of preserving Somali unity, they ignored this incident at the parliament the same way they did other blatant shows of disregard to them.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Retrieved from a public speech addressed by the Somaliland President at the Somaliland Parliament in 18 December 1997. Available at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_A2qn7uMTT0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_A2qn7uMTT0). Accessed May 2021.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

Although, Somalilanders were utmost of Somali nationalist course against the European colonizers and the expansionism of Abyssinia (currently Ethiopia), however, the people of Somaliland under the British Government felt that Great Britain made a deception and lied to the people of Somaliland when the British Government handed over Hawd and Reserve area to Ethiopia. In 1954 the Anglo-Ethiopian Agreement was concluded under which one-third of the territory of Somaliland was ceded to Ethiopia. When the agreement was announced in the country in January 1955, the Somali people took the news very badly. Demonstrations were organized throughout the territory, and elite nationalist parties gained public following and support that they had previously lacked.<sup>31</sup> The vigorous political energy and determination which surrounded the Somali unification objective represented a permanent threat in the eyes of neighbouring countries<sup>32</sup> and this has caused destructive and catastrophic situations.

As the literature reveals, the Somaliland traditional elders and the British Government entered agreements and treaties of protection and safeguarding the territory of Somaliland but this step to relinquish the Hawd and Reserve area to Ethiopia was enflamed Somalilanders cross. By 1885, the British had won the race to the Somali country and had signed various treaties with Somali elders in which they agreed never to cede, sell, mortgage, or otherwise give for occupation - save to the British Government - any portion of the territory presently inhabited by them, or being under their control.<sup>33</sup> In February 1956, Michael Mariano, one of the foremost nationalist leaders at the time, said in a broadcast over the Hargeisa Radio that what the Somalis of the Protectorate had regarded as a “great calamity” might in the long run, because of the great political awakening it had caused, be their “greatest blessing”.<sup>34</sup>

## THE OUTCOME OF THE ATTEMPTED UNION

Since the founding principles of the union failed to attain both legitimacy as well as other means of political accord, this has resulted in growing dismay toward how the merger has been performed in a way that mismatched and contradicted the vision and dream of the people of Somaliland. Therefore, the consequences of the failed unification can be divided into four critical areas: Firstly, the Pan-Somali unity dream of the greater Somali state was terminated and become unattainable at the onset. Amalgamating the Somali people was both an ideological and political aspiration, preventing Ethiopia’s expansionism and countering its growing hegemony in the region was among underlying principles to unify all Somalis in the Horn of Africa. Nonetheless, today, this ideology is no longer receptive to many Somalis including Somalilanders who were once a proponent of this ideology of the greater Somali nation-state because the first attempt of two countries – Somaliland and Somalia had become fruitless.

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<sup>31</sup> Mohamed, Jama (2002). Imperial Policies and Nationalism in the Decolonization of Somaliland, 1954-1960, *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 117 (474), pp. 1177–1203.

<sup>32</sup> Zoppi, Marco (2015). Greater Somalia, the never-ending dream? Contested Somali borders: the power of tradition vs. the tradition of power, *Journal of African History, Politics and Society*, Vol. 1 (1), pp. 43–64.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 31.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 4.



After a month of the voluntary union, Somalilanders demonstrated their public regrets and disobedience. During a visit by Prime Minister Abdirashiid Ali Sharmarke to Somaliland in August 1960, Abdilahi Sultan Tima Adde, the foremost pan-Somali nationalist poet, expressed dismay at how the Somalia leadership ignored the disparity of power between Somaliland and Somalia. He cited a poem portraying the government's disregard of Somaliland (symbolized by its main port Berbera) while Somalia (represented by Xamar, i.e. Mogadishu) enjoyed the seat of the government, including a thriving port.<sup>35</sup>

The second point to note is that Somaliland people got disappointed in how the situation of the union went wrong and impaired the overarching goal of the merger, lack of proper integration legally and politically, and the absence of power-sharing. Socio-political and economic alienation were experienced, and this has degenerated the overall conditions that the Somaliland people beefed for many years for their efforts to unite the Somalis. Many mistakenly think that the breakup of the union was borne on 18 May 1991, not realizing that the process of drifting away and regrets had started soon after the union in 1960. On the contrary, Somaliland's reclamation of independence on 18 May 1991 was the culmination of a process of drift and rift that started soon after independence.<sup>36</sup>

In this political context, there were economic sanctions and extra measures imposed on the Somaliland business communities, restraining their own-generated development. Somaliland people and their regions remained underdeveloped with limited access to education with not even a single university. The situation turned into peripheral and severe conditions. The Siad Barre regime prohibited Somalilanders to build luxury houses or buy luxury cars as well. And, thirdly, and the most horrible experience is the level of oppression, murder and destruction that was openly perpetrated.

Civilians continued to suffer human rights violations as arbitrary arrest, detention, capital punishment, killing, torturing, raping, looting, and the use of all forms of repression and subjugation, suffocating the life out ordinary people daily. This has resulted in clan cleansing and gross human rights violations. Genocidal acts evidenced by mass graves that dry rivers uncover are in the testimony of and proof of how such crimes against humanity took place inside the regions of Somaliland. The legacy of the abortive union and the resulting civil war left behind a trail of physical destruction and social dislocation, all of which require more resources in order for the population to recover and enjoy better conditions of life.<sup>37</sup>

The Africa Watch Report of 1990 further illustrated that thousands of people fled from the main cities of Hargeisa, Burao, Berbera, and others, reached Ethiopia settling in refugee camps. Africa Watch estimated that more than 400, 000 people fled to Ethiopia. Other reports also pointed out that around 800,000 thousand fled either to Ethiopia or countries far beyond the boundaries of the Horn of Africa, including other African countries as well as European and North American countries such as Canada and the United States of America.

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 5.

Fourthly, people suffered in varying forms and degrees the ravages of the intractable conflict, social disintegration, the harsh conditions, humanitarian crisis, and difficult, debilitating circumstances experienced. The situation was becoming imprudent and intolerable from time to time where many innocent people lost both their lives and property. Three decades of unaccountable decision-making alienated Somalis from the formal government process. Beneath its surface unity, a ferocious competition was unleashed for spoils in Somaliland regions that spawned nepotism and clannishness.<sup>38</sup> It reached a stage – in the late 1980s where private in the army would pay bribes to his superior officers to be transferred to Somaliland areas.

#### THE SOMALILAND EXPERIENCE IN THE POST-FAILED UNION AND COLLAPSE OF THE SOMALI REPUBLIC

Somaliland has acquired plenty of experiences and learned lessons both in the history of the failed union, and the aftermath of the attempted unification that ultimately resulted in the whole Somali Republic's breakdown. One of the important experiences that currently reshaped Somaliland peace and political stability is how the notion of seeking a greater Somali state in the Horn of Africa has become a devastative and deceptive notion.

Therefore, seven main surrounding facts constrained the slogan of the greater Somali state in the pursuit of Somaliland experiences to revoke the utopian notion of the union: Somaliland and Somalia tried to materialize this ideal view of the union did not succeed as Somalia obstructed proper authentication of the union. The Somali irredentism or Pan-Somali nationalism instigated a lot of inter-state deadly conflicts in the region as the war between Somalis and Ethiopians in 1964 and 1977, and the Somalis and Kenyan conflict of NFD in 1964.

The pride and Somali nationalism ended up tyrannical to devastation and the disadvantaged Somaliland people had become the first victims in the Somali irredentism ideology. Somalia's stateless and lawless conditions over the latter 30 years embedded such historical matters that Somali irredentism has left behind. The Somaliland state-building process, peace-building, and socio-political reconciliations entrenched a blatant sadness history in the past and it is for this context that Somaliland has become a pioneer of peace and a democratic state. The recollection of such terrifying history in the past as political negative ramifications of the union with Somalia has steadfastly stimulated decisiveness building the foundations of peace and political stability of Somaliland leading to the reinstatement of its sovereignty in 1991.

Somaliland's political system has predicated possession of the locals and comparative experiences in the past. Most of the people here in Somaliland believe that 'enough is enough' in that their efforts to form a Somali nation-state ended up in the parochial hands of Somalia political leaders whose political philosophy never adequately embraced or envisioned the Pan-Somali nationalism. Somalilanders argue that first and foremost, Somalia's politicians were responsible for the demise of the union from 1960 and onwards. The last 30 years of lawlessness

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<sup>38</sup> Geshekte, Charles (1997). *"The Death of Somalia historical Perspective"*. In: Mending Rips in the Sky: Options for Somali Communities in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Lawrenceville, New Jersey: The Red Sea Press.

and anarchism testify to how profound the political division in Somalia is and how Somalia lacks a political culture that can be used to rescue the country when such disorder occurs.

Notwithstanding, there is the belief and realization that Somaliland has every right to retrieve its sovereignty and political independence which was misplaced in 1960. The political narrative of Somaliland is notably rooted in the experiences and lessons learned from the Somali Republic's political failures. The Somali National Movement (SNM) political foundation combined with experiences of civil wars that broke out in Somaliland after 1991. These experiences, in part, accentuated the political and security fragility of the country shoring up efforts to lay a solid foundation for peace and stability in Somaliland. The political debates and even ordinary people's conversations are all in harmony that Somaliland will not fall again into what happened in the past, and despite small pockets of conflicts between clans or sub-clans over land issues, grazing, water wells, and retaliation of blood, there had never been a full-scale war in Somaliland since in 1996.

Moreover, the people have also a belief that promoting a peaceful, democratic and inclusive political system should lead Somaliland to attain its dream of a nation-state and political pluralism. In the meantime, the politicians and the elite people in Somaliland now completely changed the narrative of the Hawd and Reserve area in Ethiopia that the British Government relinquished to Ethiopia officially in 1954. This land that the British handed over to Ethiopia was once a political benchmark in order to return it by - an agenda point of Pan-Somali nationalism and unification of the two parts.

For instance, Somaliland's constitution article (10) sub-clauses 4 and 5 state Somaliland accepts that political disputes which arise shall be settled through dialogue and peaceful means, and shall respect the territorial integrity of other countries. It shall endeavor to replace the long-standing hostility between the countries in the Horn of Africa with better understanding and closer relations.<sup>39</sup> Hence, this is a more explicit political notion that Somalilanders are not aspiring again to confront their erstwhile contestation over the Hawd and Reserve area because Somaliland recognized the AOU/AU Cairo Declaration in 1963 reaffirmed the colonial borders to remain intact.

## SOMALILAND AND THREE DECADES OF ACHIEVEMENTS

Since the Republic of Somaliland has reinstated its sovereignty on May 18 in 1991, the country has been struggling to reconstitute and revive the multiple state institutions that were destroyed during the war between SNM and the Siad Barre regime. Mohamed Farah Hirsi (Ph.D), the Executive Director of the Academy of Peace and Development (APD) points out that initially, the political settlement of Somaliland has shaped a political momentum embedded in inclusiveness, consensus building, and genuine social reconciliations. He believes that such greater cooperation between formal and informal actors was instrumental and navigated the peace and state-building processes across the political reconstruction of the country.

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<sup>39</sup> Republic of Somaliland (2016). *Somaliland State Constitution*. Hargeisa: State Printing Agency.

Restoring the political history of Somaliland as it existed before the merger with Somalia has had its disadvantageous and pragmatic political effect concerning power-sharing and constitutionalism. Both the local and international actors agree that Somaliland has made remarkable achievements and has become a miracle in East Africa. Somaliland's political system is rooted in a social contract based on the national charter of the Borama conference in 1993 and later amalgamated by the constitutional referendum which was unanimously approved in the first Somaliland 1 Person-1 Vote referendum in May 2001.

According to many local, regional, and international scholars, researchers, institutions, and policymakers, the Somaliland peace-building initiative was accomplished because it was locally financing and locally determined to demonstrate genuine ownership. Reviving and reconstructing social services, economic backbones, and generating government revenues were commendable and encouraging signs for growth and development. It is also an unconcealed factor how political stability and constitution-making process concurrently envisioned and materialized.

#### SOMALILAND SUCCESSFUL PEACEBUILDING INITIATIVES, 1991–1997

Somaliland's peace-building approach has combined factors of indigenous, traditional, cultural, and customary instrumental triangulations. The relationship between SNM and traditional authorities during the struggle had become a tool for reconfiguration and reconciliatory means of forming an immediate platform of dialogue and negotiations. As early as February 1991, the SNM leaders had organized a meeting between all of Somaliland's Isaq and non-Isaq clans in Berbera to negotiate an end to hostilities. Within two months of Barre's fall, all Somaliland clans had agreed to accept the political leadership of the SNM.<sup>40</sup>

This immediate dialogue between clans that supported SNM and clans that remained with the regime was both substantial and had some conceivable outcome that generated the subsequent meetings of peace-building, and ceasefire. As soon as the Siad Barre regime was ousted in January 1991 and SNM captured Somaliland, whereas peace-building conferences between Isaq and non-Isaq clans commenced in February 1991. The first was held in less than a month after the dictatorship fled and this dialogue and peacemaking initiative prevented any spread of conflict and hostility between Somaliland clans with the full support of the two sides.

According to Sarah Phillips, the international community spent a lot of money on the Somalia peacebuilding process where Somaliland's peace-building process was more bottom-up and home-grown indigenous initiative. Phillips stated that the Borama conference was only given \$100,000. While the United States and United Nations became more entangled in the conflict, putting together intervention forces and spending a combined total of around US \$4 billion on peacebuilding processes in Somalia.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Phillips, Sarah (2013). *Political Settlements and State Formation: The Case of Somaliland*. Available at <https://www.dlprog.org/publications/research-papers/political-settlements-and-state-formation-the-case-of-somaliland>. Accessed June 2021.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid*.

Nevertheless, Somaliland peace-building process can be divided into three phases in which the traditional elders with a variety of categories participated and contributed voluntarily. According to Yusuf Sha'ir who is a prominent and active poet that participated in the peacebuilding process, he categorized for the following (a) ceasefire stage, in this context, he has explained that the third party who are the elders step in to stop direct fighting and strike a ceasefire; and (b) the parties fighting to give confidence of authority to the mediating elders/committee – (c) swearing-in each clan around 25 or 50 elders to accept the mediation outcome and finally to sign the agreement. He concluded that the mediation elders committee foresee or monitor quite the same time how the agreement is being implemented based on the parties' contractual agreement.<sup>42</sup>

On the other hand, Yusuf Sha'ir has illustrated that this traditional mechanism has all the tactics and strategies to defuse the tension, to scrutinize the root cause of the conflict by employing customary law drawing experience from similar events in the past, or if the conflict is new, in finding appropriate leverage and mode of operations to resolve it. Therefore, the way and approaches that Somaliland peace-building has followed also are more relevant to the international scale as Johan Galtung laid down the road to peace-building in three trajectories: peacekeeping, peacemaking; and peacebuilding (1976).

It is undeniable, looking from all angles, which the peace-building process of Somaliland succeeded due to the cooperation between traditional authorities and politicians. The literature termed this cooperation 'a hybrid political order'. In reality, it is astonishing how Somaliland survived the stateless conditions in 1991 when many parallel and paradoxical actors were operating. The interplay between state and non-state actors reshaped the peace-building atmosphere in Somaliland.

## THE ROLE OF SOMALI POETRY ON PEACEBUILDING

Yusuf Sha'ir has enlightened the important role of Somali literature on peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peace-building, Yusuf Sha'ir wrote poetry and literature on peace as written in a book called '*Nabadshe*', literally meaning 'the Peace Making' that was published in 2005. He illustrates that the poets played a vital role in peacemaking, peacekeeping or peacebuilding because he argues that Somali poetry has wisdom and features of persuasion and promotion of peace, stability, brotherhood, healing, curiosity, and voicing.

For instance, having read some of the poetry that Yusuf Sha'ir promoted the peace between two major clans in Somaliland, in particular, in Burao at Waraabeeye as well as Beer conferences in 1996, should indicate how rich the Somali literature was, how words and arguments of the poem delivered in these peace conferences contributed to the peace and brotherhood among these clans.

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<sup>42</sup> Interview with Yusuf Abdulle Osman better known as Yusuf Sha'ir, Hargeisa, Somaliland, 2021.

During the researcher's interview with Yusuf Sha'ir (2021) in Hargeisa, he told the researcher about a poem that he narrated at the Duruqsi peace conference in 1996 between two major clans living in Burao.

When he recited the poem to attendees of a peace council, the participants of the conference from the two hostile clans immediately started healing, crying on one another, regretting what happened and the whole atmosphere changed becoming more positive, more tranquil. He concluded that Somali literature is vibrant and contributory for the fate of peace and social reconciliations and he also emphasized that currently, the Somali literature that previously used conflict mobilizations and retaliation among the clans now has no audience.

### REVIVING AND RECONSTRUCTING SOCIAL SERVICES, AND ECONOMIC BACKBONES

Somaliland succeeded to restore basic social services, improve economic backbones, and infrastructure development. Successive governments flourished by generating revenue and tax collections, starting the national budget, and sustaining the salaries of the civil servants and security divisions in, primarily, a progressive and incremental manner throughout the years. Somaliland is a state that neither relies on external budget support nor loan and there is no debt at all in Somaliland that international financial institutions offered to the government, every sector started from scratch.

Accordingly, these last thirty years can be divided into three stages (a) 1991–2000: The whole government concentration and attention focused on peacebuilding, political stability, security, reconstruction, rehabilitation, demobilization, disarmament, healing, etc. (b) 2001–2010 was a constitutional assignment period, democratization, forming multiparty political system, and experimentation of check and balance of state branches as a key component for the country's political and governance efforts. (c) 2010–2021: The country pursued a development agenda as putting national development plans in place, recovering from humanitarian care and turning to development opportunities and visions, institutionalizing and improving infrastructure for both public facilities and the private sector.

### THE DEMOCRATIZATION PROCESS OF THE STATE

Somaliland succeeded to create a constitutional state that promoted political pluralism, competitive, free, fair, and transparent elections. This constitutional democracy also safeguards civil and political rights, equality, and no racial discrimination. According to many scholars including Michael Walls (2014), Marleen Renders (2012), Rebecca Richards (2014) Hussein Adam (2008) Ibrahim Meygag Samatar (1997) Dominik Balthasar (2018), Sahara Phillips (2013), Ahmed Yusuf Farah, and I.M. Lewis (1997), Mark Bradbury (2008) argue that Somaliland state-building as a constitution-making process and democratization realized through the combination of formal state institutions and informal as traditional authorities.

Ibrahim Meygag Samatar who was a chairman of the SNM central committee has had a strong belief that Somali National Movement (SNM) as a guerilla and liberation movement against the

dictatorship succeeded to rotate the leadership and held successive congresses during the war where SNM elected its leadership democratically. The SNM provided an alternative system whose hallmark was participatory democracy from top to bottom. It was thus possible for it to carry over this tradition to a national level after victory, providing avenues for dialogue and compromise while state structures were still weak, culminating in the fora for consensus-building such as the Borama conference.<sup>43</sup>

Samatar also argues that SNM was the most democratic liberation movement in Africa. SNM and Somaliland constitutional practices involve leadership rotation and electoral participation within relatively bottoms-up legitimacy wherein in Somalia, faction leaders held power without electoral legitimacy.<sup>44</sup> SNM as a political organ gave birth to the struggle for democratic experimentation in Somaliland, and is still guiding it in more ways than one, it has learned how to forgive, how to compromise and accommodate, and how to relinquish state power when this is dictated by the principles for which it struggling for.<sup>45</sup>

This political philosophy of self-reliance and domestication of political activities proved sustainable and flexible in the sense that the political and electoral decisions are made through consensus and participatory manner. Somaliland's political reconstruction was driven by indigenous initiative, indigenous capital reconstruction, and indigenous political leaders.<sup>46</sup> Bradbury also mentioned that the traditional system was integrated into the political system. As the government became established, 'tradition' was fused with the 'modern' to create a unique political system.<sup>47</sup>

The question must be raised of why a traditional institution was included in the government of this aspiring state? Indeed, without the inclusion of this traditional element from the beginning of the state formation process, the territory would not have exhibited the level of peace and stability that exists today.<sup>48</sup> Most scholars locally and internationally argue that the *de facto* state that Somaliland accomplished, was realized through a nexus between the longstanding traditional governance and modern democratic constitutional state institutions.

In the subsequent elections since 2002 the domestic and international observers attributing Somaliland elections most peaceful and transparent polls and the last election of the joint parliamentary and the local council, the international observers testified that 31 May election was more peaceful and transparent. From what the Brenthurst Foundation's mission saw during its

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Renders, Marleen (2012). *Consider Somaliland: State-Building with Traditional Leaders and Institutions*. Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers.

<sup>47</sup> Bradbury, Mark (2008). *Becoming Somaliland*. London: James Curry Publishers.

<sup>48</sup> Richards, Rebecca (2009). *Challenging the Ideal? Traditional Governance and the Modern State in Somaliland*.

Available at

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/260095566\\_Challenging\\_the\\_Ideal\\_Traditional\\_Governance\\_and\\_the\\_Modern\\_State\\_in\\_Somaliland](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/260095566_Challenging_the_Ideal_Traditional_Governance_and_the_Modern_State_in_Somaliland). Accessed June 2021.

period and scope of observation, the 31 May 2021 Somaliland election process was free, fair, and credible.<sup>49</sup>

## SOMALILAND'S CONTRIBUTION TO REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Reinstating the sovereignty and political system of Somaliland has become an attractive, and credible partner to regional and international peace and security. In this regard, Somaliland constantly contributes to the regional and international community efforts towards the fight against terrorism, piracy, arms smuggling, human trafficking, wildlife trafficking, illegal fishing, and other crimes that take place both onshore and offshore.

Somaliland is located in a troubled region of the Horn of Africa disadvantaged by ethnic violent conflicts, civil wars, and the influx of refugees, droughts, poverty, locust, humanitarian crisis, terrorist groups, intra- interstate conflicts, diseases, and poor socioeconomic conditions. The Horn of Africa region is characterized by poor governance and stalling democratic practices, where authoritarian regimes and one-party systems dominate the political arena letting in contending external actors and proxy political activities to germinate fresh challenges.<sup>50</sup>

On the other hand, the Horn of Africa region has been subject to contestations of superpowers in the Cold War era and again the Horn of Africa region has become a battleground of multiple actors and rivalries due to its geostrategic location by the Gulf of Aden, the Red Sea. Somaliland, by default, became the focus and the main frontline state in these strategic avenues however, this contestation of multiple actors is likely to jeopardize the regional peace and political stability. The Port of Berbera and Somaliland's geopolitical location at the crossroads of West Asia, the Horn of Africa, and the Indian Ocean is likely to assume increasing strategic importance as the Indo-Pacific rivalries sharpen.<sup>51</sup>

In recent years, Somaliland dedicated itself to promoting regional economic integration, transnational trade, and modernizing its ports and airports. The Horn of Africa, home to the port city of Berbera, and with a population of more than 140 million people, is dynamic and ever-evolving. Despite the economic shocks of the pandemic, the region has showcased remarkable resilience, managing to grow by 0.88% in 2020. A testament to its growing consumer markets, natural commodities, and strategic location with excellent access to some of the world's major trade sea lanes and land routes, from the Suez Canal to the Strait of Malacca.<sup>52</sup> Historically, the

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<sup>49</sup> The Brenthurst Foundation (2021). *Report of the Brenthurst Foundation: Somaliland Election Monitoring Mission*. Available at <https://www.thebrenthurstfoundation.org/books-publications/report-of-the-brenthurst-foundation-somaliland-election-monitoring-mission/>. Accessed July 2021.

<sup>50</sup> M. Barawani, Mohamed A. (2020). *Horn of Africa Conflicts Mainly Caused By External Influence*. Available at <https://www.busiweek.com/horn-of-africa-conflicts-op-ed-by-external-influence/>. Accessed July 2021.

<sup>51</sup> Gurjar, Sankalp (2021). *Reviving the Port of Berbera: Why India and the UAE can become partners in the Western Indian Ocean*. Available at <https://www.indianarrative.com/economy-news/reviving-the-port-of-berbera-why-india-and-the-uae-can-become-partners-in-the-western-indian-ocean-105500.html>. Accessed July 2021.

<sup>52</sup> DP World (2021). *Transforming Berbera into a world-class centre of trade*. Available at <https://www.dpworld.com/news/blogs/transforming-berbera-into-a-world-class-centre-of-trade>. Accessed July 2021.



strategic location of the port near the straits of the Bab-el-Mandeb, which is a key maritime chokepoint for international trade and global energy security, has attracted foreign powers.<sup>53</sup>

## CHALLENGES THAT SOMALILAND EXPERIENCED OVER THE PAST THIRTY YEARS

First and foremost, misplacing the sovereignty rights of Somaliland and the denial of its *de jure* political status has undermined the economic growth, institutional development, and integration of the world system. The disavowal of the political rights of over 4.5 million persons is catastrophic and negative. For instance, Somalia constrained and sabotaged the international assistance that was intended for Somaliland. Second, one cannot dismiss that the interplay between modern state institutions, tradition/clan system, and Islamic sharia system raised a constant tension socially, legally, economically, and politically. Somaliland is steadfast toward creating a democratic state, in which its political and legal systems are both locally contextualized and internationally integrated. Most scholars attributed this system to a “hybrid political order” which meant the cooperation or integration between formal and informal actors and systems.

On the premises of this, clan/traditional system overrides and weakens the institutional and political growth of the country whereas political appointees, civil servants, and elected bodies are all positioned in such tracing and tribal influence, and this is contrary the merit-based, competence, and qualified deserved persons who can make the country more effective and prosperous. The clan system and tribalism raise a persistent threat to formal state institutions, and no one can dismantle them unless is transformed the society into a more educated and nationalistic.<sup>54</sup> Hussein contends that reforming the national constitutions is indispensable if Somaliland wants to mitigate some of the institutional challenges that it currently faces.

The third point to note is that poverty, high rate of unemployment, poor socio-economic conditions, and absence of many necessary infrastructures as roads, airports, ports, and water systems, and health facilities all weakened the socio-economic growth and development of the country. The people of Somaliland have been enduring such challenges over the past thirty years because of the realization of their founding true democratic spirit, independence, and safeguarding their civil, political, cultural, and economic rights.

Fourthly, failure to settle Somalia’s political system and create an independent and credible democratic state made the world powers and international community as a whole to be exhausted both energy and resources. They appear to have ended up, despite the unsparing efforts, in a zero-sum game. The diversion of attention and resources constrained Somaliland’s growth and development, too. The whole world is obsessed to rescue Somalia from misery, a state of shock, and anarchic conditions. On the other hand, the attempted talks between democratically elected leaders of Somaliland and transitional leaders of Somalia did not succeed and Somaliland accepted these talks for the sake of peace and security in the region. Somaliland demonstrated to the world that it has every right to reclaim and reinstate its sovereignty.

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 51.

<sup>54</sup> Interview with Eng. Faisal Ali Hussein in Hargeisa, Somaliland, 2021.

Lastly and the fifth point to mention is that the intractable conflict between clans or sub-clans over the land grappling, grazing areas, or water wells threatened peace and stability. Successive governments of Somaliland spent more resources and energy to maintain peace and stability. The creation of new settlements aimed at expansion of the clan or sub-clan territory has become the most repetitive violent conflict since Somaliland regained its sovereignty in 1991.

## CONCLUSION

There is no doubt at the moment that Somaliland has sufficient experiences and a track record to comprehend how Somali nationalism, political ideology, and dreams to reunify all Somalis in the region of the Horn of Africa is nothing more than a figment of the imagination. The Somaliland experiment has proven beyond reasonable doubt that the Pan-Somali dream was not a shared goal among the Somalis in Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Djibouti as Somalilanders of 1960 envisioned.

Somaliland and Somalia were two sovereign countries at the time of the voluntary union but this history was misinterpreted, and distorted on the political ambition of the people of Somaliland. However, the steadfast political development of Somaliland is a signal that Somalilanders can determine their future in a better way. In the meantime, Somalilanders often have a discourse that the future of the people will never be compromised again and that enough was enough as far as gambling with people's lives and existence in another wild adventure with Somalia was concerned.

Somaliland people have long given up their misguided dreams of a greater Somali state. Indeed, such a huge political transformation seemed to be more convincing and credible considering the lessons learned from the history of the union with Somalia. Somaliland proved its internal sovereignty and a political system that maintained peace and political stability. However, the quest for international recognition, and for Somaliland to realize its vision of *de jure* state should require more coherent non-partisan strategic development and greater national attention combined with the international community realization of Somaliland's inalienable rights of international recognition.

Comparing and contrasting Somaliland's thirty years of unity with Somalia (1960–1991) and thirty years (1991–2021) as a republic on its own attest to how right Somaliland people were to reclaim their statehood from the ashes of war, conflict, and state-designed under-development. Somaliland is much better in all sides of socio-economic, socio-political, education, health, governance, and infrastructure compared to the thirty years it was with the Somali Republic and the Somali Democratic Republic of Siad Barre. The majority of the people testify that Somaliland did a great success when it reclaimed its sovereignty in 1991.

In this year of 2021, Somaliland is celebrating its thirty anniversary of the restoration of a democratic system and political sovereignty that was proclaimed on 18 May 1991. Even though Somaliland has made a peaceful political settlement and progressive social resolutions, there is an increasing clan obscurity over the state and institutional development. Reconciling the state

and non-state actors – a trend that still negatively impacts deepening democratic processes and institutionalization – needs to be settled and reviewed.

The majority of the people suggest that Somaliland needs holistic political and constitutional reforms after thirty years. Even some Somaliland friends are all alarmed by the clan system continually miring and obstructing the state institutions' growth and overall development of the country. The clan hegemony is committed to subordinate and undermine the formal state structures, political pluralism, and citizenship.