

Post-Conflict State Reconstruction in Somaliland: An African Perspective of Statebuilding Processes

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ABSTRACT

In January 1991, the central government of the Somali Democratic Republic collapsed as a result of local insurgency against Mohamed Siyad known who is also known as 'Barre'. Somaliland, a former British protectorate which had united with Somalia in 1960 with the aim of uniting the divided Somali people in the Horn of Africa, declared its unilateral withdrawal from almost three decades union with Somalia but remains unrecognized by the rest of world. This paper will explore Somaliland's journey of peace and statebuilding processes which has adopted a bottom-up, locally-driven, and traditionally-fashioned approach to post-conflict state reconstruction. The study adopts a qualitative research approach by conducting an in-depth interview and reviewing existing academic literature on African state reconstruction approaches. The study will critically apply and examine Aka Claude's theory of 'building from below' in relation to the statebuilding process of Somaliland.

INTRODUCTION

Somaliland, a former British protectorate is comprised of a territory, boundaries, and people as defined by international treaties such as the Anglo-French Treaty of 1888,¹ the Anglo-Italian Protocol of 1894, and the Anglo-Ethiopian Treaty of 1897². The people of Somaliland are part of the Somali 'nation' who inhabit in the Horn of Africa, from Awash Valley, through the Ethiopian Ogaden, and into northern Kenya as far as the Tana River.³ During the 'Scramble of Africa', the Somali-inhabited land and its people were colonized by different European and non-European countries. Somaliland was colonized by the British, Somalia by the Italians, Djibouti by the French, Ogaden was annexed to Ethiopia and north Kenya was annexed by the British to Kenya.⁴ After a century of colonial rule, the first Somali-inhabited territory 'British Somaliland' became independent. However, due to colonial resistance, and the subsequent Somali nationalistic sentiments, Somaliland united with Somalia (the Italian colonized territory) five days after it received its independence from the British. In July 1960, the first two de-colonized Somali-inhabited territories were united under one independent and sovereign state 'Somali Democratic Republic' hoping the rest of the Somali territories will follow suit.

The union of the two Somali territories had enormous challenges. The North (Somaliland) had been marginalized politically and economically by the South (Somalia) and felt that their sacrifice of the unity of the Somali people was not heading towards the right direction.⁵ In 1969, the

¹Academy for Peace and Development, 'A self-portrait of Somaliland: Rebuilding from the Ruins', 1999

² Subsequent agreements between Britain and Ethiopia in 1942, 1944, 1948 and 1954 concerned the implementation of the 1897 treaty, but did not alter the substance of the original accord.

³ Mark Bradbury, 'Becoming Somaliland', African Issues, 2008

⁴Hussein A. Bulhan, 'Politics of Cain: One Hundred Years of Crises in Somali Politics and Society', 2008

⁵ Ibid.

democratically elected government was overthrown through a bloodless coup by General Mohamed Siyad Barre, a military junta who was later elected by the ‘Supreme Council of the Revolution’ as the new president of Somali Republic. With a growing resentment against the unity of the Somali Republic, the people from Somaliland formed an armed insurgency movement in 1981 known as the ‘Somali National Movement’ widely known as ‘SNM’.⁶ In 1991, the Barre’s regime collapsed and the people of Somaliland declared that the unity of Somalia had failed and as a result unilaterally announced the re-formation of Somaliland as an independent sovereign state. In Somaliland, a new political era had emerged in which the people of Somaliland regained their sovereignty. The statebuilding project of Somaliland was shaped and structured by the social clan-based structures through which peace and stability was regained. A new civilian government was elected as the successor of SNM interim administration, which subsequently led the process of political and social reconciliation of the people of Somaliland. The political reconstruction of the statebuilding process of Somaliland was a locally-driven, culturally rooted, traditionally structured process through which the state was constructed from below. Despite the progress, Somaliland has made for the last two decades, it remains diplomatically unrecognized for the sole reason that Somalia remains a failed state and does not possess the capacity of negotiating with Somaliland.⁷

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

After the end of World War II, international political actors such as the United Nations recognized the importance of post-conflict reconstruction as a major ‘grand strategy’ with a ‘grand narrative’.⁸ The objectives and the goals set up by those involved in the post-conflict reconstruction has been to provide humanitarian aid and rebuild fractured dysfunctional state institutions.⁹ During the Second World War post-conflict reconstruction, there was no theoretically adopted framework on post-conflict reconstruction. However, the Marshal Plan become a major post-conflict reconstruction strategy to rebuild Western Europe.¹⁰

Gerd Junne and Willemijn Verkoren intimate that the term ‘post-conflict’ is misleading. They argue that the term ‘post-conflict’ means the end of open warfare. However, post-conflict reconstruction remains undefined by most scholars and as of now, there is no well-scholarly agreed comprehensive conceptual definition of post-conflict reconstruction. Nevertheless, with the emergence of the post-cold war era, attempts have been made to conceptualize the term “post-conflict reconstruction”.¹¹

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Yosef Jabareen, *Conceptualizing “post-conflict reconstruction” and “Ongoing Reconstruction” of failed states*, (published online 2012).

⁹ Ibid 1.

¹⁰ After the end of WWII, the United States put together a plan, known as ‘the Economic Cooperation Act of 1948’ (Marshal Plan). For the economic reconstruction of Western Europe including Turkey and the defeated powers of Germany and Italy. The plan also finally laid down the foundation of NATO and EU. (reference-<http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h1852.html>)

¹¹ Ibid 1.

Several concepts have been developed to theorize and conceptualize the term “post-conflict reconstruction”. The concept of the failed state has been identified as one of the leading concepts of post-conflict reconstruction. Scholars such as Pierre and Tull argue that state failure is an African phenomenon and cannot be ignored.¹²For them, there is a relationship between the concept of state failure and state reconstruction in Africa. For instance, 82% of peace-keeping missions are stationed in Africa and according to the Fund for Peace Failed States Index, 50% of the ‘most failed state’ were in Africa.¹³It is, therefore, important to look at state failure and state reconstruction with the aim of understanding the impact of state failure in post-conflict reconstruction in African states. Modern states are expected to provide security, aspirations, and good public services for their people, the lack of which states shall be categorized as a failed state. Similarly, Weberian definition of the modern state is the ability to successfully uphold a claim on the monopoly of the legitimate use of force in its enforcement of its orders.¹⁴ The lack of use of legitimate force over its recognized territory is a clear sign of the failure of the state to perform its fundamental functions. This is evidently the case of Somalia, in which Somaliland had been part of since 1990. The collapse and the subsequent state failure of Somalia led Somaliland to re-think about re-building its state institutions in a democratic fashion.

In the case of the state failure, Jeffrey Herbst argues that “the notion that states incapable of imposing authority and proving basic goods should be deprived of the security and new functional states should get the possibility to secede”.¹⁵Jeffrey’s argument is the recognition of new states that emerged from a failed state like the case of Somalia. Somalia collapsed and ceased to exist as a state in 1991, and a new state Somaliland becomes functional and democratic but lacks international recognition. Marleen Renders is of this narrative and has pointed out that, “Somaliland looks like a state but is not recognized as such. Somalia no longer looks like a state, but it is one on the world map”.¹⁶There has not been a major political reconstruction in Somalia since 1991. The debate of ‘post-conflict reconstruction’ is plagued by the lack of theoretical and conceptual understanding and definitions and as a result, suffers definitional uncertainty.¹⁷

However, African scholars on, state reconstruction and state formation have argued that African states were formed as colonial products and therefore a model for the post-conflict reconstruction of African states. This study will apply the theories and concepts developed by, ‘Claude Ake’ a Nigerian political theorist whose political theories have shaped the modern African political thoughts. His contribution to the nature of African states has been well-documented. Ake’s theoretical construction of the state in Africa covers a range of multifaceted issues including, but not limited to the nature of the state in Africa; the historiography of the African state; the relationship between the state and the social class; the state, development, and underdevelopment;

¹²Pierre and Tull, “Post-conflict Reconstruction in Africa: Flawed Ideas about Failed States” in *International security*, Vol,32 No:4 2008

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid 2.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

the state and the democratization; the state and the national question; the operation and internal mechanism of a dependent capitalist state as well as the unique features of the state in Africa.¹⁸

As follows, Ake defines the state in Africa as a set of relationship and interaction among social classes and groups organized and sustained by political power:

*“The state is a specific modality of class domination. This modality is one in which class domination is mediated by commodity exchange so that the system of institutional mechanisms of domination is differentiated and dissociated from the ruling class and even the society, and appears as an objective force standing alongside society. The essential feature of the state form of domination is that the system of institutional mechanisms of domination is autotomized and becomes largely independent of the social class, including the hegemonic class”.*¹⁹

Ake’s theories were not only impinging on the state formation in Africa, but he also laid down the foundation of the African political thinking of rebuilding the post-conflict state in Africa. As one of the few scholars on the continent whose theory of post-conflict have sparked on the African scholarship literature on the conceptual thinking of the post-conflict reconstruction theory, Ake argues that the ‘endogenous initiative of rebuilding the state from below’ can serve as a condition for achieving sustainable democratic reconstruction of the state’ in post-conflict Africa.²⁰For him, state-building in Africa was neither a tragedy nor a farce.

This paper, in the context of Ake’s political theory on post-conflict state reconstruction, makes a strong argument that post-conflict state reconstruction can only be achieved by applying the concept of ‘rebuilding from below’. The paper argues that African-led, traditionally-fashioned, locally driven processes should guide the post-conflict reconstruction approach. This paper will look at Somaliland’s post-conflict state reconstruction and its approach to peace and statebuilding processes focusing specifically on how the concept of ‘building from below’ was applied to post-conflict state reconstruction in Somaliland after it unilaterally declared its sovereignty from the rest of Somalia on the 18 May 1991.

STATE FORMATION IN SOMALILAND

Modern state sovereignty both in conception and organization originated from medieval Europe with the disintegration of feudalism and absolute monarchies.²¹ Political historiography of early state formation in Europe suggests that war and violence were means of state-building. Charles Tilly in his famous book, ‘*Coercion, Capital and European states A.D 990 -1992*’ outlines that coercion and capital was early incentives for the state formation in Europe. He argues that ‘war

¹⁸ Jeremiah O. Arowosegbe, “Reflections on the Challenge of Reconstructing Post-Conflict States in West Africa; Insights from Claude Ake’ Political Writings”, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, Uppsala, 2011

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Shaheen Mozaffar, ‘The crisis of the state in Africa’, volume 5 issue 1, Bridgewater Review, 1987

made the state and state made war'.²² This concept of war-centric state formation in the early stages of the European state formation process can also be applied to the African state formation process both before and after colonization.

The concept of the modern state in Africa was imposed by colonial powers for their own political, economic, and military gains.²³ The imposition on the modern state had a deep-seated negative impact on African societies. The newly-born African states struggled to overcome social and political issues that had ultimately caused crises for the new states in Africa. The post-colonial state in Africa was highly driven by anti-colonial mobilization. The nationalist movements expected social and political transformation in the post-colonial state in Africa. Such nationalist feelings and mobilization care captured in the words of the likes of Kwame Nkrumah who declared, "*We will transform the Gold Coast into a paradise in ten years*".²⁴ After ten years of the independence of African states, there were clear signs of the lack of performance of the nationalistic promises made at the dawn of independence and this resulted in state failure in Africa.

In the Somali context, the Somali-inhabited grazing lands were partitioned by non-Muslims and Muslim colonial powers.²⁵ Egypt was the only Muslim country after the Ottoman Empire, and non-Muslim Christian imperialists such as Britain, France, Italy, and Ethiopia. Somali social and political order had been re-shaped by the colonial influence. Before the colonials, Somali people were composed of different social and political units known as, 'kinship'.²⁶ Somali traditional political order was unstructured and there was no central authority which combines the different kinship groups or clans. Centralization of power and authority was introduced by the colonial powers with their colonial administration. The stabilization of power and authority in Somali territories had been a fundamental issue since decolonization.²⁷

The colonial legacy of the Somali people had a profound impact on the political history of the Somali people. The colonialization of Somali people in the late 19th and early 20th centuries shaped the thinking of the political elites of the Somalis and motivated them to search for freedom and pan-Somali unity.²⁸ Some of the colonial powers supported the unification of the divided Somalis and the removal of colonial artificial bounders. In 1946, Ernest Bevin, the British Foreign Secretary articulated this opinion. In his words;

"... we propose that British Somaliland, Italian Somaliland, and the adjacent part of Ethiopia if Ethiopia agreed, should lumped together as a trust territory so that the nomads should lead their frugal existence with the least hindrance and there might a chance of a decent economic life, as understood in that territory".²⁹

²² Filex Gerdes, 'Civil war and state formation; the political economy of war and peace and Sierra Leone' volume 9.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ I.M Lewis, "Pan-Africanism and Pan-Somalism", *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, volume 1, issue 2, 1963

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Hussein A. Bulhan, *Politics of Cain: One Hundred Years of Crisis in Somali Politics and Society*, 2008

²⁹ Ibid.

This proposal was however rejected by other imperial powers. During the early stages of the struggle for independence, most of the Somali-inhabited territories including Somaliland dreamt of all Somali-settled territories under an umbrella of a single state.³⁰ The concept of pan-Somalism which originally came from the Somali political elites became a prominent political ideology for the Somali people. It had been one of the main drivers of the political unification of the two Somali-inhabited territories. Dr. Abdirashid Ali Sharmake, the last popularly elected civilian president of the Somali republic reiterates the importance of a greater Somalia. He intimated that:

“Our misfortune is that our neighbouring countries, with whom, like the rest of Africa, we seek to promote constructive and harmonious relations, are not our neighbours. Our neighbours are our Somali kinsmen whose citizenship has been falsified by indiscriminate boundary ‘arrangement’”³¹.

The divided kindship groups and clans were united by the domination of non-Muslim Christian colonial powers and reinforced Somali sentiments of national identity through Islam.³² Islam was not the only unifying factor of Somali nationalist sentiment because the Somalis as a homogeneous ethnic group was a force of unity. The Somalis also felt their wider sentiment as, ‘Africans’.³³ While some scholars argue that the Somali nationalist movement was a locally driven pro-unity and pro-independence movement, while others believe that it was an external Muslim-driven project.³⁴ There is no doubt through the history of the Somali people the identity was a conflicting element. The Somali people are associated with three different identities such as Islam, Somali, and African. These different identities had an impact on the pan-Somalism and the independence struggle movement.

On 26 June 1960 the first Somali territory, ‘British Somaliland’ received its independence from the British, ending a century of colonial rule. The post-colonial political structures debated on the most pressing issue of unity. Some of the political elites were reluctant to merge Somaliland into Somalia which had gained its independence five days later. Pro-unity political parties primarily Somali Youth League from Somalia and Somaliland National League from Somaliland agreed to unify the two territories to establish a one Greater Somalia nation-state- - a dream that had not achieved its objective until now.³⁵ The unification of two the independent states of Somali people towards a ‘Greater Somalia’, was driven by a popular sentiment towards and not by the political elites. The politics of unity and independence ended up with the unification of the two Somali independent states on the 1 July 1960.

The unification of the two Somali states was not a well-thought-out process. Somaliland preferred to have signed an act of union with Somalia before the merger of the two countries, but this

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ I.M Lewis, “Pan-Africanism and Pan-Somalism”, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, volume 1, issue 2, 1963

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ WSP, *Rebuilding Somaliland: Issues and Possibilities*, 2005

initiative had never been taken.³⁶ There was no legal framework of the union of the two independent states, and the existing parliament in Somalia and Somaliland failed to formulate and approve an act of union. Within a matter of a year, Somaliland felt that the union with Somalia had not fulfilled its expectations. The post-unification government was dominated by Somalia taking almost 80% of the parliamentary seats and the government positions as well. The people of Somaliland felt that they were marginalized and tried to reclaim their sovereignty in 1961 in a failed military coup. In the same year, a popular referendum had been held throughout the regions of Somaliland and, more than 60% of the people of Somaliland voted against the act of union.³⁷ From onwards, the political friction between the two polities grew and the Somali nationalist movement lost its way.

In 1969, the civilian rule came to an end and a new military-led government took over through a bloodless military coup. General Mohamed Siyad Barre became the president of Somalia and adopted ‘scientific socialism’ with the support of the Soviet Union. Civil structures including parliament, constitution, and the government were dismantled and a ‘Supreme Revolutionary Council’ was introduced as an alternative approach of governance to the civilian rule.³⁸ Most of the local people in Somaliland welcomed the newly formed military government thinking that some of their problems and the frustrations of the union would be addressed. In 1963, the British awarded Kenya its independence, and the Northern Frontier District (NFD) overwhelmingly decided to join the ‘Greater Somalia’, but the Kenyan government decided to retain the post-colonial territorial integrity of Kenya.³⁹ The Ethio-Somali war broke out in 1964 and 1977 provoked by the desire of annexing the Somali-inhabited area in Ethiopia into ‘Greater Somalia’. By 1978, the Barre regime lost the war with Ethiopia, and NFD became part of Kenya. In 1977, the last colonially-administered Somali territory ‘Djibouti’ gained its independence from the French and decided not to join into the ‘Greater Somalia’.

Furthermore, the political conflict between Somaliland and Somalia was growing, and finally, in April 1981 a post-colonial armed struggle movement, the Somali National Movement is known as in its acronym as SNM was formed in London by the military and political elites of the people of Somaliland., was and later on transferred to Ethiopia.⁴⁰ SNM being an armed struggle against the injustice of the military regime against the people of Somaliland was dominated by the ‘Isaaq’-Somaliland’s dominant clan. Several factors triggered the formation of the Somaliland-driven armed movement against the military regime. The formation of Somali-nation state and the Pan-Somalist political ideology which ended up the unregulated union between Somaliland and Somalia in which Somalia became a dominant political force over Somaliland; the hard policies of Somalia over Somaliland business trade; violation of human rights and the socio-political marginalization of Somaliland people.⁴¹ Brons argued that “*political and economic discrimination against the Northern (Somaliland) region had been a regular occurrence since the early post-independence years and turned into open hostilities and clan-related terrorism directed against*

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Mohamed-Rashid Sheikh Hassan, ‘Somali History: The Clan and the State in Somali Context’, 2015

⁴¹ Ibid.

the Isaaq people”.⁴² In the years that followed, the armed struggle intensified and most of the Somaliland people joined the armed struggle against the Barre regime. In 1988, a full-fledged war broke out in Somaliland that caused the deaths of civilians and the destruction of cities.

The Re-birth of Somaliland: From legacies of popular insurgency to Post-conflict reconstruction

In January 1991, Barre’s regime collapsed as a result of the armed political movements against his government. In former Somalia, civil war had continued and there had not been a central government which had the authority to govern its claimed territory. Warlords, radical fundamentalist, and sectarian politics ensued. On the contrary, former British Somaliland was recovering from the war and able to reconstruct its institutions. The peaceful post-conflict political settlement of Somaliland owes much to the popular political movement of SNM and its history of the struggle against the Barre regime. The political vision of the SNM was much different from other political movements in Somalia. SNM had constituted itself and used Claptam’s typology of political philosophy as a ‘reform insurgency’ with national objectives, intending to reconstruct the government.⁴³ SNM’s main political objective was to remove the Barre regime and restore democracy into Somali political governance. The unity of the Somali was never discussed and the charter of SNM was assertive to the territorial integrity of Somalia. However, the situation had changed and SNM becomes a separatist insurgency in late 1988. Even though SNM was initially inclusive, it was later changed into a clan-based political movement. One of the reasons for the radical policy shift from an inclusive organization into a single clan dominated organization emanated from Siyad Barre’s counter-insurgency policy of divide and rule. Most of the other clans inhibited in Somaliland were pro-government and therefore, only the Isaaq, the largest clan of former British Somaliland became the dominant clan of the SNM. The movement was financed and supported by the Isaaq people in the country and those in the diaspora. Prunier captured the ethnic dominated construction of SNM when he states that, “in a way, the SNM does not exist: It is simply the Isaaq people up in arms.”⁴⁴

The SNM was formed by some political elites with popular support from the Isaaq people. Isaaq is one of the largest clans inhabited in Somaliland. Other clans being the Samaron and Harti were pro-government and did not ally with SNM. It was formed based on popular struggle and had an accountable and transparent governance structure. As observed by some scholars including Ibrahim M. Samater, SNM was a participatory democratic political movement which had democratic governance structures.⁴⁵ Compagnon has extensively argued that SNM had a post-Barre political vision which was articulated into their political manifesto (‘A Better Alternative’).⁴⁶ SNM’s model of governance was highly influenced by traditional structures. The movement had used traditional political institutions to mobilize the populace and raise funds for the movement. The legitimacy of the political movement was determined by the SNM’s engagement with the traditional structures. It is in this regard that the political manifesto of SNM acknowledged that the clan system is at the root of the political stability, social cohesion, and economic activity of the

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Mark Bradbury, ‘Becoming Somaliland’, in *African Issues*, 2008

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

Somali people felt that the government of Somalia should blend ‘traditional Somali egalitarianism and the requirements of the good central government.’⁴⁷ The proposed ‘hybrid political order’ by the SNM had challenged the political orthodoxy in Somalia which, since before independence, had considered the traditional clan politics as destructive and divisive and incompatible to the modern state and suggested that the clan system be eliminated in the newly established modern Somali state.⁴⁸ However, SNM had formed for the first time in the Somali political history a ‘House of Elders’ known as the “*Guurti*’. The *Guurti* being a traditional house with a political and traditional mandate facilitated the clan-based political settlement of the post-Barre transition period. It had also played a critical role in mediating and managing inter-clan and other types of conflicts.

BOTTOM-UP STATE BUILDING PROCESS: BUILDING FROM ‘BELOW’

Following the collapse of the central government of Somalia, the people of the former ‘British Somaliland’ under the leadership of SNM as the lone military and political actor managed to reconcile different communities in Somaliland polarized by the war. The traditional leaders assembled by SNM and under its leadership agreed long before the defeat of Barre’s regime in Somaliland to reconcile post-war inter-clan conflicts in Somaliland and re-build Somaliland from ‘below’ by using its long-protected traditional conflict resolutions methods. It is important to shed light on how traditional institutions and the struggle movement devised a post-Barre statebuilding process. SNM dominated by the “Isaaq” clan was seen by other major clans such as Harti (Dhulbahante and Warsangale) and Samaron as clan-based institutions. One of the major tasks of SNM and Isaaq traditional leaders had been to bring the other clans on the table to be part of the determination of the political future of their own country. These two other clans were supportive of the Barre regime and fought against SNM. The political dialogue of SNM with those clans had changed their perspective of SNM and a real negotiation had been going on between SNM and other clans. The SNM institutional structure which was dominated by Isaaq was changed and more political accommodation and concessions were given to other clans. The creation of the state started with the SNM’s post-Barre political reconstruction and their use of traditional elders as means of statebuilding process. Four months after the collapse of the Barre regime, SNM, Isaaq traditional elders, Samaron and Harti were engaged in different levels of peace-state-building processes throughout the regions of Somaliland.

On 18 May 1991, a Grand National clan conference was held in Burao, the second capital of Somaliland, where all the traditional leaders of Somaliland from different communities and the SNM leadership attended to discuss and decide the future of Somaliland. It was this conference that changed the course of the political future of people of Somaliland. It was agreed that Somaliland’s union with Somalia had failed for reasons mentioned in the previous section of this paper and, a different political path was needed. The traditional leaders and the SNM agreed that Somaliland should withdraw from the union it had with Somalia and this resulting, in Somaliland regaining the sovereignty it lost in 1960.⁴⁹ It was argued by some scholars that SNM was not in

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Interpeace and APD, “Peace in Somaliland: An Indigenous Approach to State-Building”, 2008

favor of the separation of Somaliland from the rest of Somalia, but the clan leaders with the support of the people decided that Somaliland should be an independent state from the rest of Somalia.⁵⁰

The peace-state-building processes of Somaliland encouraged critical challenges over its course of implementation. In this paper, the peace-state-building process of Somaliland can be divided into the following: Post-Barre peacebuilding process, centralization of power and state authority, and political accommodation of non-Isaaq clans. In this section of the paper, each of these important processes to post-war political reconstruction will be closely examined. (This is part of what you should have done in the introduction)

INTER-CLAN RECONCILIATION PROCESS AS A STATE BUILDING STRATEGY

The reconciliation process between the Isaaq represented politically by the SNM and other major clans in Somaliland were shaped by three main elements. First, the Somali traditional conflict resolutions tools employed brought a breakthrough to the post-conflict stabilization process. Second, SNM's post-war plan to build representative democratic governance in Somaliland, and third, the role of traditional elders who spearheaded the reconciliation process between Isaaq and Non-Isaaq communities. It is also important to mention that these reconciliations were locally-driven and were initiated from 'below' without the involvement of external actors.

Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms are considered as the major means of peacebuilding in Somaliland. Tradition played a critical role in forging peace among conflicting parties and restored the confidence and trust of those people. As I.M Lewis stated,

*‘The evocative power of kinship as the axiomatic natural basis for all social cooperation and as the ultimate guarantee of personal and collective security is deeply rooted in Somali society. For the weaker and less successful members of the Somali lineage, kinship is an indispensable source of protection and safety, readily manipulated by their stronger more politically ambitious clansmen for whom kinship is an elastic resource, conveniently and accessible and infinitely negotiable. “Our kinsmen right or wrong” is the basic motto of Somali social life. As the foundation of social cooperation, kinship enters into all transactions between and amongst individuals. There is no significant area of Somali social activity where the influence of kinship is absent’.*⁵¹

The socio-political organization of the Somali people, as described by I.M Lewis, is the clan-family which is the most important social structure of pastoral politics and economics. The ‘*Xeer*’, a body of traditional regulations and laws is an unwritten social order which regulates the different aspects of Somali pastoral lives. The existing social contract and the long-practiced traditions and customs had enabled the different communities in Somaliland to reconcile their difference and cease hostilities among them. The post-war reconciliation critically fashioned the basic social order and institutions of Somali society.

⁵⁰ Marleen Renders, “Consider Somaliland: State-building with Traditional leaders and Institutions”, 2012

⁵¹ Ahmed Y. Farah & Ioan M. Lewis, “ Making Peace in Somaliland”, 1993

The first post-conflict inter-clan conferences held between January-June 1991. These conferences were held in the different regions of Somaliland. In the east, the Dhulbahante held meetings with the Isaaq in different locations such as Oog. In the west, a similar inter-clan conference was held in Dilla and then Borama. It was documented that more 39 inter-clan conferences were held from 1991-1997.⁵² These conferences (See table below showing overview of conferences) were supported solely by the local people and there were no external financial and technical assistance. This was purely a locally-engineered traditionally-fashioned peacebuilding process. The aim of these conferences was diverse. Some of these conferences were aimed at ending the inter-clan hostility and bring a ceasefire to the conflicting clans. The end of hostility paved the way for the restoration of trust and confidence of the clans and facilitated a meaningful political dialogue between the different clans in Somaliland. Other conferences were purely political arrangement and power distribution among the different constituencies.

⁵² Interpeace and APD, "Peace in Somaliland: An Indigenous Approach to State-Building", 2008

Table1: Overview of peace Conference in Somaliland 1991-1993⁵³

Clans	Meeting Place	Date (Approx.)	Name (If any)
Dhulbahante–Habar Je’lo	Yagori	02/1991	
Samaron–Isaq	Borama	17-19/05/1991	Guul Allah (Allah disposed Victory)
Samaron–Isse	Borama	17-19/05/1991	
Warsengeli–Habar Yonis	Yube	18/06/1991	Yube I
Habar Yonis–Warsengeli	Yube	6-9/10/1991	Yube II
Habar Yonis–Habar Je’lo–Dhulbahante	Oog	30/10/1991	
Reer Nur–Jibril Abokor	Borama	1992	
Habar Awal–Samaron	Hargeisa	1992	
Warsengeli–Habar Je’lo	Eel-Qohle	10/05/1992	
Dhulbahante–Habar Je’lo	Kulal/Awr Bogays	1-22/06/1992	
Warsengeli–Habar Je’lo		11-18/08/1992	
Habar Je’lo–Warsengeli–Gahayle (Majeerteen)	Shimbiraale	16-22/08/1992	
Dhulbahante–Habar Je’lo	Hudun	1/09/1992	
Habar Yonis–Isse Muse	Hargeysa	4/10/1992	
Samaron–Eastern Clans(Harti)–Sa’ad Muse		1992	
Samaron–Isse	Gerisa	1992	
Samaron–Isse	Agabar	1992	
Habar Yonis–Isse Muse	Sheikh	28/10-8/11/1992	Tawfiiq (Understanding)
Warsengeli–Habar Yonis	Jiideli	6-9/11/1992	
Habar Je’lo–Warsengeli–Mohamoud Garad (DUB) Sawaqroon (Majeerteen)	Garadag	23/11/1992	Dan Wadaag Bari (Eastern Alliance)
Dhulbahante–Habar Yonis	Darar Weyne	2/01-5/1993	Khaatumo (Ultimate Reality)

POLITICAL ACCOMMODATION AND POWER CONSOLIDATION AS STATE BUILDING PROCESSES

Politics of Post-Conflict Reconciliation: Issues and Challenges

Following the separation of Somaliland, a transitional interim government was formed which was led by then the chairman of the SNM, Abdurrahman Ahmed Ali. At the end of May 1991, Abdurrahman formed his first post-war cabinet. The members of the cabinet consisted of 18 ministers, six of whom were non-Isaaq.⁵⁴ The emerging SNM led government faced daunting

⁵³ Marlee Renders, ‘Consider Somaliland: Statebuilding with Traditional leaders and Institutions’,2012

⁵⁴WSP, Rebuilding Somaliland: Issues and Possibilities, 2005

challenges of reconstructing a war-torn country from ruins, with no available financial and material support from the international community.⁵⁵

However, the inclusion of non-Isaaq clans into the cabinet proved the willingness of SNM and its supporters to build an inclusive representative governance system. The political accommodation and power-sharing arrangements were one of key tasks of the SNM-led government to address in order to form a stable post-conflict political framework. On the other hand, the interim administration was assigned to demobilize and integrate clan-based militias which had proven to be a complex and complicated issue. Some achievements have been made in this regard; however, a more structured political accommodation was needed to address serious concerns over the administration of the SNM government.

The interim administration had been weakened by the existing intra-SNM military and political factions which were blocking the government to complete its tasks. Internal power rivalry turned out to be a serious issue for the new administration. Within a year, the new government failed to demobilize the militias, restore law and order and extend authority over its territorial boundaries. Furthermore, the SNM-led administration failed to control state resources and generate revenue to restore law and order by establishing state security institutions.⁵⁶ In the absence of a common enemy, the unity of SNM and Isaaq community broke down, and resources became a source of contention.⁵⁷ In January 1992, inter-clan conflict broke out in the city of Burao which was under the control of two different clan militias. With the growing internal division within the SNM, the administration failed to solve those problems and several other armed conflicts now between two different sub-clan of Isaaq broke out in Berbera port. In 1993, the administration was about losing control everywhere and the unity of SNM broke down. Therefore, the SNM administration's term which was two years was about to finish without the administration fulfilling its major tasks.

As agreed in May 1991, the SNM leadership was given a two years' term to manage the transition from SNM based administration to a civil led government. In January 1993, the Borama conference or the conference of Elders of the communities of Somaliland (*Shirwaynaha Guurtida Beelaha Somaliland*) also known as the "*Allah Mahad leh*" ('tribute be to God) convened in Borama on 24 January 1993.⁵⁸ Borama inhabited by the Samaron provided a neutral place for sub-Isaaq clans who fought in Burao and Berbera in 1991 and 1992 respectively as a result of the intra-SNM power struggle. On the other hand, it provided immense opportunities for the non-Isaaq clans to participate in and determine the future of Somaliland.

The Borama conference was considered as a watershed event in Somaliland.⁵⁹ The conference of Borama proved to be a defining moment for the future political stabilization of the country. By the time the conference was held, most of the intra-SNM and inter-clan conflicts were resolved. However, the challenges remained long after the Borama conference was finalized. Even though the previous government failed to stabilize the country, the Borama conference addressed issues

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Mark Bradbury, 'Becoming Somaliland', African Issues, 2008

⁵⁹ Ibid.

of reconciliation, security, and state formation. Several resolutions and outcomes were established from the issues debated and discussed during the conference. These outcomes determined the state formation of Somaliland and change the political discourse of the country. First, the conference established a traditional based security framework. Second, it enhanced Somaliland's unilateral separation from Somalia by framing the post-SNM political framework. Third, it provided and facilitated a peaceful transfer of power from SNM-led government to a civil-rule based administration.⁶⁰ It was in this conference that Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, the first prime minister of British Somaliland in 1960 and the last civilian prime minister of Somalia was elected as the new president for Somaliland.

Shortly after Egal took office in 1993, several achievements were registered. The people were tired of conflicts and needed a government with a centralized authority which could use legitimate force against any group that opposes to the resolutions established from the Borama conference. One of the challenges of Egal's government was to centralize power and restore law and order. Therefore, disarmament and demobilization of militias was top of his agenda. However, the demobilization process needed a financial resource to provide financial incentives to the disarmed militia. Therefore, controlling revenue-generating areas such as Berbera port was very important for the centralization of power and authority.⁶¹ In doing so, Egal succeeded to functionalize and operationalize institutions of governance. In this regard, government ministers were re-opened, public offices were equipped and a Civil Service Commission was formed. Also, a government-controlled bank was created, and a new Somaliland currency was introduced.⁶² Revenue generating locations such as ports and customs were taken over by the new government. State security institutions were re-established, and a judicial system was put in place. In 1994, Somaliland's first annual budget was approved allowing police and army personnel to receive monthly salaries. Egal successfully managed to centralize power and authority under his leadership. As argued by Dominik,

*“The newly appointed President Egal appropriated the means of violence, acquired control over major economic resources, and expanded the government's administrative apparatus. Nascent institutional standardization was accompanied by burgeoning attempts at socio-cognitive standardization, such as a newly introduced flag and currency served as a constant reminder of Somaliland's ‘imagined community’. Nonetheless, this phase was also “difficult and not without violence”.*⁶³

Despite the progress made in re-establishing governance (democratic institutions????) institutions and developing a conducive environment for post-conflict economic recovery, the new fragile state remained politically and economically weak and was vulnerable to intra-SNM factions and external interference. ⁶⁴In consolidating power and controlling state resource, President Egal was heavily challenged by the former president, Abdurrahman Tuur and his supporters. In 1994, a year

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Dominik Balthasar, “State-Making in Somalia and Somaliland: Understanding war, Nationalism and State Trajectories as Processes of Institutional and Socio-Cognitive Standardization” PhD Thesis published by UCL ,2012

⁶⁴ Mark Bradbury, ‘Becoming Somaliland’, in *African Issues*, 2008

after of Egal's election in Borama, a new conflict erupted between the government of Egal and the supporters of the former president Abdurrahman Tuur.⁶⁵ Egal using traditional authorities and some SNM military supporters managed to defeat his opponents and consolidate his power. Dominik Balthasar rightly captures Egal's struggle with his opponents. In his words;

“While it is indisputable that these civil wars were brutish and had a negative impact on the lives of thousands of people, and while there might have been alternatives to the violent conflict to achieve the desired outcomes, the civil wars fought in the mid-1990s were constitutive of Somaliland's state-making. Thus, violent conflict is not necessarily “development in reverse”, even if the respective war occurs today and in the form of a civil war. In the case of Somaliland, the civil wars Egal pitched not only enhanced state regime hegemony in institutional terms but have been judged that “as in so many other instances, the notion of statehood was nurtured during the war”⁶⁶

In 1997, the civil war came to an end and Somaliland entered a new post-civil war political reconstruction era. The last national clan conference was held in which the civil war within Somaliland was resolved and Egal was re-elected for another term. Since then, the new polity had not experienced major conflict and had managed to consolidate power, use violence legitimately over its territories, and establish a modern system of democratic governance.

CONCLUSION

From a theoretical and conceptual perspective, post-conflict state reconstruction remains undefined. Several scholars had attempted to establish a conceptual definition of the term 'post-conflict state reconstruction', however, different policy-oriented approaches had been adopted under different circumstances. The lack of the agreed scholarly defined theoretical framework of the 'post-conflict reconstruction' poses challenges to the policy-making apparatus.

The study attempted to address and examine the post-conflict state reconstruction of Somaliland in light with the concepts and theories developed by African political thinkers. The study has employed Aka Claude's theory of post-conflict state reconstruction in Africa. The key finding of this paper is that 'rebuilding from below' theory has been effective in the case of Somaliland. The present political stability that Somaliland has enjoyed for over two decades as a result of bottom-up, tradition-fashioned, and locally-driven peace-state-building processes which has proven to be more durable and sustainable than top-down, foreign-engineered statebuilding approach.

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Ibid.