

THE SITUATION IN SOMALIA

TOPIC B

INTRODUCTION

Genocide and war have historically been major challenges for the entire continent of Africa, and the Horn of Africa is certainly no exception. Since the end of World War II, when most of the African continent began to gain independence from colonial powers, domestic, religious and ethnic differences have slowed the development of national identities throughout Africa. This holds true in Somalia as well; from the beginning of Somalia's independence, the northern and southern halves of the country have not cooperated.

In the past two decades, as different regions of Somalia have declared independence, religious and ethnic violence has spread throughout the country. Somaliland, which declared itself independent from Somalia in 1991, is still awaiting recognition from the African Union, which recognizes Somalia as the sole authority over both nations. Although the United Nations attempted to solve the humanitarian crisis with the creation of a peacekeeping operation in 1992, the mission met significant challenges and was soon thereafter removed from the country. Until just recently, the world appeared to turn its back on Somalia and had allowed its civil war to ensue. Currently, a Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in the capital city of Mogadishu led by Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed encounters constant resistance from an Islamic insurgency. However, in 2006, Ethiopian military forces agreed to help the TFG fight the Islamic insurgency in Somalia after it proclaimed a jihad on Ethiopia.

The need for Somalia to establish a national government and to create a sense of national unity is essential to the maintenance of international security in the Horn of Africa. With the help of the Ethiopian forces, the new transitional federal government should be able to handle domestic issues and keep friendly relations with its neighbors - most notably Ethiopia – which has traditionally been a major rival.

Among the many challenges that Somalia faces, attempting to get the many opposing parties to work together may be the hardest of all. Although the Horn of Africa has suffered from violence since the start of colonization, today the violence is between the Somali people themselves. With different cultures and ethnicities, the Somali people disagree simply on how the government should provide for its people. Numerous national peace conferences and United Nations (UN) resolutions have taken steps towards peace, but have not fulfilled the objective. Because of the violence, a major humanitarian crisis has continued since 1991 and remains unresolved.

The Security Council must take action to prevent the possibility of destabilization in the Horn of Africa. The major issues which will need to be resolved in order to prevent destabilization include the increase in acts of piracy throughout the 1,800 mile coast of Somalia, the stabilization of refugee populations through adequate humanitarian aid, and most importantly, the backing and improvement of the current internationally-recognized Transitional Federal Government (TFG). Although the TFG seems to be taking steps toward mending the country, an insurgency has hindered progress in Somalia.

HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION OF THE ISSUE

Somalia and Colonialism

For many years, the British, French and other European powers fought over the Somali region - seeking a seaport between Europe and Asia. In 1887, Great Britain colonized the whole of Somaliland until the 1920s, when Italy began to consolidate power over the region. Under Italian Prime Minister Benito Mussolini, Italy occupied Ethiopia in 1925 and began to form *Somalia Italiana* – an Italian colony. However, after being defeated in World War II in 1941, the Italians relinquished *Somalia Italiana* to the British Military Administration (BMA). The BMA took this responsibility because of Britain's past history with colonialism

and its effort to decolonize. Though all of Somalia was united under the BMA, because the North and South had different cultures and spoke different languages, the two halves did not cooperate.

After World War II, many African countries rapidly gained independence for a number of reasons. Among the first were the right to self-determination espoused by the newly created United Nations and the controversy over colonialism. Perhaps more importantly, colonial powers had domestic issues in reestablishing strong economies in their home countries. Since the colonial powers were weak from fighting in World War II, this took priority over making sure to establish effective borders for African countries upon their independence. The BMA held power in the Horn of Africa until “1950, when a UN trusteeship territory under Italian administration was established in ex-Italian Somaliland” (Brons 145) under GA UN Resolution 289. Although the Italian administration was initially supplied with 6,000 Italian soldiers, the weak Italian economy caused the administration in Somalia to have a slim budget year after year. By 1952, this had led to the repatriation of all but about 750 soldiers (Brons 145).

Although British Somaliland took steps toward modernization from 1950 to 1960, dissent between the different competing clans became increasingly aggressive. When the colony was declared an independent sovereign state in June 1960, the two sides, the northern and southern halves of Somalia – though sharing a common Ethiopian enemy - quickly became opponents for control over their own government. When the Somali government was unified, the two halves disagreed on virtually every issue, beginning with the constitution and how the government was to function. The North rejected and voted against the South’s proposed constitution and little progress was made for some time.

Though the government eventually became quite extensive, including an adequate constitution and supreme court, the government ultimately decided to give the majority of its power to one man, the Executive President, a rather common theme throughout Somali history.

Election Fraud, the 1969 Coup d’état, and the Ogaden Invasion

As the Somali government struggled to secure domestic peace and border security, fraud in public elections led to greater tensions between political parties. After President Abdirashid Ali Shermarke was assassinated by his own bodyguard on 15 October 1969, Prime Minister (PM) Muhammad Haji Ibrahim Egal manipulated politicians to win their vote in selecting a new president from his own tribal clan. Between the chaos of the assassination and the illegitimacy of the election – being almost a bidding contest for politicians’ votes - the Somali army seized control of the country and installed General Siad Barre, a long-time military veteran and leader, as the next President. The newly formed government then worked to unite the country by banning the many different political parties, dissolving the national assembly, discouraging tribal clans, and establishing a single official Somali language to become a one-party, socialist state.

However, while this newfound unity may have been good for establishing a single, working government, many human rights groups disliked President Barre’s policies. For example, following Barre’s coup, his government “adopted far-reaching legislative and administrative reforms that infringe on internationally protected civil and political rights” (Somalia 16). These reforms, along with the declaration of a state of emergency, which granted Barre additional powers, from 1979 to 1982 and the creation of the National Security Service (NSS), a network of secret police, made politically rebellious factions disappear.

After banning political parties and centralizing power, President Barre then went on to prevent any type of opposition group. By November 1986, Barre had unleashed a specialized fighting force called the ‘Red Berets’ on the Somali people. This force, with the NSS, led to the abuse and deaths of Somali civilians throughout the country.

The tensions of the Cold War also caused the West and the Soviet Union to struggle over the African nation. The West had quickly become allies with Somalia, hoping to keep the regime under control by supporting them with enough weapons to defend the country and to regulate domestic issues. However, “the amount of United States military and economic aid to the regime was US\$34 million in 1984; by 1987 this amount had

dwindled to about US\$8.7 million, a fraction of the regime's requested allocation of US\$47 million” (Somalia’s Difficult Decade). Even though the amount did not satisfy Barre, because of the alliance with the US, Somalia was still receiving enough funds from the US and military supplies from the Soviets to increase military capacity and strengthen the borders. In fact, “by mid-1974, about 1,725 Somali soldiers had been to the Soviet Union for training, and the army had as part of its inventory an estimated 150 T-35 and 100 T-54 tanks, mostly fitted with 105-mm guns. Also, more than 300 armed personnel carriers, 200 coastal batteries, 50 MIG fighters, a squadron of Il-28 bombers, and an SA-2 ground-to-air missile complex” (Laitin).

Once President Barre had established his government and secured his power in Somalia, he decided to fight for the Ogaden, a large region of Ethiopia where Somalis claim an ancient right to the land. Furthermore, “the fall of Emperor Haile Selassie in 1974 and the resulting political turbulence in Ethiopia gave both the Somali government and the Western Somalia Liberation Front (WSLF), an opportunity to take military advantage of the turmoil that engulfed Ethiopia” (Somalia 27). With financial support from the US and a strong military force by land and air, Barre seized the opportunity and invaded with over 40,000 troops.

However, as soon as the Somali army occupied the majority of the Ogaden, Ethiopia made an urgent plea to the Soviet Union for their assistance in reclaiming the Ogaden. The Soviet Union decided that Ethiopia, who had been allied with the US, was more likely to become socialist than Somalia was, and changed their allegiance. Ethiopia was required to, and did, break off all ties with the United States of America. After Ethiopia accepted the deal, Soviet generals in Somalia were ordered to Ethiopia and began training military forces there. “About one week later the Soviet Union and Cuba began sending troops (more than 10,000 Cuban soldiers) and war equipment worth about US\$ 1 billion (three times as much as the Americans had sent in the previous 25 years) via air and sea to Ethiopia” (Brons 183). By March 1978, the newly trained Ethiopian army was able to reclaim Ogaden and force the Somali army to retreat.

Lost Ogaden - found Civil War

As soon as Somali troops were forced to retreat and Ethiopia reclaimed the territory, secessionist forces in Somalia began to grow stronger once again as faith in the government grew weaker. The Isaak clan, the largest clan in Somaliland, had felt left out of the Somali government since the military coup in 1969. However, when Somaliland became overwhelmed by the influx of an estimated 1.5 million refugees (Brons 187) from the Ogaden who crowded cities and created a land struggle after the Somali government granted them land to settle in Somaliland, the Isaak clan established an anti-government political faction called the Somali National Movement (SNM). Although Isaaks throughout the country were persecuted as a result of the group’s establishment, the movement continued to grow because of the harsh punishments the Somali army inflicted on its own people:

Africa Watch’s estimate of 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, is in the vicinity of 50,000 – 60,000 ... The figures are so high because the army sought both to punish Isaak civilians for welcoming the SNM attack and to discourage them from further assistance to the guerrillas (Somalia 3).

The Somali government did not show much concern for civilian life, but the SNM was not much better. Like the Somali army, the SNM was known for raiding cities and refugee camps and murdering civilians who supported the Somali government and Ogaden refugees hoping others would return to Ethiopia. While the SNM continued its campaign against the government and its supporters, Barre’s military forces, notably the NSS and Red Berets, waged a counter-insurgency campaign primarily aimed at those SNM supporters in the North and the various Isaak clan members throughout the country. However, the important SNM leaders were based out of Ethiopia, leaving government forces to deal only with the SNM ground forces in the North. It was not until “1988 when two years of peace talks between Siad Barre and Mengistu Haile Mariam, president of Ethiopia, which had been under way since 1986, culminated in an agreement wherein the two governments pledged to stop supporting any political opposition directed against the neighboring country” (Brons 203). Although this forced anti-government forces into hiding within Somalia, the continued abuse of

the Somali people by government forces led opposition groups to join together to fight against their common enemy – the Somali government under Siad Barre. Though these groups were able to coordinate anti-government efforts at first, in January 1991, once Siad Barre and his administration fled the country, the opposition groups began to struggle over political power.

An interim government set up by the United Somali Congress (USC) and Manifesto wing declared Ali Mahdi Mohamed as the interim president to the newly freed state, but soon many of the opposition groups felt their contributions to the overthrow of Siad Barre were left unnoticed in the distribution of political power, and consequently, the interim government and the peace did not last.

Somaliland

In 1991, Somaliland, the northern tip of Somalia, declared independence. Although the United Somali Congress (USC) was established in early 1991, the old tension between northern and southern Somalia forced clan elders to decide that it was time to become independent. Even without international recognition, Somaliland has become a relatively peaceful and stable government, with a functioning parliament and police force, its own symbols of statehood, refugees returning to the area to settle, and commercial activity increasing.

There were, however, many challenges to the success of the Somaliland government. For example, the original government set a two year mandate to accomplish a set of goals designed to establish the government. However, when “little progress was made on drafting a new constitution and the state remained politically vulnerable to shifts in power relationships between the clans” (Bradbury 461), tensions grew and clan rivalries resulted in civil war. The violence was extremely damaging to the credibility of the newly forming government, but after 33 clan peace conferences between 1991 and 1996, the Somaliland government was able to settle differences between the clans by increasing the minority seats in the parliament and adopting an interim constitution.

Later, “on 6 August 2001, the Somaliland parliament legalized the formation of political organizations and scheduled presidential elections for February 2002” (Bradbury 463). The success of the free and democratic district and presidential elections would ultimately legitimize the Somaliland government. However, once again there were many challenges that Somaliland had never previously faced. The Somaliland Electoral Commission (SEC) had never managed an election before, the voters had not been registered or informed of the political process, and an attempted assassination on President Kaahin by forces from the neighboring Puntland region of Somalia almost put the elections on hold. Fortunately, a number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) helped inform the voters and supervise the voting procedure. “In January 2003, the UN news information service noted that the year ahead held ‘opportunities and dangers’ for Somaliland, predicting that the presidential elections could ‘either demonstrate Somaliland’s political maturity, or lead to fighting’” (Bradbury 471).

UN Involvement

When fighting, famine, and chaos within Somalia broke out and in 1992, the United Nations took action to prevent the complete destabilization of the Horn of Africa. The United Nations Operations in Somalia (UNOSOM) was established in April 1992 to monitor the ceasefire and escort humanitarian supplies to Mogadishu and soon thereafter, the Security Council approved Resolution 794, creating a coalition force which would “ensure the delivery of humanitarian assistance in Somalia” (S/RES/794). Later that year, “‘Operation Restore Hope’ began in December 1992 as an American-led humanitarian intervention mission” called the United Task Force (UNITAF) (Brons 219). UNITAF was comprised of American, Pakistani, Italian, and Malaysian military forces with financial support from various UN member states. Its mandate was to assist the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) in monitoring a ceasefire between warring Somali factions and to ensure that humanitarian aid was reaching those in need. Furthermore, UNOSOM and UNOSOM II were charged with disarming the violent inhabitants and clearing minefields for the civilian

inhabitants. All of these measures worked toward promising the Somali people that the region would be a safe and prosperous environment, which, in turn, would encourage refugees to return to their homes.

Although many Somalis accepted the force, their expectations that UNITAF would disarm the fighting factions and establish peace swiftly could not be fulfilled. UNITAF was somewhat successful in establishing friendly relations with the Somali public at first, but as time drew on, because the United Nations forces were more focused on providing humanitarian aid instead of changing the political process and as more civilians were killed in the crossfire, opposition groups convinced the public to blame the United Nations forces for their own actions. Gradually, the Somali people refused to accept the foreigners as peacekeepers. In March 1994, many Western countries that had previously backed UNITAF pulled out of the country. Although the original mandate had included the disarmament of Somali factions, because the UNITAF force had been significantly downsized after the Western countries withdrew, the UN adopted resolution 897 in April 1994 which excluded the forced disarmament of Somali factions from the mandate. Once the remaining UNITAF forces had lost Somali support for their mission, the rest of the UNITAF forces withdrew in March of 1995.

Though the UNITAF force did withdraw from Somalia, the UN did not completely lose hope for the stabilization of Somalia. In fact, “the UN has organized over 10 highly publicized and costly reconciliation conferences since 1993. Faction leaders, who have played the central role in these reconciliation conferences, have dutifully signed agreements at every meeting. But each settlement collapsed soon after it was agreed, sometimes within hours” (Ahmed 124). Additionally, the United Nations Political Office in Somalia (UNPOS) was established in April 1995 to advance the cause of peace and reconciliation through contacts with Somali leaders, civic organizations and the States and organizations concerned.

The Aftermath of UN involvement

Although the UN tried for years to moderate the crisis and establish a legitimate government in Somalia, peace keeping operations ended in a stalemate or failure. Between 1991 and 1995, “the UN peace-enforcement mission in Somalia resulted in a death toll of 135 UN soldiers, and hundreds of Somali fighters and civilians, many of them women and children ... UNITAF and UNISOM were not only incapable of interrupting the general cycle of violence which had developed in the anarchic period, but through their political misjudgments they even provoked additional violence directed against their own troops and installations, adding another dimension of conflict to the civil war arena” (Brons 235). While not becoming involved in the crisis was never a viable option, the consequences of withdrawing from the country further destabilized the region.

Once the UN peacekeeping forces pulled out of Somalia in 1995, the nation quickly became an unguided, stateless nation. Ruling warlords and clans took control of regions where they could, but no federal government could be agreed upon. The northwestern region of Somaliland and the northeastern region of Puntland declared independence and worked to establish their own legitimate governments. Commercial activity in both of these regions were steadily growing as faith in their governments grew, but the warring factions would not allow the other to succeed and the unpredictable African weather patterns often caused problems for farmers.

Islamic Courts Union (ICU), Transitional Federal Government (TFG), and the Ethiopian military

Throughout the 1990s and into the 2000s, Somalia has been in an outright civil war. From this civil war, three distinct groups have seemingly emerged – the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and Ethiopian military forces.

The TFG developed as the strongest of over 15 national reconciliation conferences in Somalia since 1991. The implementation of the TFG project was not put into effect until 2000 and officers were not chosen until 2004, following the approval of the government’s charter, but recent developments have yielded positive results. However, as the TFG was establishing itself, the ICU was growing stronger throughout the southwestern region of the country to the point of controlling the capital city of Mogadishu by early 2006.

When Islamic forces overtook Mogadishu in 2006, Ethiopian forces helped the TFG troops force the ICU out of the capital city even though both the African Union and the Arab League called on Ethiopia to stay out of the conflict. As the TFG began establishing government offices, the African Union (AU) established and implemented the AU Mission to Somalia (AMISOM). AMISOM's mandate since its creation in 2007 primarily includes the safeguarding and support of the TFG while ensuring the delivery of humanitarian aid to the Somali civilians. Currently, South Africa has been a key player within the African Union in helping to establish the details and negotiations between different Somali clans of how the TFG will function once it is operational.

While the TFG and the Ethiopian military forces work together to institute a strong Somali federal government, the ICU continues its insurgency all over the country. The ICU refuses to attend peace negotiations until all foreign troops have left Somalia and the TFG can attend the negotiations themselves.

CURRENT STATUS

United Nations Resolutions

The United Nations has passed a number of resolutions in 2008 regarding the crisis in Somalia. Starting in February 2008, the Security Council passed Resolution 1801 asking the Transitional Federal Institutions to respect the decisions of the newly formed National Reconciliation Congress in forming the Somali constitution. In April, the Security Council passed two resolutions – 1809 and 1811 - which highlighted the importance of communication between the United Nations and the African Union by encouraging the development of the African Union – United Nations panel that UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon established. Finally, in May, the Security Council passed landmark Resolution 1814 which reinforced the arms embargo that has been in effect since Resolution 744 in early 1992.

In March of 2008, the UN Secretary General reported on the situation in Somalia. Though the conclusion seemed to be that the entire region is still hostile, there were many conclusions and recommendations made by the SG that may help settle the crisis. First, Ban Ki-Moon believes that it is important to combine the three main components of restabilization – politics, security, and programmatic. These areas are all mutually dependent on one another and can only succeed if all succeed. Furthermore, by strengthening the UNPOS capacity and refocusing its mandate, the team will be effective in helping to stabilize the country. Finally, the Secretary General outlined a number of proposals which strengthen the political process in Mogadishu by establishing the UNPOS office and withdrawing foreign forces while building up peacekeeping forces and establishing communication to Somali citizens.

Piracy

Off the 1,800 mile long coast of Somalia, piracy of merchant shipping has become a major problem in recent years, especially for the transportation of humanitarian aid to refugees in the country. In Resolution 1772, the Security Council called upon “member states whose naval vessels and military aircraft operate in international waters and airspace adjacent to the coast of Somalia to be vigilant to any incident of piracy therein and to take appropriate action to protect merchant shipping.” However, because the piracy crisis has continued, the Security Council passed Resolution 1816, which again called upon member states whose air and naval forces were stationed in the region to protect the merchant ships and humanitarian aid headed for Somalia. In 2008, over 15 attacks and 21 attempts on merchant shipping boats occurred off of the coast of Somalia (“Piracy Attacks”). With more attention on the issue, the number of pirate attacks is expected decrease over the next few years.

Food Prices and Malnutrition

Because of the conflict between the government and the Islamic insurgency, the recent drought, the hyper-inflation of the economy and the rise of global food prices, the cost of food has increased substantially and has left many civilians without enough money to live. Demonstrators in Mogadishu quickly became rioters as they protested the inflation of Somali shillings and the government's lack of regulation to control the inflation. "Global food prices have nearly doubled in three years, according to the World Bank, sparking riots and protests in several poor countries" (Food Riots...). Additionally, the delayed start to Somalia's April – June rainy season has not helped the situation calm down. "The United Nations food security unit warned recently that half of Somalia's seven million people face famine, pointing to a drought as well as food prices" (Troops fire...). Though the World Food Programme (WFP) has been attempting to reach the starving Somali civilians, the humanitarian aid is often stopped by pirates claiming to be the Somali National Guard. The Security Council has passed resolutions 1772 and 1816 requesting safe travel for the humanitarian ships with the help of nearby naval escort ships, but the threat of piracy continues.

Refugees

Refugees have always been a challenge for Somalia. "From 1979 onwards, UNHCR and numerous NGOs took up the refugee issue, bringing vast amounts of aid – food, medicine and related equipment, transport facilities, such as trucks, cars and related spare parts, etc. – into the country. In 1980, US\$ 132 million were channeled to Somalia through UNHCR, including US\$ 66 million for food" (Brons). Thousands of refugees are currently fleeing the capital and to escape from the unrest. Human rights groups, including Amnesty International, are calling the fighting in Somalia the worst in 17 years. In one recent fight in Mogadishu, 81 civilians were killed and more than 100 were wounded.

Transitional Federal Government's Progress

While the Transitional Federal Government is internationally recognized and supported, it seems to lack the potency to get clan factions to unite under a single Somali government. The continued Islamist insurgency in Mogadishu has only made the TFG military forces in the capital city more apt to stay within the walls of the Presidential palace and other military compounds – a factor which led to UNITAF's distrust by the Somali public in 1992.

Furthermore, involvement by the US in Somali affairs has not resulted in positive outcomes. Continued air strikes by the US on known Islamic extremists and known Al Qaeda sites have led to the deaths of ICU leaders and many civilians. This targeting of ICU leaders has made the peace negotiations difficult, as the ICU has stated that it will not stop fighting until all foreign troops have left the country.

Ceasefires

The most recent attempts at a ceasefire occurred in 2006, when Islamists controlled the capital Mogadishu and signed a peace agreement with the Somali transitional government "for the good of Somalia" ("Somalia cease-fire"). Some major headway was made in negotiations between the two sides, with talks held in Khartoum with Arab League support. However, as recently as 7 October 2008, many of the Islamist hardliners still refuse to "recognize the government or engage in peace talks until foreign troops withdraw from Somalia" ("Ceasefire not Implemented").

BLOC ANALYSIS

Western Bloc

Though the United Nations has repeatedly attempted to solve the humanitarian crisis in Somalia, most notably with the UNITAF peacekeeping force in the early 1990s, the western bloc still feels an obligation to solve one of Africa's biggest human rights crises. The Transitional Federal Government has been supported

by the majority of western countries. Though the United States may be resentful and wary of returning to Somalia to enforce the peace throughout the region, ultimately, the humanitarian crisis should encourage the US and the rest of the west to take more advanced action.

However, the commitment to the global war on terrorism also creates a challenge for western nations in developing a peaceful resolution to the crisis in Somalia. Many western nations are engaged in efforts to eliminate terrorist or extremist Islamic organizations, of which, some are present in Somalia. The West has a stake in the success of any government that gains control of Somalia – it may work with a Western style model of government, while combating terrorism may be more difficult and relations more strained with an Islamist government. In either case, Somalia presents the West with an opportunity to be peace-brokers in the hopes of securing a friendly government in the future. They must regain the confidence of the Somali people, a confidence that has been shaken in recent decades by ambiguous support by superpowers and military strikes and incursions on Somali sovereign territory.

African Union

The African Union believes that the foreign alliances with the United States of America and the Soviet Union decades ago made the situation much worse after alliances with Ethiopia were swapped. Though the African Union may not be equipped to handle the magnitude of this crisis, it is still important that the situation be regarded as an African issue. Most notably, South Africa has been working for the past year to get all parties involved to attend a peace summit regarding Somalia and the Transitional Federal Government. A volatile Somalia threatens the development of the entire continent, and African powers must be willing to play multiple roles in Somalia as peacekeepers and observers in elections if they were to take place. While Somalis have a resentment of foreign powers on their land due to its complex colonial and post-colonial history, the AU must extend a hand of friendship to its war-torn African neighbor.

Arab Bloc

The Arab Bloc has a unique opportunity to shape the outcome of the now stalemated political process in Somalia. Somalis can most easily identify with its Arab neighbors to the north and across the Gulf of Aden. They harbor less resentment against Arab countries when compared to their feelings about certain African neighbors, such as Ethiopia. These states are uniquely positioned as the confidants, and therefore the nurturers of, the success of Somali politics. Their actions will likely certainly influence the outcome of whatever form the government may take in the coming years. Many Arab countries will likely support the Islamic Courts Union in their struggle for political power in Somalia. While not a monolithic entity, many of these countries (like Saudi Arabia) would like to see Islamic Shari'ah law implemented when the new government comes to power.

COMMITTEE MISSION

The situation in Somalia appears to become worse by the day. Though some negotiations have been underway for quite some time now, the Islamic insurgency continues to state that it will refuse to stop the fighting until all foreign troops have left the country – a condition which prevents peaceful negotiations from occurring. Furthermore, the African Union has been reluctant to allow the United Nations to send a sizeable peacekeeping force, and the organization lacks the sufficient resources to fully mediate the many conflicts happening on the continent. As a result, the factions in Somalia continue to fight without regard for civilians and human rights abuses.

In order to establish international peace and security in the Horn of Africa, the Security Council will have to work closely with the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the African Union to host more peace negotiations between the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), the National Reconciliation Congress (NRC), and the Islamic Courts Union (ICU). In these negotiations, it will be important to address the needs of the Somali civilians and refugees who require humanitarian aid, how the humanitarian aid can safely reach said civilians and refugees, and how a new Somali federal government could include all parties peacefully.

Security Council

While it is by no means expected as a product of these negotiations, an outline for an eventual ceasefire would be one of the first necessary steps towards peace and reconciliation on the country. Furthermore, the Security Council may suggest that certain regional bodies, such as the Arab League or the African Union, restart negotiations on the status of foreign forces within the country with hopes of future power-sharing talks in Mogadishu.

The Security Council may find it extremely beneficial to examine the reports of Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon when assessing the situation in Somalia and how the UN can go about solving the humanitarian crisis and establishing a functioning government.