



# Yorkshire African Studies Network

## **South Sudan and after: rethinking borders and revisiting migration after the referendum**

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### **What makes Somaliland's case for recognition so different? *Michael Walls & Steve Kibble***

#### *Introduction*

Somaliland in the northern tip of the Horn of Africa is bounded by Djibouti, Ethiopia, 'Puntland State' of north-east Somalia, and Yemen across the Red Sea. The people of Somaliland are ethnic Somali, sharing with other Somalis a common language, religion, Sunni Islam, and a traditional livelihood system based around nomadic pastoralism. Most come from three main 'clan families' - the Isaaq, Dir (Gadabursi and 'lise) and Harti (Warsengeli and Dulbahante) of the Darod clan federation. The Isaaq, the most populous and the politically and economically dominant group, divide into six main sub-lineages. These sub-clans and the dynamic divisions and alliances between them have at times represented critical factions in Somaliland's politics. Historically Somalis were largely nomadic pastoralists. Customary political affiliation is based on kinship, with economic activity, culture, individual and collective rights and economic security mediated through clan. Entitlement to resources, divisions of labour and authority came through social contract between and among clans (known as *heer* or *xeer*). Decision-making was through consensus amongst adult males, with all activity including conflict, subject to widely recognised norms of behaviour. The social structure remains heavily patriarchal despite the presence of highly educated women, many with time spent in the diaspora, involved in politics, civil society and business.

After being a British protectorate since 1884, Somaliland became an independent country on June 26, 1960. The rest of present-day Somalia, then administered by Italy, became independent several days later. Within days, the two lands decided to merge. But Somalilanders felt slighted almost from the start, since most of the power went to the south of the country. Somalilanders rejected a referendum on a unitary constitution in June 1961 and, later that year, military officers in Hargeisa began an unsuccessful rebellion to reassert Somaliland's independence.

Over the years, especially from 1982 onwards the leaders in Mogadishu fought to keep control of Somaliland. In 1988, a full-scale civil war broke out between the Mogadishu-based government and Somaliland rebels grouped in the Somali National Movement (SNM) – founded in London in 1981 - and which had been fighting the regime in northwest Somalia since 1982. Secession in fact was never a publicly stated objective of the SNM, although there were secessionists, especially among the military commanders. The initial objective was to overthrow the dictatorship and replace it with a democratic political system including greater devolution. The declaration of independence was in part at least due to popular demand from Somalilanders, particularly from the Isaaq clans, from whom the SNM drew its

support. Significantly, though, the non-Isaaq Gadabuursi and Dhulbahante also committed considerable effort to the Somaliland project in the early days. When the United Somali Congress (USC) announced the formation of a government in Mogadishu without consultation, Isaaq fears about southern domination were revived, and on this occasion, many Gadabuursi and Dhulbahante shared that fear. On 18 May 1991, as Somalia descended into anarchy with the fall of the government of Gen. Mohamed Siad Barre, leaders of the Somali National Movement (SNM) and elders of northern clans meeting at the Grand Conference of the Northern Peoples in Burco revoked the 1960 Act of Union that had joined the former Italian and British colonies. The new Somaliland contained the territory of the former British Protectorate bordering Djibouti to the west, the Gulf of Aden to the north, Ethiopia to the west and Somalia to the east in line with nineteenth century international treaties. The territory covers 137,600 km and incorporates the five former regions of northwest Somalia – Awdal, Woqooyi Galbeed (since renamed Maroodi Jeex), Togdheer, Sanaag and Sool – and a sixth region – Saaxil – created in 1996. The largest city, Hargeisa, is the commercial centre, political capital and the Somaliland seat of government. Since 1998, Somaliland's authority over eastern Sanaag and Sool regions has been contested by the semi-autonomous Somali territory of Puntland with occasional violent conflict.

On 27 July 2010, Dahir Riyale Kahin, President since 2003 of the internationally-unrecognised Republic of Somaliland, conceded power peacefully to his successor Ahmed Mohamed Mohamoud Silanyo. The new President had been the victor in a presidential election held one month earlier. This event marked both change and continuity – a change of government (from the UDUB party to Kulmiye) as well as president, but continuity in taking further steps on Somaliland's journey to democracy.

The holding of the presidential elections on the scheduled date (26 June 2010) marked a major turnaround from before September 2009. By that stage, political party infighting had caused repeated delays from the original 2008 date and the prospects for successful elections looked bleak. The deadlock was finally broken when a six-point agreement was signed on 30 September 2009.

#### *Democratisation and Indigenous Models*

While the southern areas of Somalia endure endemic conflict, despite internationally-brokered 'top-down' peace conferences, Somaliland began a home-grown process of 'bottom-up' reconciliation and state-building, mostly free from foreign prescriptions or interventions. It remains internationally unrecognised, but has held elections for the head of state (twice), the lower house of parliament and local councils.

Somaliland has been engaged on a journey to build systems of legitimate and accountable governance with some form of social contract with civil society (a term we might dispute in relation to Somaliland but let us use it for the time being). The proclamation of independence in 1991 meant that the new state had the opportunity to break with past corrupt, military and unrepresentative forms of government. While the lack of international recognition has meant a lack of governance support granted to many post-conflict countries, this has given Somalilanders the opportunity to build their own system suitable for their needs. For the first twelve years this has consisted of what has been termed a 'hybrid' system, combining traditional institutions of clan governance with at least some formal Western-style government institutions. In May 1999 the Hargeisa government approved a plan to move from the current clan-based system to a multiparty political system provided the proposed parties were not based on tribal or religious lines and drew support from all (then) five regions. There were to be votes for women, although no women were consulted in drawing up the draft.

Against this background and the chronic failure of Somalia, Somaliland appears an example of successful, indigenous state-building. Many see lessons for Somalia and the Horn of Africa. It is vaunted as the first indigenous, modern African form of government to achieve stability through a regime employing traditional social systems within a democratising framework. Somaliland is not a developmental state, but *has* provided significant stability and security for its citizens. The state remains weak and poorly-funded, with an economy marked by widespread poverty, little domestic production and probably unsustainable remittance-based consumption. There has been a lack of transparency in public finance management with little parliamentary oversight. From our perspective, the view that Somaliland is a hybrid of 'modernisation' and 'traditional' (clan) practices bears some validity but fails to factor in the complex and changing contestation of securocrats, past and present diasporas, political Islamists, women's groups, international and domestic civil society, and the space granted to outsiders in negotiations. Somaliland has rather been shaped by a combination of and conflicts between 'nightwatchmen' and securocrats, and democratising and traditional or patriarchal forms – all of which hold significant developmental implications.

Much of the process of democratisation has been driven by a public desire to avoid a return to conflict accompanied by an urge to win international recognition, although yoking the two has proved problematic. In 1999 the then President Egal pronounced that recognition would only come through democratisation – meaning democracy was seen as instrumental rather than an inherent good and built on formal electoral processes. One aspect missing was the understanding that viable governance entails a two-way relationship with civil society based on respect for autonomy and the division of labour, including the tracking of government performance and a willingness to be open to policy dialogue.

In combining this 'instrumental and formalistic' approach to democracy with a securocratic mentality, the dialogue has proven problematic. The previous president ignored or attempted to subvert civil society – notably the human rights network, SHURONET. Equally he ignored the opposition parties who have since 2005 controlled parliament. The problem for development has been that the state spends most of its paltry revenues on security.

#### *The Case for Recognition*

In 2001 a referendum in Somaliland showed 97 percent of the population in favour of independence, and Somaliland has essentially ruled itself, given the lack of a central government in Somalia. But getting recognition from the rest of the world has proved troublesome. African leaders are hesitant to acknowledge the claim for fear of stirring up more chaos in Somalia. They also do not want to encourage rebels elsewhere on the continent who desire independent states of their own. An African Union fact-finding mission declared in 2005 that Somaliland's status was "unique and self-justified in African political history," and that "the case should not be linked to the notion of 'opening a Pandora's box.'" The International Crisis Group, recommended in a subsequent report "Somaliland, Time for African Union leadership" that the African Union address the issue soon "to prevent a deeply rooted dispute from evolving into an open conflict." The report called on the African Union to name a senior envoy to consult with key players and report back to the African Union's Peace and Security Council. In addition, the report called on the AU's Peace and Security Council to familiarise its members with the case of Somaliland. Finally it called on the AU, meanwhile, to grant Somaliland interim observer status. Essentially the report argued 'Is it fair to keep Somaliland hostage to events in Mogadishu and the surrounding areas or should Somaliland be rewarded for creating stability and democratic

governance out of a part of the chaos that is the failed state of Somalia?' However those recommendations proved too sensitive and instead the African Union shelved the case where it has remained for the past for six years.

On a purely technical reading, Somaliland probably has a stronger case for international recognition than does Southern Sudan, Eritrea or Kosovo. Somaliland was administered through most of the colonial period as a British protectorate, while other parts of the Somali territories were controlled by the Italians, the British in Kenya, Ethiopia, or the French in Djibouti. At independence, Somaliland even enjoyed several days of widely recognised sovereignty, before (willingly) joining with the ex-Italian territory in the south. Somaliland can therefore be described as a formerly independent state reasserting its independent international personality.

Focussing specifically on the comparison between Somaliland and Southern Sudan, the major difference lies in the fact that there exists no 'established state' in Somalia which could legitimately, even grudgingly, give 'some degree of consent' to Somaliland's separation.

This leaves Somaliland in something of a dilemma: while international acceptance of Southern Sudan's overwhelming support for independence holds enormous emotional and symbolic significance for many Somalilanders, they remain hostage to the chaos that has reigned for so long in the south. Regrettably, that situation has long cost Somaliland dear. With a recognised but ineffective and far from legitimate government (Transitional Federal Government – TFG) in the south holding the right to negotiate on behalf of the whole of the now defunct Somali Democratic Republic, Somaliland is prevented from accessing bilateral aid, and struggles to raise funds for essential state activities.

It therefore occupies an invidious position: it has neither a functional relationship with a southern Somali state that is capable of accessing critical investment, nor can it access much of that investment itself. If it is to secure the recognition that would resolve that dilemma, it must argue the case for a further expansion in the criteria for recognised sovereignty. Somaliland has made impressive strides in establishing a viable democracy, so coupled with the evident will of the majority of the population, it has a case for arguing that other states should not stand in the way of its self-determination. However, that argument demands a further expansion of the principles that were called on to justify recognition for other new states.

The international will to make such an accommodation is seriously limited. Somaliland lies at the intersection of several geopolitical faultlines which tend to favour the status quo. Egypt prefers to hold onto the hope of a united Somalia as a bulwark against Ethiopia, and it is hard to see any new dispensation in Cairo altering that. Ethiopia is happy with a fragmented series of semi-stable Somali entities on its doorstep. The West is paranoid about an Islamist takeover in the south to the degree they cannot bear to entertain the thought of abandoning the TFG, although the EU has said that the TFG needs to relinquish power by the end of August 2011. The Islamists themselves believe fervently in a greater Somali caliphate. Even Uganda and Burundi make significant cash out of foreign sponsorship of peacekeeping troops and are happy to see that continue. While Somaliland's stability is valued by many of those (notably neighbours and the West), the appetite for recognition remains limited.

A gradual process which we have dubbed 'incremental recognition' is perhaps the best available option. However, this too presents significant barriers. It requires a level of Somaliland diplomatic aptitude that has been notable by its absence in the past. The Somaliland state has long been too sparsely-resourced, governments too

unsophisticated in their approach to recognition, and the populace too paranoid about 'contact' with Somalia to allow the necessary subtlety in diplomatic terms.

In the final analysis, this latter option still offers the best avenue for Somaliland, but it places great onus on the government to raise their game significantly. Perhaps even more problematically, it also requires a public relaxation of attitudes to engagement with those who are politically active in the south. To date, numerous initiatives designed to 'share' experiences or to discuss possible ways forward have been sabotaged by a public eager to see malign intent in every such contact. The fervent belief held by many Somalilanders and fanned by domestic media is that any meaningful discourse represents an underhand attempt to effect reunification with Somalia.

While the hurdles are considerable, though, there are a number of factors playing in favour of this incremental strategy. Key international actors –including both the US and UK and some African voices – are showing signs of fatigue after successive and often dramatic policy failures in southern Somalia. This is yet to play out in the form of major policy shifts, but there have been minor adjustments (eg a dual-track policy announced by Johnnie Carson and Andrew Mitchell's rather fudgy pledge to increase UK aid to Somaliland by a greater proportion than a promised hike in aid to the TFG – he promised it in Hargeisa but weaselled his way out of that promise while in Nairobi). There is a new and more energetic government in Somaliland, and even Kenya has started talking about offering greater support to 'regional' administrations. On top of that, the TFG's mandate expires in August 2011.

Now that a new government has been in place for almost a year, after presidential elections in June 2010, there are a number of questions that will determine fundamentally the ways in which traditional institutions interact with the (Western) norms of nation-state democracy. Clan will continue to play a significant yet dynamic role in the political realm, while external actors, from private, public and non-governmental sectors, must also expand their involvement. There were hopes of the government effecting a change not just from the securocratic and non-transparent practices of former President Riyale, but in the nature of the state towards a more interventionist and pro-poor model. There has been some progress in this direction, but performance has been mixed. On the first day of the new regime, the government delivered on a pledge to abolish the unpopular security committees. These committees were originally established to address urgent issues of security in the wake of the civil war; these committees had been permitted to imprison without trial and they lay outside any due judicial process. A new National Security Board was established, to provide security, defend borders and fight against terrorism. The judiciary, however, remains ineffective, corrupt, and subject to executive pressure. It is also alleged to be corrupt and non-professional with untrained clerks acting as judges. A seasoned observer described the system as 'a hell of a mess which will take a lot of cleaning up. It's still based largely on judicial practice under Siyaad Barre – i.e. who has the most money wins'. The new government also appears almost as suspicious as the old one of independent journalists, shown by a series of arrests of journalists and editors on charges that were, at best, dubious.

The position of women has been another key element in the fight to further and deepen democratisation and Kulmiye has, as well as its clan base, majority support among women, youth, civil society and diaspora. Activists cautiously welcomed the increase in female cabinet ministers from 5% to 20% but pointed out this still only means two ministers and an assistant minister (although the cabinet has shrunk in size). There is also a woman commissioner on the Human Rights Commission. The new (female) Minister for Labour and Social Affairs is, unlike her predecessor, open

to dialogue with civil society. Women's groups welcomed these developments, with the umbrella network NAGAAD promptly submitting an advisory paper on gender issues to the government. However, women's groups are looking for much more tangible progress and this still appears largely distant. There is, for example, little movement on key issues such as proposed 30% quotas for women in parliament.

There has been an improved relationship with civil society. A new NGO Act defining roles and responsibilities for NGOs as well as giving them legal protection was signed into being while a number of new ministers have civil society backgrounds. Former NGO activists include one of the female cabinet members, Zamzam Abdi, now Minister of Higher Education and formerly Executive Director of the Committee of Concerned Somalis (CCS) and ex-Chair of the human rights network, SHURONET. The new Minister of Planning was himself a founding member of the NGO Somali Relief Association (SOMRA) in the UK in the early 90s, and has spent the past few years working with the private sector *hawala* (money transfer company), Dahabshiil. Early in his new ministerial role, he held his first coordination meeting with the UN and international NGOs and presented new guidelines for aid coordination. In addition, there is the promise of forums for domestic civil society to engage with government and to monitor performance, including input into the budgetary process.

However there has been disquiet expressed over this new NGO law in that it could, according to aid workers and donors, undermine international humanitarian work. While establishing a legal framework for NGOs to ensure their activities are in line with the government's development priorities and to improve accountability and transparency is fine in principle, much of the wording of the law appears ambiguous. Foreign agencies working in Somaliland are particularly worried about article 35 (3), which states: "International NGOs shall not become implementers for other international NGOs and UN organisations working in the country." While the aim of encouraging international NGOs and UN agencies to work with local NGOs and local businesses for implementing projects to build their capacity, useful for when international NGOs leave is laudable, there are fears that a blanket application of the principle, rather than a case-by-case approach, could drastically reduce overall donor funding. Some programmes being carried out require specific technical expertise that is not easily available in-country.

Before the elections, the (then Shadow) Foreign Minister spoke of taking a far more nuanced approach to Somaliland's neighbours, including pursuing reconciliation with Somalia and Puntland, as well as with other Somali groups and neighbours in the Horn in general. This necessarily requires that Somaliland address specific sensitivities on the question of recognition, for which neighbours remain the key.

In a recent talk in London, one of the authors floated the concept of 'incremental recognition' in which we suggest that Somaliland leaders engage in confidence-building measures, such as pursuing the possibility of greater engagement with regional bodies such as the IGAD forum (Intergovernmental Authority on Development). The premise is that this would allow Somaliland themselves to assume a more active and self-directing role in the pursuit of recognition, setting modest incremental objectives that are nevertheless achievable, and should one day lead to a situation in which full recognition represents mere acceptance of an *ipso facto* condition. Such an approach would contrast with past tendencies to emphasise recognition as a one-stop solution requiring a single, substantial policy shift on the part of other nations. The new policy seemed to reap rewards with the unexpectedly positive presidential visit to Djibouti in which President Silanyo was awarded red carpet status as if he were a recognised head of state. The long-closed Somaliland

liaison office was also reopened, marking a shift from the rocky relations between Djibouti and the Riyale regime. It may be that this change is linked to the new fibre-optic cable coming into Somaliland via Djibouti. A number of government advisers themselves have links with Djibouti, and there were accusations within Somaliland that the agreement had favoured Djibouti against Somaliland interests.

Having initially viewed the new Somaliland government with suspicion, Ethiopia also hosted a Somaliland delegation led by Mohamed Abdillahi Omar, the new Minister of Foreign Affairs. In so doing they indicated a willingness to work with the new administration. Hargeisa has also seen a visit from the new UN Envoy to Somalia, apparently at the invitation of the Norwegian Refugee Council. Significantly, the Executive Secretary of IGAD, Mahboub Maalim, also visited Sheikh Veterinary School and met the President, noting that his visit marked a new era in the relationship between IGAD and Somaliland.

However, relations with Puntland have continued to be tense, with the contested sovereignty of areas of Sanaag and Sool complicated by recent accusations from Puntland that Somaliland was harbouring and indeed promoting the 'terrorist' Mohamed Said 'Atom'. Puntland forces had clashed with Atom in the mountainous area of Galgala, and accused Somaliland variously of sending militia to fight alongside him and of sheltering him when he fled. The Somaliland account inevitably differed from this, with senior politicians declaring Atom a terrorist and insisting that the two territories were cooperating over terrorism. These claims were repeated to us when we spoke to the Somaliland President and the Minister of Foreign Affairs in London in November 2010. They suggested that the dispute was essentially between the Puntland administration and local clan groups. Since that date, the situation in the border areas with Ethiopia near the town of Buhodle has also deteriorated, with renewed fighting between Somaliland forces and those of a breakaway militia titling themselves SSC<sup>1</sup> early in 2011 resulting in significant fatalities. The same group was responsible for the election day clash near Kala Baydh.

A further significant problem lies in the seeming continuation of a position of the Riyale government in the form of suspicion of and attacks on press freedom. This started with the suspension twice of the right of the popular Somali cable broadcaster Universal TV to work in Somaliland in retaliation for having 'treated Somaliland unfairly'. The first suspension was subsequently lifted, but was renewed when the broadcaster was caught displaying bodies from southern Somali areas and claiming that they were fatalities of the SSC clashes. The Chief Editor of the partisan Yool daily newspaper was also threatened by ministers and security personnel for unfavourable coverage. A further instance saw Mohamud Abdi Jama, the editor of the daily newspaper 'Waaheen'<sup>2</sup>, sentenced to three years imprisonment for publishing articles which accused the government of nepotism and an official of having appointed his own clan members to posts. Mohamud was sentenced to three years in prison and fined. He was subsequently granted a presidential pardon after global pressure on the government and released after spending over a month in prison. He was then awarded the Free Press Africa Award for 2011 at the CNN Multichoice African journalist of the year ceremony.

Other journalists from the Saxafi, Hargeisa Star, Ogaal and Yool newspapers are also facing charges of criminal defamation – all of which has attracted international

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<sup>1</sup> The initials refer to the areas of Sool, Sanaag and Cayn, portions of which are claimed by clans opposed to Somaliland.

<sup>2</sup> Waaheen belongs to Ahmed Hussein Essa, a long-time politician with good insider knowledge but with a combative past inside Kulmiye.

criticism. The National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ) protested over continuing intimidation of journalists in Somaliland, following the arrest on 10 May of a reporter from the Hargeisa-based Haatuf daily newspaper, Ahmed Adan Hirsi, known as Ahmed Dhere, in Berbera. This appears to have happened after a complaint from Berbera district commissioner against the journalist. Hopes that the new administration would not resort systematically to the measures of the prior regime, which had a tendency to lock up perceived opponents, including journalists, for lengthy periods have begun to fade – even though the new media spokesperson for the government is himself an ex-journalist. It had been thought that there was a more intuitive understanding of the importance of an independent judiciary, press and civil society from the new government from the securocratic Riyale mindset. This is yet to be vindicated. The presidential pardon granted to the Waaheen editor was welcome but did little to alter the perception that moves against the media tend to be far too arbitrary and open to political manipulation. There is thus a significant need for work on fully institutionalising the freedom of the media, particularly in such areas as making defamation a civil rather than a criminal offence, and in local governors being able to organise the arrest of journalists. Even though the new government is so far less guilty of unreasonable media suppression than its predecessors, some of the actions they have taken still amount to undue harassment.

Perhaps this relates to the wider worries that commentators and people on the street see little evidence of a unifying vision. In the nearly twelve months since taking power the concentration appears to be on reshuffling the institutions and getting rid of supposedly corrupt civil servants, while creating new agencies such as the Anti Corruption Commission. Essentially some charge that Kulmiye did not have a plan for governing. This line holds that they concentrated too hard on winning the election on an anti-government platform and, despite the high expectations of the population, they are now weighed down by the day-to-day job of governing. One commentator opined that the President seems to be overwhelmed and that he lacks the stamina for the job, relying instead on others to do the work for him.

We have had a year now to see whether such criticism is well-founded. Complaints about a lack of vision and unnecessary levels of negativity seem to hold some validity. Too many civil servants were fired for what appeared no fault of their own other than (inevitable) ties to the previous administration. In the process, competent as well as less able individuals were lost. Equally, there have been concerning indications that the government has lacked a consistent agenda, with ministers too willing to embark on action at odds with the positions of other members of the executive. It is possible that the anti-media moves described were a manifestation of this tendency.

There is nevertheless donor goodwill. In September 2010, the US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs announced a new policy on Somaliland that would see 'aggressive' engagement with the administrations there and in Puntland (Carson, 2010). Given that such engagement is likely to be highly focused on an anti-terrorist/anti-political Islamist agenda, these words are not necessarily reassuring for Somalis with echoes of the previous use of surrogates to 'police the badlands'. Can Somaliland try to use this to its own advantage? As it attempts to reach out more actively and to establish a more nuanced approach to international and regional players, increasing international acceptance of Somaliland as an autonomous political entity could assist significantly. The US shift is part of a 'dual track' strategy which will see the US continue to support the Mogadishu-based Transitional Federal Government, but which will also result in an increase in direct aid to Somaliland, so the possibility for this and similar adjustments in attitude to result in tangible benefit for Somaliland is real.



Donors have promised to channel an increased proportion of aid directly to Somaliland e.g, 40% of British aid to Somalia will go to Somaliland, amid talk of direct budget support for the government. If implemented, which has not yet happened, this would mark a significant shift in donor engagement with Somaliland, contributing materially to the process of incremental recognition mentioned above.

Somaliland has a significant opportunity given the impending expiry of the mandate of the Transitional Federal Government in the south and the EU insisting that it resigns once its mandate expires. The TFG has long represented an explicit obstacle if Somaliland is to extend the depth and breadth of its formal engagement with the international community. Negotiation with donors over their future therefore represents a very real opportunity for Somaliland, along with those amongst the international diplomatic community who would like to see a change in the nature of that engagement, to leverage a further and more substantial enhancement in international acceptance of Somaliland.

### *Conclusion*

The election of a fresh administration in Somaliland promised much and in the first part of their term they have delivered on some of that promise. Early moves to disband security committees and to improve relations with civil society were welcome, and some successes have been achieved in foreign policy. Set against these advances have been continued harassment of media representatives. Similarly, a policy of unnecessary replacement of civil servants provided fuel to those complaining that the administration was too narrowly focused on clan and political appointment.

There is also some merit to the criticism that the government has failed to display a genuinely coherent leadership for the country. Again, this is an area in which the previous administration was signally poor, so setting a low benchmark. It is small comfort therefore that the new government has at least improved on that record. In future, they will need to be far more clear-sighted and long-term in their vision if they are to maximise their potential in garnering outside support and in sustaining the momentum for democracy and development.

In terms of understanding the potential and nature of the Somaliland state as a catalyst for transformation, we need to note that in general there has been little perception of the state as a developmental entity. The promise, however, of free primary and intermediate education and doubling of teachers' salaries along with those of other public servants, marks a move in that direction, although questions remain over the availability of resources. The focus hitherto has largely been on internal survival in the context of perceived external threat. Such a focus provided the previous regime with a seeming legitimacy to concentrate on stability and use the great desire of the population for post-civil-war peace to entrench itself in power and use that for economic gain. Clan has been the basis of social networks and safety nets, and largely the state has not attempted to capture that role in contrast to the 'flight from the state' elsewhere, meaning greater space for social and economic interventions from citizens. Ideas emanating from time to time in the diaspora on the more developmental and interventionist role of the state (but without the resources) may lead to contrasting views within the new government. There is, despite the lack of recognition, a greater than usual internal and external acceptance of the legitimacy of the state and an identification of the great mass of citizens with it (with the exception of the areas bordering Puntland). To that extent in contrast with large areas of Africa, there does appear to be greater congruence between identity, legitimacy and territory. Rather than the clichéd 'hybrid' state combining 'traditional'

and modernising forces, Somaliland has been shaped by a combination of and conflicts between 'night watchmen' and securocrats, and democratising and traditional or patriarchal forms. The balance of different social forces that underlie them is also shifting. The support base of the Kulmiye governing party appears progressive and developmental but the moves against the media show that it is entirely possible that state organs can too easily reflect the structural inheritance of the previous regime.

Finally some possibly random thoughts on how useful Somaliland's experience is for the very different case of South Sudan. Neither of us claims special expertise on the new Sudanese nation and both are chary of trying to cram comparisons that are not there. Firstly for South Sudan, recognition will be followed by state building – the reverse of Somaliland's yet to be achieved case for recognition. It does as stated above give the opportunity for utilising well-understood indigenous forms free from outside formulae, but without significant resources. Secondly South Sudan can see that Somaliland has survived for 20 years in a hostile neighbourhood through strong congruence of identity, territory (mostly) and nation, but with clan and religion playing both centripetal and centrifugal roles. A great many Somalilanders undoubtedly see South Sudan's political recognition as achievement of precisely the primary objective they themselves have long held. This perspective simultaneously highlights the perceived injustice of non-recognition and fuels hopes that Somaliland success might lie just around the corner. Civil war brought both states into being albeit with very different trajectories. South Central Somalia is weak and ineffective whereas North Sudan can certainly been seen as manipulative and able to enforce its policies. It would seem that the one lesson that Somaliland might have for South Sudan is the importance of concentrating on incremental consolidation of the 'building blocks' of state. It is probably no stretch to consider the Somaliland experience: a resource-poor government forced to proceed slowly, constantly renegotiating the terms under which its domestic polity has been willing to extend support or tolerance of its existence. This gradual and consensus-based process has been painfully slow with much of its rationale focused on the security of citizens rather than grand development plans. Certainly no Somaliland government has possessed the resources to institute such ambitious programmes. The Southern Sudanese administration too lacks non-physical resources, and arguably one of the challenges they face relates to the temptation inherent in possibly rich external support. Importantly, the South Sudan state must, as was the case in Somaliland, retain the support of a populace exhausted after years of conflict and under-development. While enthusiasm for independence runs strong at the moment, expectations are unrealistically high and tensions are probably masked rather than resolved. Just as Somaliland's erstwhile SNM allies resorted to conflict themselves shortly after the 1991 declaration of independence, the risk of latent disputes erupting into violence in South Sudan must logically be real.

South Sudan has promised that it will not be a failed state and is seemingly aware that resources – both oil and external development funds – can be both a blessing and a curse; not least through 'Dutch disease'. Both hold the basis for development through investment and outside expertise but also corruption – not that one needs oil for corruption.

There are also dangers in the South Sudan situation in terms of their far greater foreign, including UN, presence in contrast to the largely correct rhetoric from Somaliland of 'doing it on our own'. Without a well-thought through development plan, there is always the danger of becoming another 'Donors' Republic of Mozambique'. It would seem at present that there are certainly a list of priorities for South Sudan – rural development, good governance, service delivery, a new land

law, and, importantly, combating climate change. Again the lack of state resources in Somaliland meant that that nation was never confronted with these problems and the means to tackle them to any great extent, being forced instead to leave the process to civil society, donors and diaspora while itself concentrating on security and a form of state-building. This has meant that the Somaliland state has been able to avoid responsibility for tackling some very urgent problems. On the one hand, that avoidance was justified by circumstance, but on the other, it has meant that the state holds little capacity to address issues that in some instances would be best tackled through the institutions of a viable and functional state.

There may be lessons – positive or negative – that Somaliland can take from watching (or indeed engaging with?) South Sudan as it attempts simultaneous nation-building and development. How South Sudan uses the expected \$2 billion per annum from oil revenues plus outside investment and aid will be instructive. Somaliland has been highlighted for more aid but there needs to be a discursive Somali dialogue on priorities between government, donors, diaspora and civil society on such matters as ending high youth unemployment and other key challenges. Is downstream processing of livestock products etc possible? How does Somaliland give outsiders financial guarantees when remaining unrecognised? It is unlikely that South Sudan can provide the answer to these and other questions, but scrutiny of each others' history could nevertheless be instructive.

Michael Walls/ Steve Kibble  
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