

## SOMALILAND; THE VIABILITY OF A LIBERAL PEACEBUILDING CRITIQUE BEYOND STATE BUILDING, STATE FORMATION AND HYBRIDITY

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## **SOMALILAND; THE VIABILITY OF A LIBERAL PEACEBUILDING CRITIQUE BEYOND STATE BUILDING, STATE FORMATION AND HYBRIDITY**

Somaliland portrays the typical characteristics of a liberal peacebuilding context; normally a post conflict environment, which peace-builders are accused of defining as traumatised, dysfunctional, irrational, and immature, therefore legitimising models and solutions defined by outsiders rather than local actors. It is also strategically located; has possibilities for natural resources such as oil; and has a presence of terrorist groups and thus is within a region that presents security challenges viewed through the lens of the global war on terror. Somaliland, also hosts numerous local and international NGOs whose impact on the development landscape beyond relief is questionable. However, there is a dearth of critical engagement or interest in Somaliland beyond the state building/state formation analysis and even then, it is comparison to the failure of state formation in Somalia. Thus, I argue that outside the process of the oft cited example of state building in Somaliland, there is need to critically engage with other peacebuilding processes that are ongoing; and which have a liberal agenda. I opine that a critical review of such activities would offer a more nuanced and broader critique but most importantly, it will highlight the limitations and challenges of interventions in fragile contexts.

This paper draws on evidence gathered during the author's fieldwork in Somaliland in 2010 and in 2012 including some of the recent studies. The PhD research is an analysis of the viability of the Liberal Peacebuilding critique in Somaliland particularly focusing on the implementation of mine action. This article draws on the critical literature on liberal peacebuilding with the aim of challenging the current debate and calling for the deepening of the critique beyond the failure of state formation.

***Keywords: Somalia, Somaliland, Liberal Peace, Non-Recognition, Liberal peacebuilding critique***

## Introduction

Peacebuilding interventions have evolved from a strictly post-conflict undertaking, to a concept with a broader meaning and therefore broader activities. Tschirgi argues that the term ‘peacebuilding’ has gradually expanded to refer to integrated approaches to address violent conflict at different phases of the conflict cycle.<sup>1</sup> This set of practices includes both short and long term interventions organised by both local and external actors and were rooted firmly within the UN Secretary General’s efforts in redefining peacebuilding through the report ‘*An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peace-making and Peacekeeping*’ which proposed a strategy for resolving conflicts.<sup>2</sup>

The *Agenda for Peace*, coincided with the ambitious UN mandate in Somalia. Interventions took place in intra-state conflicts even when the state at that point did not present a military threat to its neighbours.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, it implicitly claimed a formulaic universal template, and the peace that it proposed was State-centric at heart and considered sovereign States to be the main actors and to which Somalia became a true reflection of the same.<sup>4</sup> Thus more frequently now, peacebuilding or any analysis of conflict are characterized by a state-bias, and as a consequence peacebuilding is associated with state-building.<sup>5</sup> Peacebuilding is therefore viewed by critics as a form of neo-colonial or neo-imperial control of the global South by the North/West whereby

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<sup>1</sup> Neclâ Tschirgi, *Peacebuilding as the Link between Security and Development: Is the Window of Opportunity Closing?* (International Peace Academy, Studies in Security and Development, 2003). Pg. 1

<sup>2</sup> Boutros Boutros-Ghali, "An Agenda for Peace : Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking, and Peace-Keeping : Report of the Secretary-General Pursuant to the Statement Adopted by the Summit Meeting of the Security Council on 31 January 1992," United Nations, <http://www.un.org/Docs/SG/agpeace.html>.

<sup>3</sup> Samuel M. Makinda, *Seeking Peace from Chaos : Humanitarian Intervention in Somalia* (Boulder, Colo. ; London: Lynne Rienner, 1993), p. 61; Nicolas Lemay-Hébert and Sophie Toupin, "Peacebuilding: A Broad Review of Approaches, Policies and Practices," *A discussion Paper for Peacebuild, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (Canada)* (2011), [http://eprints.bham.ac.uk/660/1/LemayHebert\\_PeacebuildingApproaches.pdf](http://eprints.bham.ac.uk/660/1/LemayHebert_PeacebuildingApproaches.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> Oliver P. Richmond, "A Genealogy of Peace and Conflict Theory," in *Palgrave Advances in Peacebuilding : Critical Developments and Approaches*, ed. O. P. Richmond (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

<sup>5</sup> Daniela Körppen, "Space Beyond the Liberal Peacebuilding Consensus—a Systemic Perspective," in *The Non-Linearity of Peace Processes - Theory and Practice of Systemic Conflict Transformation*, ed. D. Körppen, N. Ropers, and Hans J. Gießmann (Opladen/Farmington Hills: Barbara Budrich Verlag, 2011).

outsiders seek to shape the structures of these weaker societies into their own prevailing notions of ‘good’ or ‘civilised governance’ in what Paris refers to as *mission civilisatrice*.<sup>6</sup>

In tandem the mainstream academic discourses on practices of conflict management overtly moved away from peace and reconciliation towards governance and state-building mirroring donor and research funding agendas in a move that was substantial and systematic. This is partly attributed to the post 9/11 era which brought in a new dimension of state security, conceptualization of peace and its implementation. It also led to the focus on ‘failed states’ or ‘states in situations of fragility’ creating a strong interest in the debates on ‘state building’, as an over-arching concept. This analysis further associated peacebuilding with state building conflating the two.<sup>7</sup>

Balthasar attributes the conflation of peacebuilding and state building to the establishment of the Peacebuilding Architecture at the 2005 World Summit and the first forum for political dialogue that aimed at bringing together countries affected by conflict and fragility, development partners, and civil society.<sup>8</sup> Thus the preferred international interventions were increasingly about the attempts to establish liberal-democratic orders to address the root causes of conflicts and this had limited success.

Conversely, the emerging dominant critiques of such inventions focused on ‘states’ and their failure to succeed in rebuilding states. This meant that inevitably, the critics also limited their interrogation to contexts such as Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Somalia, Kosovo, Bosnia and Iraq,<sup>9</sup> which had heavily militarised peacebuilding

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<sup>6</sup> "International Peacebuilding and the ‘Mission Civilisatrice’," *Review of International Studies* 28, no. 04 (2002).

<sup>7</sup> Edward Newman, "'Liberal' Peacebuilding Debates," in *New Perspectives on Liberal Peacebuilding*, ed. Edward Newman, Roland Paris, and Oliver P Richmond (2009).

<sup>8</sup> Dominik Balthasar, "'Peace-Building as State-Building'? Rethinking Liberal Interventionism in Contexts of Emerging States," *Conflict, Security & Development* 17, no. 6 (2017).

<sup>9</sup> Roland Paris, *At War's End: Building Peace after Civil Conflict* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).; Oliver P. Richmond and Jason Franks, "Liberal Hubris? Virtual Peace in Cambodia," *Security Dialogue* 38, no. 1 (2007).; Jonathan Goodhand and Mark Sedra, "Rethinking Liberal Peacebuilding, Statebuilding and Transition in Afghanistan: An Introduction," *Central Asian Survey* 32, no. 3 (2013); Michael Pugh, "Postwar Political Economy in Bosnia and

interventions were recognised states largely excluding other peacebuilding interventions and marginal contexts. These critiques therefore couldn't apply to all post-conflict settings.<sup>10</sup> Thus, the critics and their critiques are 'state-centric' tend to base their analysis on democratisation and therefore such offer a generalised analysis of failure. Such a restricted approach ignores other post-conflict contexts and types of interventions. Somaliland is a politically unrecognised state, not endowed with natural resources but rather growing evidence for the potential oil and gas,<sup>11</sup> has had interventions broadly bearing the hallmarks which the liberal peacebuilding critiques are based. However, unlike other contexts, it has managed to secure relative peace and stability for over 25 years after its reassertion of sovereignty without external support; whilst this successful process in establishing a viable state has generated a lot of scholarly<sup>12</sup> interest including special editions of journals,<sup>13</sup> there has been a limited critical analysis of other interventions taking place in Somaliland. When critical scholars have engaged with the same, this is framed within an analysis of the failure of

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Herzegovina: The Spoils of Peace," *Global Governance* 8, no. 4 (2002). Stein Sundstøl Eriksen, "The Liberal Peace Is Neither: Peacebuilding, State Building and the Reproduction of Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo," *International Peacekeeping* 16, no. 5 (2009); Jonathan Goodhand and Oliver Walton, "The Limits of Liberal Peacebuilding? International Engagement in the Sri Lankan Peace Process," *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 3, no. 3 (2009).

<sup>10</sup> Chandra Lekha Sriram, "Justice as Peace? Liberal Peacebuilding and Strategies of Transitional Justice," *Global Society* 21, no. 4 (2007). Makes the same assertions.

<sup>11</sup> Jakob Grandjean Bambergger and Kristian Skovsted, "Concessions and Conflicts: Mapping Oil Exploration in Somalia and Ethiopia," (2016); Ken Menkhaus, "Conflict Assessment: Northern Kenya and Somaliland," *SSRN* (2015), <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2589109>.

<sup>12</sup> See the following as an illustration that state building remains the prevailing narrative that is mostly cited on Somaliland :Iqbal Jhazbhay, "Somaliland: Post-War Nation-Building and International Relations, 1991-2006" (PhD, University of the Witwatersrand, 2007); "Somaliland's Post-War Reconstruction: Rubble to Rebuilding," *International Journal of African Renaissance Studies - Multi-, Inter- and Transdisciplinarity* 3, no. 1 (2008).; Daniel Forti, "A Pocket of Stability: Understanding Somaliland," *ACCORD Occasional Papers*, no. issue 2 (2011), [http://www.accord.org.za/downloads/op/op\\_2011\\_2.pdf](http://www.accord.org.za/downloads/op/op_2011_2.pdf). Iqbal Jhazbhay, "Africa's Best Kept Secret; a Challenge to the International Community?: Somaliland: Essay," *African Security Review* 12, no. 4 (2003); Marleen Renders and Ulf Terlinden, "Negotiating Statehood in a Hybrid Political Order: The Case of Somaliland," *Development and Change* 41, no. 4 (2010); Dominik Balthasar, "State-Making in Somalia and Somaliland" (London School of Economics, 2012); Steve Kibble and Michael Walls, "'Tradition and Modernity in Somaliland Beyond Polarity: Negotiating a Hybrid State'," in *Democratisation in Africa Conference* (Leeds University Centre for African Studies (LUCAS)2009); Micheal Walls and Steve Kibble, "Beyond Polarity: Negotiating a Hybrid State in Somaliland," *Africa Spectrum* 45 no. 1 (2010). Markus Virgil Hoehne, "Limits of Hybrid Political Orders: The Case of Somaliland," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 7, no. 2 (2013). Rebecca Richards, "Bringing the Outside In: Somaliland, Statebuilding and Dual Hybridity," *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 9, no. 1 (2015). Debora Valentina Malito, "Neutral in Favour of Whom? The Un Intervention in Somalia and the Somaliland Peace Process," *International Peacekeeping* 24, no. 2 (2017).

<sup>13</sup> See for example the *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, Special Issue Volume 7, 2013 Issue 2: *Effects of 'statelessness': dynamics of Somali politics, economy and society since 1991 articles by Hoehne*, "Limits of Hybrid Political Orders: The Case of Somaliland." Dominik Balthasar, "Somaliland's Best Kept Secret: Shrewd Politics and War Projects as Means of State-Making," *ibid.*; Nicole Stremmlau, "Hostages of Peace: The Politics of Radio Liberalization in Somaliland," *ibid.* Also Malito, "Neutral in Favour of Whom? The Un Intervention in Somalia and the Somaliland Peace Process."

liberal peacebuilding agenda viz a viz Somalia and even then, Somaliland is marginally mentioned within the discourse of hybridity.<sup>14</sup> I posit this is a result of a state centric approach to peacebuilding and therefore a generalised conclusion that liberal peacebuilding that is normally implemented by external actors has failed. Thus, an analysis of Somaliland, a non-recognised polity, relatively peaceful, and whose post conflict peacebuilding agenda was devoid of external actors is hardly scrutinised beyond a limited analysis of the hybrid political order. I further argue that the formative statebuilding period that was devoid of external actors has masked any enquiry or analysis into the role of external aid/actors in other areas of peacebuilding. Thus, the aim of this article is to reassert the importance of an analysis of Somaliland beyond the romanticised hybrid political order by demonstrating that there are opportunities to extend and deepen the prevailing liberal peacebuilding critiques. By presenting the case study of Somaliland, I postulate that there are salient context related challenges such as political non-recognition that contributes to entrenching the prevailing liberal peacebuilding critiques.

Using critical literature on liberal peace, this paper will draw on interview data and observations from the field work undertaken as part of my PhD project between 2010 and 2012. The participants were mainly purposively selected based on their mandates in relation to post conflict peacebuilding. These were those who interacted with the Mine Action Sector in Somaliland within the field of peace and conflict broadly defined. Thus, whilst some of the evidence relates specifically to this research period and in cognisant to the fact that contexts are not static, I have endeavoured to draw on later scholarly and institutional work from recent periods.

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<sup>14</sup> Volker Boege et al., "On Hybrid Political Orders and Emerging States: State Formation in the Context of 'Fragility'," (2008).  
Karl Sandstrom, "Cooptation, Acceptance and Resistance in the Somali 'Everyday'," in *Hybrid Forms of Peace*, ed. Oliver Richmond and Audra Mitchell (Springer, 2012).

## A 'fragile post conflict context'

Somaliland fits post conflict context, which peace-builders are accused of defining as traumatised, dysfunctional, irrational, and immature, therefore legitimising models and solutions defined by outsiders rather than local actors.<sup>15</sup> Following its unilateral declaration of independence in 1991, Somaliland inherited some challenges which are the legacy of the Cold and civil the wars. This was followed internal problems marked by episodes of large-scale violence.<sup>16</sup> This included total destruction of Hargeisa, killing more than 50,000 people at the time.<sup>17</sup> The government bombarded the region with artillery and aerial shelling reducing the region to rubble and leaving thousands of unexploded ordnance and dwellings and water points extensively mined.<sup>18</sup> Populations were displaced both internally and across the border in Ethiopia.<sup>19</sup> At the end of the civil strife, the society became militarised not just in terms of the size of its military and the influx of the weapons into the streets, but also because of the tendency to which intergroup relations and conflict were defined in narrow military terms.<sup>20</sup>

Today, Somaliland still faces enormous challenges including but not limited to governance and its institutions as these are primarily based on improving inter-clan harmony and mutual trust. Clan character continually permeates politics with many cabinet members owing their posts more to the need for perceived clan equilibrium in government than to their qualifications or political relevance. In every Presidential

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<sup>15</sup> Caroline Hughes and Vanessa Pupavac, "Framing Post-Conflict Societies: International Pathologisation of Cambodia and the Post-Yugoslav States," *Third World Quarterly* 26, no. 6 (2005). Citing Kevin M Cahill, *Preventive Diplomacy: Stopping Wars before They Start* (Routledge, 2013).; Paris, "International Peacebuilding and the 'Mission Civilisatrice'."; Mark Duffield, "Governing the Borderlands: Decoding the Power of Aid," *Disasters* 25, no. 4 (2001).

<sup>16</sup> Mark Bradbury, *Becoming Somaliland*, African Issues (Oxford: James Currey, 2008), p. 115.

<sup>17</sup> (Gundel, 2002: p 257).

<sup>18</sup> ICG, "Somaliland: Democratization and Its Discontent," *ICG Africa Report No. 66* (2003), <http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/africa/horn-of-africa/somalia/Somaliland%20Democratisation%20and%20Its%20Discontents.ashx>.

<sup>19</sup> Joel Frushone, "Welcome Home to Nothing: Refugees Repatriate to a Forgotten Somaliland " (Washington DC: U.S. Committee for Refugees, , 2001). pp 15Quote at p 257

<sup>20</sup> K. D. Bush, "Somalia: When Two Anarchies Meet " in *Canada and Missions for Peace Lessons from Nicaragua, Cambodia, and Somalia*, ed. Gregory Wirick and Robert Miller (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre 1998).

appointment a clan balance is the overriding factor including the seat allocations in both houses of parliament.<sup>21</sup>

Somaliland is however, short of being a classic context associated with liberal peacebuilding interventions; critics have noted that peacebuilding operations and interventions take place in countries rich in natural resources, with a geopolitical or geostrategic importance.<sup>22</sup> Somaliland is not endowed with resources such as oil or minerals. However, geologists have speculated about the possibility of oil in the region for a long time;<sup>23</sup> prior to the collapse of the Somali State in December of 1990, a study funded by the World Bank and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), indicated the oil potential<sup>24</sup> of the *North of Somalia* (present day Somaliland).<sup>25</sup> Whilst previously Somaliland's hydrocarbon sector remained vastly underexplored recent studies have indicate interest has increased and foreign companies are now actively in the exploration.<sup>26</sup> Previously others had argued that the US military intervention in Somalia was partly driven by this.<sup>27</sup> Similarly, the geography of the region especially Somaliland, at the mouth of the Red Sea, favours oil exports. Even the deepest part of the country is only a few hundred kilometres from a coastline that sits along one of the

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<sup>21</sup> Timothy Othieno, "A New Donor Approach to Fragile Societies: The Case of Somaliland," *ODI Opinions No. 103* (2003), <http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/download/1903.pdf>.

<sup>22</sup> Zenonas Tziarras, "Liberal Peace and Peace-Building: Another Critique" *The Globalised World Post Research Paper*, (2012).

<sup>23</sup> M Kielmas, "Oil Hopes Hinge on North Somalia," *Petroleum economist* 58, no. 10 (1991).

<sup>24</sup> Several concessions, nearly two-thirds of Somalia, were allocated to the American oil giants Conoco, Amoco, Chevron and Phillips and at least three key wells were scheduled to be drilled in the final years before Siyyad Barre was overthrown and the nation plunged into chaos in January 1991. Similarly, according to Soma Oil, every potential hydrocarbon basin across East Africa is the subject of intensive interest and Somalia is at present the last remaining frontier on the region's energy map. Industry experts consider it to have huge prospective resources, both onshore and offshore. Soma Oil and Gas Exploration Company is based in the UK and its executive director is the former leader of the Conservative Party in Britain, Lord Michael Howard has been Chairman of Soma Oil and Gas since May 2013. According to its website, Soma Oil & Gas will be the first exploration company in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century to commence activity across Somalia in consultation with the Federal Government, starting with seismic surveying to establish the full extent of the country's oil and gas potential.

<sup>25</sup> See for example; Jamil A. Mubarak, "The "Hidden Hand" Behind the Resilience of the Stateless Economy of Somalia," *World Development* 25, no. 12 (1997); Afyare Abdi Elmi, "Understanding the Somalia Conflagration. Identity," *Political Islam and Peacebuilding*, New York (2010); Kielmas, "Oil Hopes Hinge on North Somalia."; OL Slind, SR DuToit, and AG Kidston, "The Hydrocarbon Potential of the East Africa Continental Margin," (1998).

<sup>26</sup> These include UK-based Ophir Energy, and AngloTurkish Genel Energy; others such as Ophir Energy and UAE-based Ras Al Khaimah Gas Company (RAK Gas) cited by Dominik Balthasar, "Oil in Somalia; Adding Fuel to the Fire?," (Mogadishu: Heritage Institute for Policy Studies, 2014). Pg. 3

<sup>27</sup> For example Sydney U Barnes, "Geology and Oil Prospects of Somalia, East Africa," *AAPG Bulletin* 60, no. 3 (1976).



world's busiest shipping routes.<sup>28</sup> Whilst natural resources haven't been the driver for interventions as has been the case in other contexts, hydrocarbon licensing and exploration have gained considerable attention as a driver for conflict for Somaliland as government concessions for oil exploration in the East has raising tensions that have led to temporary suspension of exploration.<sup>29</sup>

As a region, the Horn's strategic importance has previously attracted outside interest, leading to international interventions often resulting in dire consequences for the stability, security and development of the whole region. The region is host to a complex nexus of challenges that lead to warfare and humanitarian catastrophe, has large 'ungoverned spaces'<sup>30</sup>, with weak and or failed states and hence is a target for illicit transnational networks, particularly terrorist and criminal groups.<sup>31</sup> This means that post 9/11 the region became an important battle ground in the framework of the so-called war on terror, driven principally by factors related to the collapse of the Somali state; the emergence of terrorist groups; and escalation of piracy off the Somali coast.<sup>32</sup> Whilst Somaliland remains relatively stable, one critical feature relates to the presence and the proliferation of armed groups like the Al Shabaab which possesses a network throughout Somaliland and whose visibility included suicide bombings in Hargeisa in October 2008.<sup>33</sup> There is further concern that with that oil exploration or extraction Al

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<sup>28</sup> The Horn of Africa region has recently seen some major oil and gas discoveries in the world in recent years. According to Deloitte & Touché, "The Deloitte Guide to Oil and Gas in East Africa 'Where Potential Lies'," (Dar es Salaam 2013). advisory, onshore oil discoveries in Uganda have been followed by discoveries in Kenya with world-class discoveries of gas in Tanzania and Mozambique

<sup>29</sup> Menkhaus, "Conflict Assessment: Northern Kenya and Somaliland".

<sup>30</sup> "Terrorist Activities in Ungoverned Spaces: Evidence and Observations from the Horn of Africa" (paper presented at the Brenthurst Foundation's 'Southern Africa and International Terrorism' workshop. Tswalu, South Africa, 2007). defines "Ungoverned spaces" as a term meant to connote a general condition of weak to non-existent state authority in a defined geographic area (p:2). According to the 'Report of the Commission on Weak States and US National Security', illicit transnational networks, particularly terrorist and criminal groups, target weak and failed states for their activities."

<sup>31</sup> S Eizenstat, John E Porter, and J Weinstein, "On the Brink: Weak States and Us National Security," *Washington, DC: Center for Global Development* (2004).

<sup>32</sup> See Redie Bereketeab, "The Horn of Africa: Intra-State and Inter-State Conflicts and Security," (2013); Malinda Smith, ed. *Securing Africa: Post-9/11 Discourses on Terrorism* (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2010).

<sup>33</sup> Menkhaus, "Conflict Assessment: Northern Kenya and Somaliland"; "Stabilisation and Humanitarian Access in a Collapsed State: The Somali Case," *Disasters* 34 (2010).

Shabaab targets in Somaliland might increase.<sup>34</sup> However, concerns over terrorism has had no significant a role in Somaliland as much as it has in the rest of Somalia, whilst piracy networks and therefore an international response has remained constrained in Puntland..

### **Towards a hybrid political order; ‘an internally led process of State building’<sup>35</sup>**

Following the collapse of the Somalia state and its degeneration into a classic example of a ‘failed State’, Somaliland went through a process of state rebuilding which saw the northern clans commence an internally driven process towards reconciliation as a means to state building. This culminated in Somaliland developing a hybrid system of government that incorporated an elected president and lower house of parliament with an upper house that consists of traditional clan elders known as the *guurti*.<sup>36</sup> The robust role of clan elders in managing conflict, applying customary law, and negotiating political disputes which is widely viewed as a key ingredient in Somaliland’s success.<sup>37</sup> Thus, Somaliland has become the prime example that liberal democratic statebuilding is not the only way to generate social order and has become a prime example a bottom up hybrid form of peacebuilding<sup>38</sup>; which the critics have offered as an alternative approach for peacebuilders.<sup>39</sup> Throughout its formative period, external support in form

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<sup>34</sup> Balthasar, "Oil in Somalia; Adding Fuel to the Fire?." Pg.79

<sup>35</sup> Taken here to be the formative period is roughly its first decade, 1991–2001 as defined by among others; Sarah G Phillips, "When Less Was More: External Assistance and the Political Settlement in Somaliland," *International Affairs* 92, no. 3 (2016).

<sup>36</sup> Walls and Kibble, "Beyond Polarity: Negotiating a Hybrid State in Somaliland." pp 5; describe a *guurti*, as any individual or group who assumes a mediatory role. They argue that this term has more recently been institutionalised and, many would argue, politicised in the Somaliland context through its application to the upper house of the Parliament. The etymology of the term refers to the necessary wisdom of any person or group responsible for mediating disputes and can be applied to individuals or groups at various levels (op cit, pg 8)

<sup>37</sup> Ken Menkhaus, "Bcpr Strategic Review - Somalia," in *Small Arms Survey*, ed. Ryan Nichols (UNDP’s Bureau for Conflict Prevention and Recovery (BCRP) 2006).

<sup>38</sup> Volker Boege et al., "On Hybrid Political Orders and Emerging States: What Is Failing - States in the Global South or Research and Politics in the West?," *Berghof Handbook for Conflict Transformation Dialogue Series* 8 (2009), [http://www.berghof-handbook.net/documents/publications/dialogue8\\_boegeetal\\_lead.pdf](http://www.berghof-handbook.net/documents/publications/dialogue8_boegeetal_lead.pdf).; see Renders and Terlinden, "Negotiating Statehood in a Hybrid Political Order: The Case of Somaliland."

<sup>39</sup> See for example Oliver P. Richmond, "Resistance and the Post-Liberal Peace," *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 38, no. 3 (2010); Michael C. Pugh, Neil Cooper, and Mandy Turner, *Whose Peace? : Critical Perspectives on the Political*

of foreign aid was insignificant thus any belligerents' access to external revenue from external actors attempting to end its civil wars was limited. Similarly, the process did not have to adhere to any deadlines such as those associated with liberal peacebuilding processes such as in the case of Somalia.<sup>40</sup>

The bottom up hybrid peace that emerged in Somaliland consisted of the fusion of local structures, practices, values and identities that were a result of an 'inclusive' participatory process which supports MacGinty's alternative conception of peacebuilding as one that explores indigenous approaches to conflict resolution and localised responses to conflict.<sup>41</sup> However as mentioned elsewhere Somaliland's 'bottom-up' 'hybrid' approach<sup>42</sup> was without external interveners. This process however became the subject of many academic enquiries<sup>43</sup> including emerging critical voices challenging the 'romanisation' of this notion of hybridity noting that the 'effectiveness and legitimacy of both 'modern' and 'traditional' actors have been undermined by their cohabitation'.<sup>44</sup> The process demonstrated the intention to 'stabilise' itself towards democracy with local participation and today positions itself by

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*Economy of Peacebuilding*, New Security Challenges (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); Boege et al., "On Hybrid Political Orders and Emerging States: What Is Failing - States in the Global South or Research and Politics in the West?"

<sup>40</sup> Sarah Phillips, "Political Settlements and State Formation - the Case of Somaliland.," *Research Paper 23* (2013), file:///C:/Users/snjeri/Downloads/Political%20Settlements%20and%20State%20Formation%20-%20the%20Case%20of%20Somaliland.pdf.

<sup>41</sup> "Hybrid Peace: The Interaction between Top-Down and Bottom-up Peace," *Security Dialogue* 41, no. 4 (2010); "Indigenous Peace-Making Versus the Liberal Peace," *Cooperation and Conflict* 43, no. 2 (2008).

<sup>42</sup> O. P. Richmond, "Beyond Liberal Peace? Responses to 'Backsliding' " in *New Perspectives in Liberal Peace*, ed. Edward Newman, Roland Paris, and Oliver P Richmond (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 2009); Roger Mac Ginty, *International Peacebuilding and Local Resistance: Hybrid Forms of Peace* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Niels Nagelhus Schia and John Karlsrud, "'Where the Rubber Meets the Road': Friction Sites and Local-Level Peacebuilding in Haiti, Liberia and South Sudan," *International Peacekeeping* 20, no. 2 (2013).

<sup>43</sup> Bradbury, *Becoming Somaliland*; Michael J Walls, "State Formation in Somaliland: Bringing Deliberation to Institutionalism" (PhD Thesis, UCL (University College London), 2011); Michael Walls and Hodan Elmi, "Indigenous Forms and External Interventions in a Somali Context," *REFLECTIONS AND LESSONS OF SOMALILAND'S* (2012); Marleen Renders, *Consider Somaliland: State-Building with Traditional Leaders and Institutions* (Brill, 2012); Balthasar, "State-Making in Somalia and Somaliland.," Mohammed Hassan Ibrahim and Ulf Terlinden, "Somaliland 'Home Grown' Peacemaking and Political Reconstruction " in *Whose Peace Is It Anyway? Connecting Somali and International Peacemaking* ed. Mark Bradbury and Sally Healy (London: Conciliation Resources, 2010); Iqbal Jhazbhay, "Somaliland: The Journey of Resistance, Reconciliation and Peace," *African Safety Promotion: A Journal of Injury and Violence Prevention* 7, no. 1 (2010); Ioan M Lewis, *Understanding Somalia and Somaliland : Culture, History, Society* (London: Hurst & Co., 2008).

<sup>44</sup> Hoehne, "Limits of Hybrid Political Orders: The Case of Somaliland." See also Dominik Balthasar, "From Hybridity to Standardization: Rethinking State-Making in Contexts of Fragility," *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 9, no. 1 (2015). Renders and Terlinden, "Negotiating Statehood in a Hybrid Political Order: The Case of Somaliland."

international norms of liberal democratic statehood with the intended outcome being international recognition.<sup>45</sup>

Whilst progress has been made, Somaliland has remained an unrecognised State and therefore endures blanket references of 'State failure' whilst being acknowledged as a region of Somalia that is an 'Oasis of peace'<sup>46</sup>, a 'pocket of stability'<sup>47</sup>, 'an oasis of security, reconciliation, and cooperation' or a 'pocket of peace' in the midst of chaos.<sup>48</sup>

Somaliland's failure to win international recognition therefore has resulted to international isolation which has had both positive and negative implications; The isolation meant that any belligerents lacked access to external revenues and therefore this contributed to the ability of Somaliland to contain and manage violence thereby allowing locally-driven solutions and institutions to emerge and peace to prevail.<sup>49</sup> Peacebuilding critics have long argued that external aid can have a political impact and can help decide whether peace endures or war resumes.<sup>50</sup> The importance of this cannot be disputed as this isolation contributed to the consolidation of peace during the most pertinent period however; however as I will demonstrate in the next section, the lack of external support was limited to the process of state formation.

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<sup>45</sup> Richmond and Franks, "Liberal Hubris? Virtual Peace in Cambodia," p. 30.

<sup>46</sup> Ian Fisher, "An Oasis of Peace in Somalia Seeks Freedom," *The New York Times*, 26 Nov 1999; Charlotte Gleave Riemann and Sam Gregg-Wallace, "Somaliland: An "Oasis of Peace" to Somalia's Chaos," *The Atlantic International Studies (ATLIS) Journal* 5, no. 08/09 Journal: Intervention (2009), <http://atlismta.org/online-journals/0809-journal-intervention/somaliland/>.

<sup>47</sup> Forti, "A Pocket of Stability: Understanding Somaliland".

<sup>48</sup> Aisha Ahmad, "Agenda for Peace or Budget for War: Evaluating the Economic Impact of International Intervention in Somalia," *Int'l J.* 67 (2011).

<sup>49</sup>For Example Phillips, "When Less Was More: External Assistance and the Political Settlement in Somaliland." Forti, "A Pocket of Stability: Understanding Somaliland". See also Simon Allison, "Somaliland at the Crossroads Protecting a Fragile Stability," (2015).; Nicholas Eubank, "Taxation, Political Accountability and Foreign Aid: Lessons from Somaliland," *Journal of Development Studies* 48, no. 4 (2012); Nicholas Eubank, "Peace-Building without External Assistance: Lessons from Somaliland," in *Working paper 198* (Washington, DC: Centre for Global Development, 2010).

<sup>50</sup> James K. Boyce, "Aid Conditionality as a Tool for Peacebuilding: Opportunities and Constraints," *Development and Change* 33, no. 5 (2002).

## **Debunking the myth on ‘lack of external support’**

It is important to credit the resilience of the Somaliland people who initiated and supported various reconstruction programmes within their communities before other external actors became engaged. Whilst Somaliland received no external support during the formative state building a myth has persisted that her lack of international recognition means that it does not receive any external aid from donors and claims have been made that “Somaliland has never been eligible for foreign assistance,”<sup>51</sup> or that it receives “little outside assistance”.<sup>52</sup> This is misleading; what it means is that Somaliland cannot enter into bilateral agreements with donors. Thus, whilst Somaliland does not receive official development assistance (ODA), or is ineligible for loans from bodies such as the IMF; it does receive some foreign assistance.<sup>53</sup> Similarly, whilst the statebuilding efforts were truly internally led, external actors such as donors, the UN and international NGOs, the government contributed towards the restoration of basic services throughout much of Somaliland and their engagement remains. Today Somaliland’s development is slow, and the fragile peace is continually being challenged, the reconstruction, including the continuing of democratic reforms is dependent on external support.<sup>54</sup>

Donor such as the DFID, the EU, Danida engage with Somaliland by providing institutional support for capacity-building for ministries and local administrations however, due to Somaliland’s political non-recognition, direct funding from donors can only be implemented through a partnership with the UN Development Programme

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<sup>51</sup> Eubank, "Taxation, Political Accountability and Foreign Aid: Lessons from Somaliland," p. 446.

<sup>52</sup> Seth Kaplan, "The Remarkable Story of Somaliland," *Journal of Democracy* 19, no. 3 (2008): p. 147.

<sup>53</sup> For example, in 2004, 37 percent of all aid going to Somalia went to Somaliland, while 41 percent went to South Central Somalia Mark Bradbury, "State-Building, Counterterrorism, and Licensing Humanitarianism in Somalia," *Feinstein International Center. Medford, MA: Tufts University* (2010): p. 8.

<sup>54</sup> For example the 2008 Election crisis that involved the the European Commission (EC) and the NGO Interpeace. See J. Peter Pham, "The Somaliland Exception: Lessons on Postconflict State Building from the Part of the Former Somalia That Works," *Marine Corps University Journal* 3, no. 1 (2012).

(UNDP). Whilst, this support may not come laden with conditional ties which has the potential of leaving recipients heavily indebted. The support is largely for the very programs that have been critiqued for undermining locally driven approaches, and due to this funding model is problematic and undermines the governments development plans.<sup>55</sup>

The view of Somaliland's government is that this aid is donor-driven, bureaucratic, and unpredictable doing little to support the emergence of a Somaliland state that is able to implement its own development agenda.<sup>56</sup> In a report, on aid effectiveness the Somaliland government further cited the lack by donors to involve them in fund raising; aid target shortage, and the irrelevant sectoral allocation' that collectively undermines their development plans.<sup>57</sup> More recently the government has argued that recent drought has been made worse by bureaucracy within the UN in administering aid arguing that the lack of direct access to bilateral aid has hindered them from developing a more resilient economy that is less dependent on livestock.<sup>58</sup>

Another source of Somaliland's external support is through humanitarian aid that is provided and evident through the presence of International organisations including 21 UN agencies, funds, programmes and organizations.<sup>59</sup> Whilst accurate figures remain elusive, previous estimates of registered local and international NGOs

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<sup>55</sup> Laura Hammond et al., "Cash and Compassion: The Role of the Somali Diaspora in Relief, Development and Peace-Building," (New York: United Nations Development Programme 2011); Renders, *Consider Somaliland: State-Building with Traditional Leaders and Institutions*.

<sup>56</sup> DFID Somalia and Danida, "Somaliland Development Fund," (DFID Somalia Danida, 2011).

<sup>57</sup> Ministry Planning & Development, "Somaliland 2009 Annual Aid Report; Issue No. 2," (Hargeisa: Government of Somaliland; Macroeconomic Management Office (MEMO), 2010), p. 7. See also Renders, *Consider Somaliland: State-Building with Traditional Leaders and Institutions*; Hammond et al., "Cash and Compassion: The Role of the Somali Diaspora in Relief, Development and Peace-Building."; Phillips, "Political Settlements and State Formation - the Case of Somaliland. ".

<sup>58</sup> Patrick Wintour, "Somaliland's Hunger Crisis: 'The World Doesn't Respond until Children Are Dying'," *Guardian* (24 May 2017), <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/may/24/somaliland-hunger-crisis-world-doesnt-respond-until-children-are-dying-foreign-minister-saad-ali-shire>.

<sup>59</sup> Please see <http://so.one.un.org/content/unct/somalia/en/home/who-we-are/un-country-team.html> accessed on 03/04/2018

has been as high as 300<sup>60</sup> whilst others cite more conservative estimates of 100.<sup>61</sup> This has previously been estimated to have a budget of over US \$100 million, levels which at the time were estimated to double the national budget.<sup>62</sup> Evidence suggests that this is increasing gradually, for example, whilst donor contribution towards local council elections in 2002 was estimated at US\$750,000 this increased to nearly US\$9M in 2012.<sup>63</sup>

### **‘A pocket of peace’ or a ‘State’; Examining the pathologies of external peacebuilding through the lens of political non-recognition**

Any international engagement however, operates in the *de jure* constraints of having the obligation to treat Somaliland as part of Somalia, a radically different context.<sup>64</sup> Similarly, the international organisations whilst they hold purse strings and control programs and disbursement processes they do so guided by the principals of neutrality.<sup>65</sup> Thus for operations and donor programming purposes, there are three government counterparts in Somalia: Puntland, Somaliland and South Central.<sup>66</sup>

#### ***External international actors as custodians of liberal peacebuilding***

As with other post conflict contexts, peacebuilding initiatives have been institutionalised in the work of the UN, international agencies, NGOs, and the many actors engaged in conflict and post conflict environments. The lack of international recognition and therefore the model of implementation means that the role of external actors in peacebuilding has further been consolidated in Somaliland. For example,

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<sup>60</sup> NGOs are out of control: Somaliland Minister of Planning and Development SomalilandPress Oct 6, 2010.

<sup>61</sup> Christopher Clapham et al., "African Game Changer? The Consequences of Somaliland's International (Non) Recognition," (Johannesburg, South Africa: The Brenthurst Foundation, 2011). Pg. 16

<sup>62</sup> Phillips, "Political Settlements and State Formation - the Case of Somaliland. ".Pg 29

<sup>63</sup> Aly Verjee, "The Economics of Elections in Somaliland: The Financing of Political Parties and Candidates," (2015). Pg. 14

<sup>64</sup> Chris Albin-Lackey, "*Hostages to Peace*": *Threats to Human Rights and Democracy in Somaliland* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2009).

<sup>65</sup> Körppen, "Space Beyond the Liberal Peacebuilding Consensus—a Systemic Perspective."

<sup>66</sup> Alejandro Bendaña, "The Rule of Law in Peacebuilding Contexts: Lessons from Somalia," *NOREF Report* (2012).

DFID engages with multiple agencies as implementing partners via remote management. These include UN agencies international NGOs, local NGOs and mixed agency consortiums.<sup>67</sup>

Similarly, these organisations also prefer an indirect method of implementation and therefore intervenes through established circles of international NGOs (INGOs) or large Civil Society Organisation (CSOs). This has two implications; it has led to the explosion of a myriad of humanitarian aid agencies and civil society organisations offering a broad spectrum of services across multiple fields; and secondly it has created a pattern of mutual dependency as the INGOs also rely on local smaller organisations. It also increases overdependence by local NGOs on short-term project-based funding from the International organisations hindering investments towards coherent and effective capacity building.<sup>68</sup> Without access to direct sustainable funding, these mainly indigenous organisations therefore scale up and down according to the needs and funding of their international partners, have varying and sometimes competing agendas.<sup>69</sup> Similarly, by virtue of their depth and breadth, co-operation, collaboration or coordination becomes all the more challenging resulting to a ‘flag-waving syndrome’ with multiplicity of players on the ground making close.<sup>70</sup> Such interventions therefore rest upon a problematic relationship between external and local actors, and in some cases reflect what Barnett & Finnemore have called institutional ‘pathologies’ of international organisations and risk weakening the fragile polity.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Yuri Tsitrinbaum, "Aid Partnerships: A Vehicle to Strengthen Ngos in Somalia?," (September 2012 ), [somalianoconsortium.org/download/578571d6a915d](http://somalianoconsortium.org/download/578571d6a915d).

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Richard Manning and Alexandra Trzeciak-Duval, "Situations of Fragility and Conflict: Aid Policies and Beyond," *Conflict, Security & Development* 10, no. 1 (2010).

<sup>71</sup> Michael N Barnett and Martha Finnemore, "The Politics, Power, and Pathologies of International Organizations," *International organization* 53, no. 4 (1999).



### ***Remote management and the failure to build capacity***

Somaliland remains relatively peaceful as some of the immediate post war programmes included the successful absorption of militiamen into the Somaliland army the result of this was ‘better levels of public order and security in *northern Somalia* than almost anywhere in the Horn of Africa’.<sup>72</sup> This level of security has remained relatively high thanks to the robust application of customary law and blood compensation, administered by clan elders. However, a number of factors have informed the posture taken by the international actors in Somaliland; this includes adhering to the approaches to security (partly linked attacks on UN headquarters in Iraq in 2003) which led to today’s risk management approaches that lead to the period of ‘bunkerisation’.<sup>73</sup> This posture was not only consolidated by the twin suicide bombings in 2008 in Somaliland, but also the framing of Somaliland within Somalia. These approaches have fed the perception of insecurity for the international actors especially the UN and donors and resulted to the adaption of remote management programming.

This is where the international community, be they of a political, humanitarian or developmental nature, are governed from the comfortable distance provided by operational bases. Programmes are ‘remotely managed’ and the staff have only limited opportunities to make short field site visits thus transferring increased programming responsibilities to local staff or local NGOs.<sup>74</sup> For example, the coordination by the UN for the Mine Action programme was implemented by the Somaliland Mine Action Centre (SMAC) and whilst arrangements for training for the local team were agreed,

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<sup>72</sup> Ken Menkhaus, "Vicious Circles and the Security Development Nexus in Somalia", *Conflict, Security & Development* 4, no. 2 (2004). Pg 160

<sup>73</sup> The term “bunkerisation” was used by Mark Duffield when giving a lecture in 2011 <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/global-insecurities/news/2011/7.html> that built upon the key concepts of Duffield, M., *Development, Security and Unending War*, Polity Press, 2007

<sup>74</sup> Jan Egeland, Adele Harmer, and Abby Stoddard, *To Stay and Deliver: Good Practice for Humanitarians in Complex Security Environments* (Policy Development and Studies Branch (PDSB), UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 2011).

this was never followed by the UN Technical Advisors as they were unable to spend any significant time in Somaliland. Their responsibilities also extended to the whole of Somalia and therefore their priority at the time was activities in South Central Somalia.<sup>75</sup> The SMAC team therefore lacked adequate technical support for a long time due to what was described in an evaluation report as a highly ineffective ‘virtual management’ i.e. management by proxy support from UNDP.<sup>76</sup>

Reduction in access, information and a limited capacity for local analysis increased the operational risks regarding effectiveness, cost efficiency and accountability and produced an acute “field versus headquarters” tension and frustration within SMAC senior officials.<sup>77</sup> Whilst it was acknowledged that good institutional structure existed for mine action on paper, the reality was different.<sup>78</sup> The programme lacked coherence and was rather a grouping of discrete, but worthwhile activities programmes.<sup>79</sup> Remote management implied the high administrative costs with claims that the total aid allocated to projects never leaves Nairobi.<sup>80</sup> This has led to calls for the transfer of decentralization of decisions to Hargeisa, considering the stability of Somaliland.<sup>81</sup>

Whilst some organisations have slowly started to increase their presence on the ground, engagement still remains through national partners whilst maintaining headquarters in Nairobi with implications. Over two decades later, mine clearance programmes are ongoing and whilst there is no strong evidence to suggest that the

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<sup>75</sup> Interview with Senior SMAC officials in Hargeisa.

<sup>76</sup> UNDP, "Assessment of Development Results Evaluation of Undp Contribution to Somalia. ," (USA: United Nations Development Programme 2010). Pg. xiii

<sup>77</sup> Ken Menkhaus, "Somalia: A Situation Analysis and Trend Assessment; Commissioned by Unhcr," (Geneva: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Protection Information Section (PIS/DIP), 2003). (p. 44)

<sup>78</sup> See Landmine Monitor, *Landmine Monitor 2009: Towards a Mine Free World* (New York: International Campaign to Ban Landmines, Landmine Monitor Initiative, 2009).

<sup>79</sup> MASG, "Mine Action Support Group (Masg) Newsletter (1 January 2008 to 30 April 2008 )," (2008).

<sup>80</sup> Menkhaus, "Somalia: A Situation Analysis and Trend Assessment; Commissioned by Unhcr."

<sup>81</sup> Fernando Almansa, "A Fresh Analysis of the Humanitarian System in Somaliland, Puntland and South Central Somalia: Somali State Agencies and Local Organisations' Capacities to Manage Humanitarian Action," in *Oxfam Research Report* (Online: Oxfam, 2015).

reason for this delay is limited to the remote management of the programme, the impact of the same cannot be completely overlooked. The most crucial period within the mine action programme cycle involving multiple agencies was marred by inefficiency and far reaching negative impact on the Sector and mine action in Somaliland in general. As of the time of this research, SMAC still had its budgetary allocations under the mandate of the UN and had limited choices for funding as they cannot lobby the donors directly.<sup>82</sup> Similarly, this lack of capacity is used by the mine action sector to justify a longer-term role with the continued presence of international actors.

### ***Local ownership and legitimacy***

As one of the key principles of peacebuilding, the strategies, approaches and interventions should be drawn from the local needs of the people, using resources and capacities that empower them to implement these strategies. With this notion, international donors and other players explicitly search for a greater degree of legitimacy and sustainability in their interventions. However, as Chesterman argues that local ownership is often used “disingenuously - either to mask the assertion of potentially dictatorial powers by international actors or to carry a psychological rather than political meaning in the area of reconstruction”.<sup>83</sup>

Whilst local organisations may claim to be closer to the people through participatory approaches, a “clientelistic and exclusive” relationship still exists with the external actors that they implement programs for, and hence local actors only serve as implementers for external actors usually in pursuit of external objectives under a guise

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<sup>82</sup> Sarah Njeri, "A Minefield of Possibilities: The Viability of Liberal Peace in Somaliland, with Particular Reference to Mine Action" (University of Bradford, 2015). (unpublished thesis)

<sup>83</sup> Simon Chesterman, "From State Failure to State-Building: Problems and Prospects for a United Nations Peacebuilding Commission," *Journal of International Law and International Relations* 2, no. 1 (2005).

of 'local ownership'.<sup>84</sup> This edifies a well-founded concern and critique that local ownership just serves to "cover up a 'business as usual' approach".<sup>85</sup> A study by Progressio established that whilst some organisations perpetuated a discourse that strategic plans were based on a bottom-up approach that considered local needs, the reality and the view of some of the organisations was that they were driven by donors. The report highlighted the fact that most local organisations had been formed after the war as a response to the international community's need for interlocutors and thus were a product of the international organisations. Whilst acknowledging that donors' agendas influenced international development stakeholders, including local those of local, INGOs and even UN agencies, local organisations were fully dependant and therefore had very minimal chances of diversifying their sources of income.<sup>86</sup> Thus, whilst not all these stakeholders are totally dependent on international aid flows, there are many organisations and therefore competition for funding leaving them with little time to engage with the grass roots thus their connections with local communities are weak. Thus, raising the questions on the extent to which those participatory methods used to develop organisational strategies and plans were locally owned and representative of the needs of local communities' "Civil society doesn't have the opportunity to have its own priorities" the report concludes.<sup>87</sup> Thus, even at the grassroots level, legitimacy for 'local ownership' over the strategic direction for activities is challenged and thus seen as insufficient. When there is failure to secure the elements of local ownership sustainability remains elusive for an effective peacebuilding agenda<sup>88</sup> and this is

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<sup>84</sup> Ken Menkhaus, "Governance without Government in Somalia Spoilers, State Building, and the Politics of Coping," *International Security* 31, no. 3 (2006).

<sup>85</sup> Hannah Reich, "'Local Ownership' in Conflict Transformation Projects: Partnership, Participation or Patronage?," (2006).

<sup>86</sup> Emilia Rossi, "Participation and Effective Governance in Somaliland Assessment Report," (Hargeisa: Progressio, 2014). Pg. 24

<sup>87</sup> Ibid. Pg. 24

<sup>88</sup> Oliver P. Richmond, "Emanipatory Forms of Human Security and Liberal Peacebuilding," *International Journal* 62, no. 3 (2007); David Chandler, "Peacebuilding and the Politics of Non-Linearity: Rethinking 'Hidden' Agency and 'Resistance'," *Peacebuilding* 1, no. 1 (2013); Roland Paris and Timothy D Sisk, *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding: Confronting the Contradictions of Postwar Peace Operations* (Taylor & Francis, 2009); Astri Suhrke, *Peacebuilding: Lessons for*

articulated in the cynicism of the local people. For example, according to a leading professor and political activist, international organisations do not build capacity and hence ownership due to this mode of implementation. He observed that many of the organisations justified building local capacity through organising seminars and conferences (never training) and therefore have very limited impact or none at all.<sup>89</sup> A similar observation was made by Tiilikainen & Mohamed who reported that activities run by international NGOs were invisible and local people just saw seminars organized at expensive hotels whilst local NGOs remained inefficient and lacking capacity and resources.<sup>90</sup>

In Conclusion I argue that the peacebuilding agenda has thus reverted to being primarily top-down in its approach, and mainly has reflected the perceived needs as identified by the external actors rather than the reality of affected people, an observation that echoes the views of articulated by the governments assessment of aid previously cited.

I would argue that whilst the formative statebuilding process coincided immediate post conflict period, the context was easier to define; a dire need for relief aid, and therefore at the time, the external actors aligned themselves to respond to these needs. However, the period post statebuilding is shrouded by the political non-recognition limbo which challenges the role of external actors. It also means that their programmes oscillate between the provision of relief and humanitarian aid, versus responding to the developmental needs that Somaliland now requires. This is reflected in this quote by one government official *'I think in the first years the needs were so*

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*Afghanistan*, Development and Human Rights Studies (Bergen, Norway: Chr. Michelsen Institute, 2002); Ole Jacob Sending, "Why Peacebuilders Fail to Secure Ownership and Be Sensitive to Context," *Security in Practice* 1, no. NUPI Working Paper 755 (2009).

<sup>89</sup> Interview with Professor Ahmed Essa Ahmed Essa; Director of Institute of Practical Research and Training; 26th September 2012, Hargeisa, Somaliland

<sup>90</sup> Marja Tiilikainen and Abdirizak Hassan Mohamed, "Civil Society in Making," (Versita, 2013). Pg 40

*obvious, there was no ambiguity about it but now there is because the needs are not so urgent for most people. Somaliland is 'seen' as being economically and politically stable. The need, for those who can see it, is basically building institutions, building strong service delivery base, strengthening governance and of course economic development through employment. In the beginning it was community led while in the last 10yrs it is more donor- driven.*<sup>91</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Somaliland should give critical peacebuilding scholars an ideal setting to engage with a context specific analysis that transcends beyond the state. However, this has so far not been forthcoming. I argue that this is for several reasons; a 'state centric' approach to post conflict peacebuilding rooted in the initial call that saw its birth on the 'Agenda for Peace' and therefore an emergent of an academic discipline that followed the same trajectory. The process became self-perpetuating and therefore the emerging critique. The limited academic enquiry on Somaliland beyond the state reflects how liberal peace building critics reproduce their own critiques in their approach to contexts. It further illuminates that mainstream academic discourses mirror or follow donor funding priorities.

Thus, due to the absence of a critical engagement on other interventions on Somaliland, the dominant narrative that persisted is that of the absence of external actors who are at the heart of the liberal peacebuilding critiques. This I theorise masks other externally led interventions which continued to thrive which further highlights the state centric nature of the critiques.

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<sup>91</sup> Interview with Senior government official at the Ministry of Interior, 9th Oct 2012

Emerging evidence<sup>92</sup> further suggests that indeed external actors now permeate the state building arena where the donors continually ‘challenges the government to adopt donor-led rigid templates and conditionality on electoral schedules and benchmarks at the risk of delegitimising the ‘hybrid’ polity, undermining and deforming the locally-owned, emancipatory democratisation process’.<sup>93</sup>

Through a context analysis of Somaliland, I demonstrate the way in which these external actors have engaged and consolidated their role in Somaliland entrenching the prevailing critiques of liberal peacebuilding; where the key actors are mainly western donors and international NGOs; programmes are poorly coordinated, and that those intervening in Somaliland have to a large extent not only failed in building local ownership but have also failed to establish sustainability which not only leads to ineffective liberal peacebuilding programme but can also lead to failure.<sup>94</sup>

Whilst these approaches exacerbate both vertical and horizontal inequalities in Somaliland<sup>95</sup>, relative peace prevails in Somaliland. Thus, the interventions cannot be deemed as having failed completely as peace and security prevails, thus I argue that by engaging in context specific analysis, the Somaliland provides a nuanced critique that illuminates the way in which different factors coalesce to produce the prevailing critiques; at the centre of which is a response to political non-recognition.

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<sup>92</sup> Verjee, "The Economics of Elections in Somaliland: The Financing of Political Parties and Candidates."; Bradbury, *Becoming Somaliland*.

<sup>93</sup> Yoshito Nakagawa, "Deliberative Peacebuilding in East Timor and Somaliland" (University of Manchester, 2016). Pg. 242

<sup>94</sup> Richmond, "Emancipatory Forms of Human Security and Liberal Peacebuilding."; Chandler, "Peacebuilding and the Politics of Non-Linearity: Rethinking ‘Hidden’ Agency and ‘Resistance’."; Paris and Sisk, *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding: Confronting the Contradictions of Postwar Peace Operations*; Suhrke, *Peacebuilding: Lessons for Afghanistan*.

<sup>95</sup> Hammond et al., "Cash and Compassion: The Role of the Somali Diaspora in Relief, Development and Peace-Building."; Phillips, "Political Settlements and State Formation - the Case of Somaliland. ".