

Review Article

Examining the Root Causes of Somali Conflict: Historical Perspectives and Contemporary Dynamics

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ABSTRACT



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The Somali conflict, which has lasted for decades in the Horn of Africa, is the result of an interplay of historical, political, and socioeconomic factors. The primary objective of this research is to examine the historical perspective as well as contemporary dynamics that have shaped and perpetuated the Somali conflict. By analyzing the historical context, the study aims to identify the underlying factors that have contributed to the conflict's longevity and complexity. This study employs secondary data to explore the root causes of this conflict and its enduring nature. The colonial legacy left by arbitrary borders, disruptive social structures, and regional rivalries set the stage for Somalia's turmoil. The fall of central authority in 1991 resulted in factionalism, power disputes, and the growth of armed groups such as Al-Shabaab. This conflict led to displacement, loss of life, and regional instability. Using Social Identity Theory and the Structural Violence framework, this study dives into historical perspective and contemporary dynamics shaping the conflict. Pre-colonial arrangements were influenced by interactions with Arab traders, but colonial Clan rivalries became worse after independence, and the Ogaden War in 1977 further destabilized the region. The study concludes that the Somali conflict is caused by a combination of historical injustices, political maneuvering, and scarce resources, resulting in a cycle of violence and instability. To achieve lasting peace, a comprehensive approach is needed that addresses the root causes, including historical traumas, genuine reconciliation and institutional inequalities, and empowering Somali communities. Successful policies for promoting peace, stability, and prosperity require a deep understanding of the conflict. Only by addressing the underlying causes of violence can the cycle be ended and a brighter future for Somalia and its people be achieved.

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1. Introduction

The Somali conflict is a complex and protracted crisis that has plagued the Horn of Africa region for decades. Understanding its root causes is essential for comprehending the factors that have contributed to its enduring nature. The conflict in Somalia can be traced back to colonial times when various foreign powers imposed arbitrary borders and disrupted traditional social structures. After gaining independence in 1960, Somalia experienced political instability, marked by military coups, authoritarian regimes, and territorial disputes, which eventually led to the outbreak of civil war in the late 1980s.

In addition, Armed conflicts were absent in Somalia for the first 17 years after independence, but three major conflicts occurred between 1977 and 1991. These conflicts led to the rise of liberation movements and foreshadowed the predatory looting and banditry during the civil war in 1991-92. The history of conflict in Somalia shows how various factors can contribute to violence and offer potential avenues for peace, making the analysis of conflict in Somalia challenging (World Bank, 2005).

The collapse of the Somali government in 1991 further intensified the conflict, giving rise to various factions and warlords competing for control over the country. The absence of a central authority and the proliferation of armed groups created a power vacuum, fostering a cycle of violence, clan-based animosities, and competition for resources. The situation worsened with the emergence of extremist groups like Al-Shabaab, which further escalated the conflict and added a new dimension of religious and ideological tensions. The Somali conflict has had devastating humanitarian consequences, leading to widespread displacement, loss of lives, and a protracted refugee crisis in the region. Moreover, its impact extends beyond Somalia's borders, affecting neighboring countries and the international community's security interests. Hence, there is a pressing need to delve into the root causes of the conflict to develop effective strategies for peacebuilding and conflict resolution.

The primary objective of this study is to examine the historical perspectives and contemporary dynamics that have shaped and perpetuated the Somali conflict. By analyzing the

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historical context, the study aims to identify the underlying factors that have contributed to the conflict's longevity and complexity. Understanding these factors can provide valuable insights into the social, political, economic, and cultural forces that have fueled the conflict over the years.

The Somali conflict is a complex issue with historical and contemporary roots. Therefore, this paper uses Social Identity and the Structural Violence framework to provide a comprehensive understanding of the conflict. Social Identity Theory, introduced by Tajfel and Turner in the 1970s, proposes that individuals categorize themselves into social groups and acquire self-esteem from their group memberships. This theory, when applied to the Somali setting, sheds light on how different ethnic, clan, and regional identities have shaped group perceptions, grievances, and alliances. It enables the investigation of historical events influencing identity development, such as colonial impacts and clan rivalry. In other words, The Structural Violence framework, developed by Norwegian sociologist Johan Galtung in 1969, focuses on the systemic factors that perpetuate violence and inequality. This framework is especially useful in the Somali context for examining historical factors such as colonization, state creation, and resource allocation. Analyzing the ways in which structural violence manifests itself via uneven access to resources, disparities in education, and political marginalization can provide insights into the persisting inequities that fuel conflict.

2. Pre-colonial Somalia

Somalia was settled by ethnic Cushites from the lush lakes of southern Ethiopia. According to archaeological evidence, most of modern-day Somalia's coastline had been inhabited by AD 100. (*Country Facts | Somalia*, n.d.). The Somali areas along the northern coastal zones were known as "Guban" during the pre-colonial period. The society was organized into clan-based arrangements, with each clan having its own clan sultan striving for its own clan state. The modern Somali state has similarities to pre-colonial clan sultanates, and today Somalis are returning to a pre-colonial era in which each clan had its own clan state. (Ingiriis, 2018). The "Guban" region of northern Somalia is an arid coastal area settled by early Cushitic people that adapted to the challenging climate by fishing, modest farming, and commerce. These communities later came into contact with Arab traders, resulting in the conversion of Somalis to Islam and the creation of clan-family political systems that continue to dominate Somali culture today. Ongoing research may reveal new insights into Somalia's early history. The essay "Class Formation and Gender in Precolonial Somali Society" explores an approach to pre-colonial Somali society that draws upon theoretical advances in the fields of African social history and legal. (Kapteijns & Spaulding, 1989).

The Somali people in the Horn of Africa have historically in the Horn of Africa have traditionally relied on nomadic pastoralism for a living. Prior to the 19th-century colonial partitioning of Somali regions, the region experienced huge migrations of Somali clans into previously settled areas. Somali tribes united to seize large portions of Abyssinia under the leadership of Ahmed Gran (1506-1543). However, the state's expansion was short-lived, and subsequent highland conquests proved the challenges of maintaining a strong state within the diverse Somali national identity (Ahmed & Green, 1999).

This Study reconstructs and interprets certain aspects of Somali history in the three centuries before 1900, that is, before the start of the colonial period. It highlights the challenges of reconstructing the history of a nomadic population that has no tradition of centralized authority and no single geographical heartland (Cassanelli, 1982). Similarly, the social and political organization of pre-colonial Somali society was less hierarchical than most societies in the region, which did not prevent conflicts

between communities but certainly mitigated their intensity (Samatar A. I., 2020). However, Somalia's history from 1700 to 1900 was an era with few written sources and interpretative issues.

3. Colonial Era and Its Impact on Somali Society

The African Scramble began with the Berlin Conference (1884-85) and lasted until the early twentieth century. During this time, European colonizers divided Africa into zones of influence, colonies, and several segments. They partitioned land from European capitals despite having little knowledge of Africa's geography, history, and ethnic combination. Many African countries have large populations divided by colonial partitioning.

In Africa, poor border design and ethnic group division have resulted in underdevelopment and instability. The exclusion of borderland communities from economic growth due to disparities between the center and the periphery exacerbates these issues (Gashaw T, 2017). This lack of development leads to human security issues such as poverty, poor infrastructure, education, and cross-border conflicts. Border designs utilized for political goals in Africa cause instability and hinder development in borderland communities across the continent.

The European colonial powers, particularly Britain and Italy, partitioned the Somali territory in the late 19th century. The northern parts became British Somaliland, while much of the south became Italian Somalia (Metz Helen Ch, 1992; Dersso, 2009; Issa-Salwe, 1996).). This division created artificial borders that separated Somali communities and disrupted their sense of unity. After independence, these divisions remained, creating tensions and conflicts as factions competed for power and resources. Furthermore, the poor infrastructure and institutions left by colonial authority hampered the creation of a stable government, leading to the Somali nation's continuous conflicts. Moreover, the colonial partition of Somalia has been a root problem in the Horn of Africa, hindering the Somali people's aspirations for self-determination and national unity (Yusuf Abdi, 1981). He further concluded that there have been similarities with the colonial period during and after the Dervish uprising in the decade following President Siyad Barre's downfall. These similarities include internecine conflict, turmoil, casualties, economic upheaval, and clan differences exploited by warlords. External pressures and modernity's obstacles exacerbated these concerns.

Colonial history, in addition to other dynamics, has played a role in the contrasting levels of stability in Somalia and Somaliland (*Somalia: Colonialism to Independence to Dictatorship, 1840-1976 - The Enough Project*, n.d.). The differences can be attributed to how the colonial powers administered these territories and the subsequent impact on their socio-political development. Generally, the difference in stability between Somalia and Somaliland may be traced in part to their different colonial histories, which shaped their government structures, cohesiveness in society, and state-building heritage. Somaliland's historical continuity, inclusive governance practices, and attempts to preserve stability have all contributed to the country's relative stability in comparison to southern Somalia's violent history. In addition, Samatar A. I. (2020) further argues, that the colonial partition of the Somali people is considered one of the root problems in the Horn of Africa.

During the colonial period in Somalia, the Somalis were grouped into two major divisions under Italian and British rule (Harold D. 1982). In British Somaliland for instance, the colonial administration focused on maintaining control and stability rather than implementing significant development projects.

In Somalia's colonial era, governance was carried out through traditional institutions that were based on clan systems. (*Somalia: Colonial Legacy – CJA. n.d ; Ingiriis, 2018*). Moreover, the clan system has traditionally served as the fundamental social organization of Somalia. During the colonial era, this system was linked with Islamic practices, and Somali governance was heavily affected by decisions made by clan elders, who enjoyed considerable respect within their individual clans (*Renders1, 2007*). He also demonstrated that Somali people adopted an Islam that was adapted to their social system and Islamic institutions were interpreted in the light of the existing clan structure. This means that Islamic practices and beliefs were integrated into the traditional clan-based governance system. In addition, Islamic law, or Sharia, had an impact on the traditional institutions of governance in Somalia. It provided a framework for resolving disputes and regulating various aspects of life. However, it is important to note that traditional Somali law, known as *xeer* Soomali, also played a significant role in regulating the lives of the Somali people (*Adam, 1995*).

Clan elders, who held positions of power within traditional institutions of governance, played an important role in Somali governance. They were intermediaries between clan members and Islamic institutions, ensuring that religious values were applied within the framework of the clan system (*Musse Ahmed, 2017*). It is crucial to acknowledge the substantial influence of colonialism on Somalia's traditional governance institutions, which has led to a prolonged state collapse in the country. However, the interaction between Islamic institutions and traditional institutions of government was shaped throughout the colonial period by the adaptation of Islam to the clan structure and the role of clan leaders in governance.

4. Post-Independence Political Landscape

Decolonizing African studies entails shifting the Eurocentric Perspective of knowledge creation in order to understand indigenous roots and the consequences of colonial domination. The establishment of universities intended to produce qualified Africans began this trend in the 1950s and 1960s. Indigenous history, politics, and economics were central to the founding intellectuals' vision. The decolonization of African studies fostered the revival of anthropology and the study of African politics, with a focus on the origins and variations of state power via anti-colonial nationalism. It is an ongoing process that necessitates Africa's centrality in knowledge generation (*Clapham, 2020*). He further suggested that Decolonized African Studies should be led by African academics in Africa, as relying on programs from the global North is counterproductive due to power disparities, and Africans must take the initiative to decolonize themselves.

In the 1960-1969 Somali Republic, the merger of southern Italian Somalia and northern British Somaliland led to regional rivalries and tensions between clans, but it was considered a model post-colonial state with high political participation until it was overthrown by a military regime in 1969 (*Besteman, 1999*). She also claims that Italy and Britain's colonial economic policies in Somalia resulted in regional inequalities in wealth and infrastructure, which ultimately resulted in the evolution of clans into political identities attached to economic benefits or disadvantages, leading to inescapable rivalry after colonialism ended.

Somalia's post-colonial history has been marked by thirty years of civil war and clan-based conflict. The colonial legacy, including the imposition of physical and cultural boundaries, played a role in creating fault lines for conflict. The civil war in Somalia shares similarities with other post-colonial African conflicts that resulted in mass atrocities (*Somalia: Colonial Legacy – CJA, n.d.*).

The absence of political, social, economic, and national development during the colonial period is regarded as a contributing factor to Somalia's post-colonial conflict and state collapse. (*Debbahi, 2016*). The impact of colonialism and lack of development throughout the colonial period had a lasting effect on the country's development. In general, Somalia's post-colonial history has been characterized by political instability, clan-based warfare, and challenges in state-building.

4.1 Socio-Political Factors

The current civil war in Somalia is rooted in specific historical, cultural, and environmental factors (*Kusow, 1994*). Somalia's history is marked by colonial influences, territorial disputes, and power struggles. European colonization led to the fragmentation of Somali territories and the subsequent drawing of arbitrary borders, creating tensions and territorial conflicts that persist today. The collapse of the central government in 1991 exacerbated these divisions, leading to the emergence of different clan-based factions competing for control. In contrast, Fellin, (2013) agrees with the Scholars who challenge the idea that the Somali clan system caused the state's collapse and instead analyze the conflict in its local and global circumstances. Similarly, Besteman, C, (1999) respectfully disagrees with those who say that clannism is the cause of the country's dissolution. In contrast, Abbink, (2003) analyzes political and military activity in Somali society from pre-colonial times to the present stateless era. His study compares the revolts against colonial states in the early 1900s to those in the late Siyad Barre period and statelessness. He concludes that Somali political culture prevents the institutionalization of legitimate state-level leadership but allows for regional clan leadership.

Metz Helen Ch, (1992) further claims that the Colonial domination resulted in the formal abolition of slavery in Somalia, particularly in the inter-riverine area, in the years preceding World War II. Fellin, (2013) analyzes and examines the impact of geopolitics on population displacement in Somalia and Somali-inhabited areas of study focusing on colonialism from 1897 to 1960. He finds that the consequences of colonial and imperial policies on internal population displacement and Somalia's protracted armed conflict. Through historical analysis, He showed that internal dislocation and displacement in Somalia are related to colonial development policies; persecution based on ethnicity and race as well as clan allegiance, and "natural disasters" such as floods, drought, famine, and armed combat. In addition, the colonial era weakened Somali culture over half a century (*Issa-Salwe, 1996*). However, Colonialism had a significant influence on Somali culture and identity, resulting in the country's disruption of traditional social systems.

4.2 Colonial legacy as the root causes

Somalia is a country that has been plagued by clan rivalries for decades (*Somalia's Challenges in 2023 | Brookings, n.d.*). The unification of the two Somali colonies, British Somaliland and Italian Somaliland, has been identified as a potential root cause of conflict in Somalia. This unity, which occurred in 1960, brought together two regions with distinct colonial histories, cultures, and clan dynamics. The rushed unification without thorough reconciliation and integration efforts led to several underlying issues that contributed to the conflict. Additionally, the two regions of Somalia had different clan structures and power dynamics, and the attempt to unite these distinct clan systems created tensions and competition for influence and resources, leading to conflicts between various clans (*Isilow H. 2021*).

The unification process in Somalia did not adequately address the distribution of political power, leading to power struggles among different groups vying for control over the newly formed Somali state. This has fueled internal conflicts and

hindered the state-building efforts in Somalia. (*State-Building Efforts Being Jeopardised by Power Struggles, Terrorist Attacks and Corruption* | BMZ, n.d.). While other factors may contribute to these power struggles, inadequate separation of powers has created a vacuum of authority, enabling rival groups to compete for dominance.

Various researchers have explored the complex issue of whether the unity of North and South Somalia colonies is the underlying cause of the Somali conflict. For example, Mohammed N, (2020) argued that competition for power and resources, the colonial legacy, and state repression were the long-term causes of the Somali conflict. Hassan et al., (2019) also highlight the impact of the colonial legacy on Somali leadership personalities and societal disintegration. They contend that the fear of losing and preserving power at any cost has resulted in the establishment of clannism, which jeopardizes unity and social integration. According to the study, many Somali leaders lack conscientiousness, a necessary leadership trait. As a result, a context of war-mongering created by the colonial legacy and clannism might be seen as the collapse of the Somali social structure. According to a substantial body of research, the breakdown and collapse of the Somali state is due to two major factors: A history of poor leadership and a culture dominated by clannism. In this view Samatar, (1992) argue during colonization, loyalists sought power in order to exploit public resources with the goal of strengthening their own interests, resulting in localized coercive power centers. This decreased central authority, rendering leadership ineffectual. The regime's strategy of exploiting blood ties to retain power backfired, resulting in the complete breakdown of its governmental power. However, during the colonial era, different clans in Somalia were favored by various colonial powers. For example, The *Isaaq* clan, particularly the *Habr Awal* and *Habr Yunis* sub-clans, received preferential treatment in British Somaliland. Similarly, The *Darod* clan, especially the *Majerteen* sub-clan, benefited from advantages in Italian Somaliland. In addition, The Ogaden sub-clan of the *Darod* clan was favored in the Ogaden region, functioning as a buffer zone for the British Administration. Likewise, during the Italian colony, the *Hawiya* sub-clans *Hirab* and *Murusade* acquired importance in the Benadir region. Therefore, these two clans had a chance to take over the presidency and the prime ministership. This legacy of colonialism continues to have an impact on Somali society and politics, adding to historical conflicts and grievances. Although the previously mentioned sources offer insight into the root causes of the Somali conflict across time, it is critical to recognize that other factors, including political and economic instability, also have a significant impact.

4.3 Somalia and Ethiopian war

In 1969, Barre took power in Somalia through a military coup and established a one-party Marxist-Leninist state. He dissolved the parliament, arrested politicians from the previous regime, and nationalized major industries. Barre also promoted the idea of a Greater Somalia, which led to the Ogaden War with Ethiopia in 1977. The events and policies initiated by Siad Barre after he took power in Somalia in 1969 played a significant role in contributing to the root causes of the Somali conflict. While it's important to note that the conflict in Somalia is complex and has multiple intertwined causes, Barre's actions, and policies had a profound impact on the country's instability.

The Ogaden War was undoubtedly one of the root causes of the Somali conflict. The conflict between Somalia and Ethiopia over the region of Ogaden had far-reaching implications for the stability and unity of Somalia as a nation. Following the defeat of Somalia in the Ogaden War, hundreds of thousands of Somalis were displaced and sought refuge in Somalia, leading to land appropriation and resettlement challenges. (*Retaining Western*

Influence in Africa: The Ogaden War - JSTOR, n.d) Furthermore, the Ogaden War left the military government of Somalia unpopular, economically bankrupt, and isolated internationally. Gumbi, (2015) argues that the consequences of the Ogaden War and the broader Somali conflict have been far-reaching. She also views economic hardship and political instability are the primary source of armed conflict in Somalia.

The Ogaden War, which took place in 1977-1978 between Somalia and Ethiopia over the region of Ogaden, can be considered a catalyst for the subsequent armed conflicts and governance crisis in Somalia. While the Ogaden War certainly played a significant role in shaping the Somali conflict, it is important to note that it was not the sole cause (Zelege, 2018). He further argues that the presence of politicized clan identity, the availability of weapons, and a large number of unemployed youths exacerbated the conflict. To sum up, the division of Somalis into five regions and the general governance crisis in the post-colonial period also contributed to the conflict. The Ogaden War serves as one of the root causes of the Somali conflict, with significant consequences for Somalia's stability and unity.

Factors like colonial history, Somalia's territorial claims, and superpower engagement in the Horn of Africa all contributed to the OGADEN war. Somali leaders made mistakes, overestimated Western support, and underestimated Soviet and Cuban assistance for Ethiopia. Regional instability, Somalia's expanding power, and ambiguous Western signals all played a role. Despite international mediation efforts, the conflict remained costly with no useful outcomes, ultimately resulting in Somalia's collapse. Border conflicts remain unsolved, depicting the war in the Horn of Africa as a devastating and vain event (Nkasserry & Army, n.d). Nevertheless, this war and its underlying causes represent a complex interplay of historical, geographical, political, and external factors that led to the broader Somali conflict and regional instability. Argues

The conflict took place during the Cold War era, and the involvement of external powers added complexity to the situation (Hauwermeiren, 2012; Zelege, 2018). Clan dynamics have historically played a significant role in Somali society and politics (Hall, 2015).

Barre attacked Ethiopia's Ogaden region to reclaim it, sparking the 1976-1978 Ogaden War, which Somalia later withdrew from. Consequently, after the end of the war opposition groups emerged like the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF), Somali National Movement (SNM), and United Somali Congress (USC) reflected a desire to challenge Barre's authoritarian rule. These movements sought to overthrow Barre's regime, contributing to broader political instability and conflict (Khalif, 2022). The events surrounding Siad Barre's rise to power, his territorial ambitions, external support, internal divisions, a proliferation of weapons, and the emergence of opposition movements collectively contributed to the root causes of the Somali conflict. These factors created a complex web of tensions, grievances, and power struggles that ultimately led to decades of instability and violence in Somalia.

4.4 Resource Competition and Scarcity

Peter, A. (2021). Argued that conflict is an interactive activity within the shared experiences of people who live together and interact in several ways, and argued that natural resource conflicts are subject to contextual forces that are both competitive and cooperative. Cassanelli, (2018) argues that Somalia's national leaders had an agenda to transfer southern land resources from local clans to other favored ones since the early 1970s. This agenda was not widely known due to international focus on other conflicts such as the Ogaden War, the Barre government's efforts to suppress opposition movements, and the factional struggle for control of Mogadishu.

Somalia is a water-scarce country with approximately 411 m³ of renewable freshwater per capita as of 2017. The continuous decline in freshwater availability has resulted in fierce competition over water resources and conflicts in some regions of Somalia (*Somalia Ministry of Energy and Water Resources: National Water Resource Strategy 2021-2025: Roadmap to Implementation - Somalia* | ReliefWeb, n.d.).

A study conducted in Africa explores the relationship between natural resources, conflict, and economic development in Africa. It discovered that the likelihood of conflict is affected by the amount and distribution of resources among the parties involved. Resources increase the gains from fighting and expropriation, thus increasing the probability of conflict. Furthermore, the research indicates that a region's economic prosperity is dependent not only on its own resources but also on those of its neighboring regions. The study also found that regions with poor institutional quality, as measured by factors like property rights and the risk of expropriation, are more likely to have conflict equilibria (Adhvaryu et al., 2018). In essence, while the specific research may not directly address the Somali conflict, its insights into resource-driven conflicts, economic implications, and institutional aspects might provide significant views when analyzing the Somali conflict's multifaceted character. Similarly, Webersik, (2005) investigates the links between resources and conflict in contemporary Somalia, arguing that people engage in violent conflict in Somalia because they struggle to gain control of valuable resources such as cash crops in riverine areas, cereals in the Bay region, and charcoal in the coastal region of Brawa. He concludes that environmental degradation and scarcity are not direct causes of conflict in Somalia. Conflict in Somalia is driven by the struggle for control over valuable resources.

The conflict in northern Somalia's *Golis Mountains* between the Puntland administration, clan militias, and Islamists militant sparked resource disputes but subsequently became intertwined with the "global war on terrorism." The study argues that sustainable solutions to the conflict can only be achieved by addressing the legitimate claims of the *Warsangeli* clan regarding the protection of their land and resources. (Hoehne, (2014). The current focus on anti-terrorism discourse may hinder the understanding of the underlying issues at stake

The study titled "Wars Over Resources? Evidence from Somalia" draws a number of findings on the relationship between scarcity of resources and conflict within Somalia. It concludes that conflict over fertile land, cash crops, economic centers, and critical infrastructure fuels violence in the region. Environmental issues, particularly droughts, exacerbate societal conflict and rebellion. The study emphasizes the importance of clan connection in obtaining security and support. Additionally, violence becomes significant when methods for preventing clan-based conflict falter (Webersik, 2008).

5. Conclusion

The Somali conflict exemplifies the complex interaction of historical legacies, political aspirations, limited resources, and cultural factors. The investigation of the root causes of this conflict reveals a complicated tapestry woven from the threads of colonial imposition, post-independence struggle, and contemporary challenges. The historical background underscores how external forces, driven by colonial ambitions, artificially carved the Somali territory, sowing seeds of division that persist to this day. The drive to unite diverse regions without comprehensive reconciliation generated internal tensions and power conflicts, fueling factionalism and violence. Siad Barre's rise to power, typified by dictatorial rule, territorial ambitions, and the Ogaden War, contributed additional complications to the conflict's foundation. His policies and actions left a legacy of shattered unity, economic woes, and

weaker governance, all of which led to the vacuum of power and subsequent factionalism. Resource competition and scarcity worsened existing tensions, creating conflicts over useful commodities and intensifying environmental challenges. The Somali conflict is not an outcome of a single cause. Instead, it is a product of an interplay of historical injustices, political maneuvering, and scarce resources, which leads to increases in a cycle of violence and instability. To pave the road toward lasting peace, initiatives must go beyond surface-level measures. Addressing the root causes requires a holistic strategy that recognizes historical traumas, develops genuine reconciliation, tackles institutional inequalities, and enables Somali communities to establish a more stable and peaceful future. As the international community continues for involvement in the region, this study serves as a reminder that devising successful policies for promoting enduring peace, stability, and prosperity requires a deep understanding of the Somali conflict. Only by addressing the underlying historical and contemporary motives of violence can the cycle of violence be stopped and a better future for Somalia and its people be realized.

6. Recommendation

Based on the analysis of the root causes of the Somali conflict, several recommendations can be put forward to guide efforts toward peacebuilding, conflict resolution, and sustainable development in the region:

1. Initiate comprehensive reconciliation initiatives to resolve historical grievances, foster dialogue, and rebuild trust among different tribes. Reconciliation may help heal longstanding divisions and lay the foundation for cooperation.
2. Inclusive Governance: Create political frameworks that incorporate diverse clan identities, decreasing competition for power and resources. Inclusive governance can help reduce political marginalization while also promoting a feeling of ownership and representation.
3. Socioeconomic Equity: implement policies to decrease socioeconomic disparities and promote equitable resource allocation, lowering conflict incentives. Addressing economic inequities can help to diminish the drive for people to join armed groups.
4. Resource Management: Develop permanent resource management strategies to reduce tensions caused by scarcity and foster cooperation. Conflicts can be avoided if resources are managed properly.
5. Disarmament and Reintegration: Establish programs to disarm armed groups and reintegrate former combatants into society by providing social and economic support. This has the potential to reduce the possibility of violence while also providing alternatives for people involved in conflicts.

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