

John Rabuogi Ahere

The Paradox that is Diplomatic Recognition

Unpacking the Somaliland Situation



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DEDICATION

To my mother Mrs. Clarice Martha Otieno, fondly referred to by her peers as *Nyar Gem*, who toiled tirelessly and saw to it that not only did I obtain a solid foundation in education but that I also appreciated its worth.

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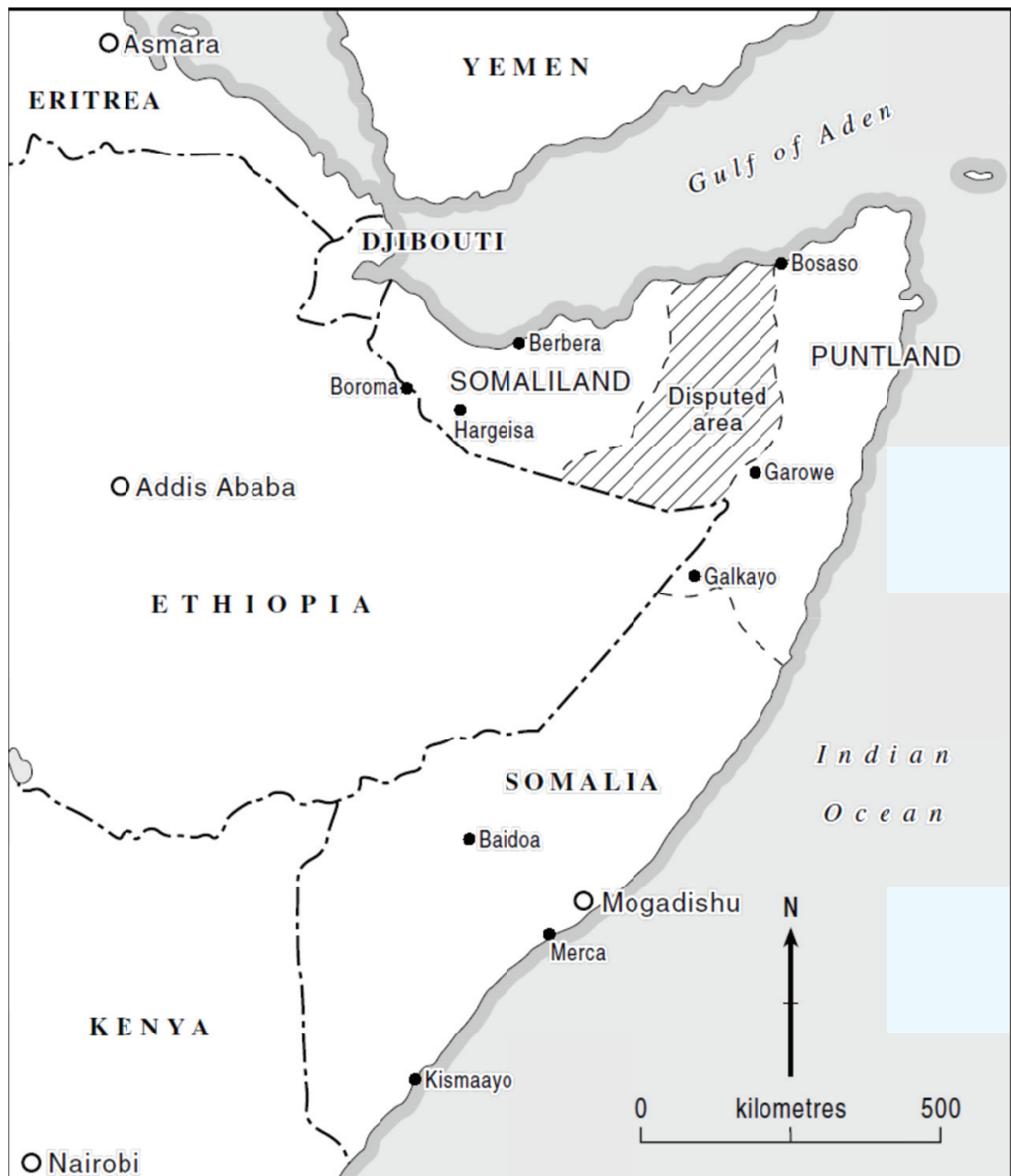
I would wish to extend my thanks to the University of Nairobi's Master of Arts in International Studies class of 2011 for providing an environment that allowed incisive debates that led to the development of the idea of this study.

Most of all, I would wish to thank the respondents who agreed and took their time to participate in this study.

To my family and friends, I shall always be thankful for your patience, encouragement and moral support during the entire time that I pursued this course.

My ultimate thanks go to God for providing me with the resources, good health, perseverance and understanding that led me to working on this study.

Figure 1: Overview of post-1991 Somalia¹



¹ P. Hoyle, 'Somaliland: Passing the Statehood Test?', *IBRU Boundary & Security Bulletin*, Vol. 8, No. 3, (2000), pp.80-91:81. Note should be taken that the boundary between Somalia and Ethiopia has never been demarcated or agreed on by the two countries.

ABSTRACT

This study examines the diplomatic intrigues that take place in the international recognition of states. It seeks to contribute to the analysis of the probable dynamics that have led to some territories in the International System not to be recognised as states by other states and international entities. A specific focus was on Somaliland which has failed to obtain international recognition since May 1991 when the 'Republic of Somaliland' was proclaimed after the breakdown of the central government of the Somali Republic. This study had certain objectives. It delved into the examination of the criteria that is used for the recognition of states in the international system. It also analyses the role of intergovernmental organizations in the non-recognition of Somaliland. The objective of this study is also to make an assessment of the nature of interactions between Somaliland and other actors in the international system. The conceptual framework that was used in this research was majorly based on realism. Specific reliance was on structural realism but with some reference to the tenets of institutional liberalism. The methodology that was used in this study is the research design known as formulative research studies. Specifically survey of concerning literature was done and the researcher reviewed and built upon the work already done by others. This study came to the conclusion that from a juridical perspective, Somaliland meets the threshold for statehood. However, in the International System, politics takes precedence over law when it comes to state recognition. Another key finding is that Somaliland's failure to participate in the Somalia peace process or its lack of engagement with the semblances of governments in Somalia has served to isolate it from the international community even as it seeks international recognition. A key recommendation is that in as much as there is global interest for peace in Somalia, for the efforts of the international society to work, the efforts need to compliment the efforts of the Somalis who must be left to devise their own mechanisms of handling their own problems. Ultimately, with peace in Somalia, and with a stable government in Baidoa or Mogadishu, the question of Somaliland's independence can then be exhaustively discussed by all actors concerned.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AU	African Union
BMA	British Military Administration
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
EC	European Community
EU	European Union
HoA	Horn of Africa
IGAD	Inter-governmental Authority on Development
IGO	Intergovernmental Organisation
INGO	International Non-governmental Organisation
IS	International System
KAR	Kings African Rifles
MINURSO	United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara
MNC	Multinational Corporation
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NFD	Northern Frontier District
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NK	Nagorno-Karabakh
OAU	Organisation for African Unity
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
RBC	Resource Based Conflicts
SNC	Somali National Congress
SNL	Somali National League
SNM	Somali National Movement
SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
SPLM	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
SSDF	Somali Salvation Democratic Front
SSLM	South Sudanese Liberation Movement
SYL	Somali Youth League
TFG	Transitional Federal Government
TNA	Transitional National Assembly
TNG	Transitional National Government
UN	United Nations
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
US	United States
USC	United Somali Congress
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WSLF	Western Somali Liberation Front

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