

COOPERATION BETWEEN THE HORN OF AFRICA AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

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This article outlines the causes of conflict in the Horn of Africa and the joint EU—Africa strategies undertaken by the European Union and the Horn of Africa partners to bring sustainable peace to the region.

Key words: Horn of Africa (HoA), European Union (EU), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

The Horn of Africa is one of the most important and strategic areas of Africa and the global economy. It is a bridge between Africa and the Middle East (Red Sea waterway and the Gulf of Aden), as well as a gateway to the oilfields of the Persian Gulf. It also neighbors Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil producer, as well as EU partner countries covered by the EU neighborhood policy. It straddles the Nile basin, which is of central importance to Egypt (whose stability in turn is an important element of Mediterranean and Middle East stability). It is a culturally and historically rich region of the world with great natural resource potential. Specifically, the region is endowed with rivers, lakes, forests, livestock, and high agricultural potential including untapped potential of petroleum, gold, salt, hydro-power and natural gas. The Horn is also a region of diverse ethnicity, languages, and religious practices. It is a region where two of the world's major religions—Christianity and Islam have co-existed peacefully for generations [11].

The Horn of Africa consists of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda. It is considered to be one of the poorest and most conflict-prone regions in Africa and in the world. Decades of war, destructive state intervention by dictatorial regimes that ruled the Sudan, Uganda, Ethiopia, and Somalia in the 1970s and 1980s have caused massive de-capitalization, brain drain, environmental degradation, poverty and famines. The conflict and instability of the Region has both intra-state, inter-state, and global dimensions. For instance, there has been a raging civil war in the Sudan for over 20 years, which is still unresolved, and that has claimed about 2 million lives and destroyed the country's resources. It has finally led to the split of South Sudan as an autonomous, independent country [12]. Although Ethiopia and Eritrea concluded a two-year war in 2000 that claimed about 100 000 lives, and destroyed the resources of both countries, their relationship between the two countries is still very fragile [4]. Somalia collapsed as a nation-state in 1991, with a de facto independence of Northern Somaliland and Punt land. The collapse of the Somali state, the only one in Black Africa with a common national, ethnic and religious identity raises a serious question for ethnic politicians and theorists of ethnic nationalism [7].

This region has come under increased international scrutiny in the war against terrorism due to the spreading of religious extremism and ideological influences from neighboring sub-regions. Prevailing insecurity in the region has also contributed to a cul-

ture of lawlessness, banditry, and warlordism. As a result the boundaries between political conflict, criminality and terrorism tend to be blurred. The major conflicts reflect the interconnections characterizing the region. These are related to the fact that most of the borders are unstable and many are contested. In addition, this factor undermines relations between countries sharing a common border, with some states providing support to armed groups fighting in neighboring States.

It is therefore correct to mention that conflicts in the Horn of Africa are interdependent between insecurity, poverty and governance. The marginalization of certain communities is reinforced by the warlords and the business community who benefit from sales of arms to fighting fractions which act to fuel the wars. In addition, authoritarianism, militarism and the interference of external powers contribute to instability and conflict; religious fundamentalism has taken advantage of weak state institutions to spread, this is especially evident in Somali. It is also strengthened by the grievances caused by poverty and conflicts and the influence of extremist fundamentalist ideology; migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons-IDPs are numerous throughout the region. The high number of trans-human and cross-border pastoralists is communities which are often marginalized and alienated. These populations are not only a source of regional instability, but also vulnerable and easily exploited by traffickers and criminal networks; proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons contribute to the presence of warlords, militias and criminal networks and also serve as an enabler of terrorism; insecurity of border and peripheral areas; competition for access to natural resources (such as water, timber, fish and fertile land), which are suffering from the consequences of desertification and climate change. In particular, access to limited water resources is of strategic importance. Specifically, five of the seven countries of the Horn share the Nile basin, which is at the center of potential regional tensions; structural food insecurity mostly affects nomadic pastoralists and agro-pastoralists. Depletion of the natural resources and degradation of pasture areas are potential causes of ethnic tensions and conflicts.

Despite changes of regime and international efforts to broker peace agreements, the countries of the region experience consistently high levels of violence, within and across borders. The incongruence between the legacy of colonial boundaries, ecological zones and cultural affinities peculiar to the region often means that disputes in any one country have social, political and economic significance beyond the area of origin. Interconnectedness of conflicts in the Horn of Africa and in any other given region, and their causes, thus makes conflict resolution particularly complex and very challenging.

The main threats come from within the region: geopolitical strife over land, water, ports and human and economic resources. The level of tension and conflict is also intensified by the role of European colonialism, which although it may present characteristics of an external dimension, was a form jurisdiction exercised through direct supremacy. The main colonial powers involved in the Horn were Italy and Britain. France weighed in as a colonial power with a few possessions (the small French Somalia, the current Republic of Djibouti), but also because it competed with Italy and England for influence in the region. The colonial period (1869—1941) witnessed the peak of interference by external forces contending for political dominance and appropriation of strategic assets [8].

Connected by history, it is therefore correct to mention that cooperation between the two regions in the history of international relations is not a new phenomenon and can be dated back to history as far as the scramble and partition of Africa which started with the Berlin conference of 1885. The times have changed, and so have the methods of cooperation transformed and diversified with the years. With the formation of the European Union and its active role as one of the actor of international relations, the instability in the region of Horn of Africa has become one of the EU's focuses in its foreign policies [9].

The EU Strategy on the Horn of Africa is being introduced against a backdrop of hopes for regional integration and long-term peace. A stable Horn Africa is in the interests of the countries that make up the region and the EU. Illegal immigration, trafficking of arms, drugs and refugee flows place the Horn's precarious political institutions under pressure, and could even affect the EU. The EU is an important trading partner for the region's seven states, and wants to foster regional integration in the Horn of Africa through the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA), bilateral trade deals which are aimed at liberalizing the economies of the EU's ACP partners [10]. By reforming border controls and trade tariff regimes, the EU hopes to increase cross-border trade and remove the incentive for trafficking and corruption. The EU is investing heavily in infrastructure to encourage and improve trade among the regions' nations and reduce their dependence on European markets.

The Africa—EU Joint Strategy specifically defines the following areas of partnership: peace and security; democratic governance and human rights; trade, regional integration and infrastructure; millennium development goals (MDGs); energy; climate change; migration, mobility and employment; science, information society and space. Socio-economic vulnerability and inequities, shortcomings in the human and social rights field, chronic food insecurity, and competition for scarce natural resources, poor governance and population growth are underlying features that EU stability and poverty reduction policies, together with regional and international partners, seek to address [6].

A prosperous, democratic, stable and secure region is in the interests of the countries and peoples of both the Horn of Africa and the EU [5]. Stability in the Horn of Africa is also strategically crucial for EU security. Cross-border dynamics, such as illegal migration and trafficking of arms, drugs and refugee flows, are factors contributing to instability and tensions that spread throughout the Horn of Africa and beyond. Uncontrolled, politically neglected, economically marginalized and environmentally damaged Horn has the potential to undermine the regional and the EU's broad stability and development policy objectives and to pose a threat to European Union security, not to mention the impacts on the world stability.

With the knowledge of the above characteristics of the Horn of Africa, European Union, in partnership with other non-European actors of international relations have formed work groups, programs to help further the cooperation mainly focusing in the areas of maintaining peace and stability as well as economic development of the region. The EU works closely together with the African Union and sub-regional organizations such as the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) — the seven-country regional development organization of eastern Africa — to implement the new regional strategy [2].

EU cooperation with Intergovernmental Authority on Development — IGAD.

IGAD was first founded in 1986 under the name of the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD), reflecting the need for partnership to combat the widespread famine, ecological degradation and poverty in the region. The organization was reconstituted under its current name of the Inter-Governmental Authority for Development (IGAD) in 1996, and given broader mandate for regional development activities. IGAD's current membership includes seven countries: Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Sudan, and Uganda [2]. IGAD's primary stated mission is to achieve regional cooperation and economic integration through the promotion of food security, sustainable environmental management, peace and security, intra-regional trade, and development of improved communications infrastructure.

While the general goal of IGAD is to achieve economic integration and sustainable development for the sub-region, its specific objectives include the creation of an enable environment for cross-border domestic trade and investment, and the harmonization of policies with regard to trade, customs, transport communications, agriculture, and natural resources, and the promotion of free movement of goods and services, and people within the region. IGAD has played an important role in the area of conflict resolution, including the Sudan and Somalia peace processes. Thus, IGAD is a natural organization with significant institutional and human capital invested by the states of the region and the international community, on which to build a workable economic cooperation based on many years of experience.

Partnership and cooperation between the EU and the Horn of Africa started in 2007 with a formation of joint commission [1]. As indicated above, the areas of cooperation range from tackling issues concerning peace and stability, migration and refugee problem, poverty, weapon proliferation, good governance, piracy, sustainable development among many others. To effectively work and strengthen the partnership, the EU — Horn of Africa commission proposes to enhance the partnership between the EU, the AU and regional organizations by means of the following measures:

- a. enhancing cooperation with the IGAD, focusing on three main areas: peace, security and governance; pastoralism and food security; and institutional development;
- b. building Africa's capacities for conflict prevention, mediation and deployment of military peacekeeping operations, with active participation of the AU;
- c. fostering of regional integration in the countries of the Horn, in particular by integrating the Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the East Africa Community (EAC) in any long-term strategy to establish peace in the region;
- d. supporting African efforts to monitor and improve governance;
- e. taking into account the key country-level strategic issues with potential regional ramifications, i.e.:

— factoring into the dialogue of the interests of the supporters and opponents of the peace process in Sudan, with particular attention paid to the Darfur crisis;

— putting cross-border state support for armed groups on the political agenda of the EU and the countries of the Horn;

— finding solutions to border demarcation issues, particularly in relation to the Ethiopian/Eritrean border;

- taking account of the role of Kenya and Djibouti in regional stability;
- the participation of Somalia neighboring countries in the Somali peace process, in which they can play a stabilizing role;
- taking account of the regional dimensions of the conflict in northern Uganda in the peace process.

To tackle regional cross-cutting and cross-border concerns EU and the IGAD address all issues on the basis of three pillars: 1 — improved governance and security, and enhanced dialogue between cultures; 2 — enhanced development, trade, security and political participation, and improved management of migration and refugees and prevention of small arms and light weapons proliferation; 3 — improved programs to address competition for natural resources.

For success of this cooperation, both sides of the commission proposed accompanying measures for the successful implementation of the partnership in the matters concerning the countries of the Horn of Africa [3]. Some of the steps to achieve these goals within the EU include promoting information-sharing and consultation between EU member states and EU institutions; promoting the International Partners Forum as a forum for dialogue with IGAD; facilitate political dialogue with key actors, with a strong emphasis on regional issues; tackling issues concerning the Horn of Africa with Egypt, the Arab Gulf States, the League of Arab States, and Central and East Africa; enhancing dialogue and coordination with the USA, Norway, Japan, Canada, Russia and China, as well as with the United Nations; strengthening integration into development programs of human and social rights and gender, demographic issues and the environment; taking account of regional and cross-cutting issues in EU strategies and programs concerning the countries of the Horn region. In addition, the national and regional strategies of the 10th European Development Fund (EDF) for the period 2008—2013 must dovetail with the regional political partnership for the Horn.

The Horn of Africa countries on the other hand aims at obtaining a coordinated position among member states, the IGAD Secretariat, regional players and civil society organizations. Dialogue on key regional challenges and be engaged in identifying the drivers of change; allocating adequate resources for the dialogue and the work program; addressing the sources of conflict and promoting cross-sectorial cooperation within the states and its population can and will play a very important role if implemented by the states of the region. Considering that the institutions in this region are poorly developed, it is therefore necessary to encourage the implementation of relevant institutional reforms.

Cooperation between the EU and the Horn of Africa, if given chance will produce dynamic results effecting the regional peace and stability. While many actors make it slower to complete the peace processes and bearing in mind that the region has been unstable for decades, it would still be necessary to include the international community in the peace processes going on in the region. Competition for political, economic influence in the region should be the least of interests among the actors willing to take part in the peace processes as the situation in the Horn of Africa currently is about life and death. The EU and other actors cannot afford to put their interests before human life and survival.

The success of the any new strategy depends greatly on political will and ownership, nevertheless, the drive and desire for change must come from within the states and leaders in the region who have better understanding of the situation of the grass-roots. That way lasting peace and stability can be guaranteed. The European Union can only help and support the steps initiated by African leaders themselves.

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СОТРУДНИЧЕСТВО ЕС СО СТРАНАМИ АФРИКАНСКОГО РОГА

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В данной статье анализируются причины конфликтов в районе Африканского Рога, а также стратегии, предпринятые странами Евросоюза совместно с африканскими странами — партнерами стран Африканского Рога с целью сохранения устойчивого мира в регионе.

Ключевые слова: Африканский Рог, Европейский Союз, Межправительственная организация по вопросам развития (ИГАД).