Rebuilding The Somali Nation-State: The Needs for Sustainable Peace

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Abstract

Somalia has been defined as a state collapse with conflicts for almost four decades as it has been at war with ethnic and religious insurgency. As a result, this led to creating post-war conflict tension. With its multi-dimensional consequences, the conflict has been an obstacle to progress, sustainable peace, and overall socio-economic development. Participation in peacebuilding and sustainable conflict resolution can only be made by Somalis when they seriously consider setting a bottom-up approach to peacebuilding. This approach could contribute to ending a given conflict, conserving their limited resources, and preserving their nation-state. This paper discusses how conflict resolution and sustainable peacebuilding can transform Somali society with a sustainable peace situation and an atmosphere of development. It will try to answer the following questions: What tools are required to have sustainable peace to help Somalia's future as a nation?

Keywords: *Somali conflict, Peacebuilding, Sustainable Peace, Bottom-up approach, Top- down Approach, Conflict Resolution.*

Introduction

With the creation of the Transitional Federal Government in 2004, Somalia formally embraced a federal system. With the approval of the Provisional Federal Constitution (PFC), which clarified many vital aspects of Somalia's governing system, this approach gained significant traction in 2012. In theory, implementing federalism was meant to discourage conflict since it was believed that shifting authority and resources away from the center could prevent parties to the dispute from vying for control center. (Somali Dialogue, 2022). The federal experiment in Somalia has experienced a need for more consensus among the federal member states. The nation needs to be faster in properly establishing how authority should be divided between the FGS and its constituent divisions. Recurrent FGS-FMS debates over resource sharing were typically related to differences in how natural resources are managed. (Ibid.)

As stated above, a constitutional review procedure was established in 2012 to address these flaws and advance understanding and agreement on Somalia's federal structure. Although significant technical advancements have presented some pertinent possibilities, the political dialogue required to agree on arrangements has yet to occur. Furthermore, there have been sensitive political matters regarding the technical aspect of federalism for the nation, ranging from very centralised to very dispersed models. (Somali Dialogue, 2022).

According to Okpetu (2011), the association of conflict and concepts is represented in situations in which peace is lacking. Thus, it is nearly impossible to discuss peace and development without appreciating and situating the problem of conflict in human society (Okpetu, 2011). Analysts believe conflict studies to be multifaceted (Okpetu, 2011). The fact that conflicts appear widespread or present in every corner of the globe is one of the arguments for why conflicts are so common in human civilizations. Second, it is proven that conflict must be avoided or reduced to a minimum for human progress to take place. As a result, finding natural resources for human existence and progress is only considered after considerable effort and dispute settlement.

On the other hand, it is crucial to understand how political practices and institutions have failed, how inadequate or limited efforts at reconciliation further damage these systems, and how these factors contribute to nation collapse, such as Somalia. Somalis have become polarized and have limited social cohesion due to a prevalent culture of violence utilized to maintain power and resources. Clannism provided informal protection in an environment marked by violent rivalry and division between and within the clans. In some cases, there has been a gap between civil society — which has been more susceptible to manipulation by violent extremist groups — and securing tension-reduction efforts. Consequently, the lack of venues for communities to participate in these efforts has been reduced because of the lack of a long-term peace setting. Consequently, the communities' need to have political representation has increased and fostered distrust and conflict within and between communities, society, and the government. A weak economy, unresponsive governance structures, unresolved clan disputes, and tensions between rival clans posed problems at the national and local levels.

Sustainable Peace; A Systematic Approach to Peacebuilding

Since the collapse of their state, Somalis have not had the opportunity to have national reconciliation to enable them to live in sustainable and systematic peace. In every so-called government since the formation of the federal government in late 2012, there is yet to be a case that focuses on this process. That is what makes Somalia still have an unsustainable peace situation despite the setting of federal member states. As stated, in Somalia, the case about power distribution has been complex, resulting in a significant vacuum in the political agreements. It has created a situation that demanded severe attention, along with other federal issues like the national security framework and the condition of the capital. The best chance of achieving this is through an integrated, inclusive political process that considers these problems before influencing the constitutional review process.

Peacebuilding from Top-Down Shortcomings

On April 27, 2016, the General Assembly and Security Council adopted resolutions on peacebuilding that were virtually identical (A/RES/70/262 and S/RES/2282 (2016)). Instead of reframing peacebuilding, the resolutions introduce the term "sustaining peace," which offers greater clarity and a broader definition. In the 1990s, post-conflict peace building was the primary concept of peace building inside the UN.

The Security Council Presidential Statement S/PRST/2001/15 and the subsequent 2007 Policy Committee decision, which defined peace building as trying to prevent the outbreak, recurrence, or continuation of armed conflict, however, caused a change in this perspective in the 2000s. As stated in the preamble of the new resolution's A/RES/70/262 and S/RES/2282, "sustaining peace encompasses activities aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation, and recurrence of conflict." Practically speaking, peace building and peace keeping should not be differentiated. It does not refer to redefining the various UN bodies' roles, duties, or mandates. The ultimate goal of maintaining peace and peacebuilding is to lessen the possibility of a breakdown or relapse into violent conflict. It is an inspirational objective aiming to create the aptitude and ability to look beyond crisis management and promptly resolve disputes. The resolutions present a chance to direct more of the UN system's attention toward conflict prevention, allowing core causes and symptoms of disputes to be addressed. Thus, the idea addresses problems that could otherwise ignite fresh conflict cycles.

Theorizing Peace building

Galtung (1975) theorized that peace building is one of the three methods for achieving peace: structural, direct, and cultural. This could come along with peacemaking and peace keeping (quoted by Abduljabar). Therefore, peacebuilding is addressed as the root cause of conflict and prevents it from degenerating into violence. Further, it is added that peacebuilding achieves positive peace through developing structures and institutions of peace based on justice, equity, and cooperation.

Lederach suggests that peace building is an enormously complex endeavor in unbelievably complex dynamic and often destructive violent settings. He contends that third-party intervention should focus on coordinating outside peace efforts to strengthen domestic players. Because notable people have connections to the top and grassroots levels, they can support the establishment of peace and impact both the bottom and the top (Lederach, 1997).

On the other hand, Paffenholz (2003) distinguished three layers of society. She describes the three steps in establishing peace but suggests starting at the ground level. Similarly, Paffenholz (2003) defines peace building as a long-term process to end violence and advance sustainable peace. She contends that the goal of peace building changes from phase to phase depending on the level of conflict escalation. Beginning with explaining the many sorts of conflicts and the appropriate approaches, Paffenholz (2003) discusses peace building as a means of turning violent forms of conflict into peaceful ones when they have already reached a warlike stage. Peace building should help end the war or civil unrest and maintain peace when widespread violence has subsided. Therefore, stability can be promoted through a variety of strategies and initiatives. Still, it is crucial to comprehend the conflict's sides, their role in society, the influence of regional and global players, and other relevant factors. (Paffenholz, 2003).

The Need for Sustainable Peace building

Participating in sustainable peace building is a proactive step that promotes resolving a particular conflict, preserving human life, and prudent use of finite resources. (Ojighoro, 2021) Quoted by Abduljabar Mohamed (2021), the concept of peace building proposed by the UNSG in the early 1990s is called to be expanded upon in Lederach's theory. Quoted by Abduljabar Mohamed (2021): “The framework was developed to bring an end to conflicts and achieve sustainable peace. The

proposal included four major areas of activities: preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping, and post-conflict peacebuilding". Further in the approach to peacebuilding, Abduljabar Mohamed (2021) emphasizes that Lederach established a framework based on an understanding of peacebuilding that centers on sustainable reconciliation within societies. Building peace can be done by establishing systems and protocols and teaching people over an extended period (ibid). This strategy's importance, which Lederach (1997) refers to as "indigenous empowerment" or "peace building from below," focuses on releasing communities from oppression and bloodshed. In addition, Lederach acknowledges the necessity to address the underlying causes of conflict and the contradiction between immediate dispute resolution and long-term relationship building. (Lederach 1997).

It is understood that emphasizing peace builders must embrace complexity and that once the total complexity is understood, one can choose what particular thing to do in a given setting. Lederach (2005) adds that peace building is an enormously complex endeavor in unbelievably complex, dynamic, and often destructive settings of violence.

Similarly, Paffenholz (2003) defines peacebuilding as a long-term process to end violence and advance sustainable peace. Here, the goal of peacebuilding changes from phase to phase depending on the level of conflict escalation. Further quoted, Abduljabar Mohamed (2021) and Paffenholz (2003) describe the different types of conflicts and the appropriate approaches. For example, when a conflict has become violent, peace building aims to turn it into a peaceful one. Similarly, if violence escalates to war or civil unrest, peace building should help end the conflict and maintain peace after the intense violence has subsided (Paffenholz et al, 2003:14).

Results of Sustainable Conflict Resolution

Different strategies must be used at all societal levels to turn conflict into a durable peace over time. Therefore, a medium with long-term assistance is needed to assist societies directly harmed by conflict. Programs that carry out local initiatives must be developed to promote inclusive peace processes with regional stakeholders. Continued development and use of local peace methods require collective efforts to convey research findings to conversations and actions connected to peace building.

A sustainable system must be created to aid societies affected by conflict in transitioning to permanent peace. The peace procedures need to be developed by regional and conflict-aware local stakeholders. A society can achieve peace by enhancing the institutions and structures that make it up, which goes beyond simply being free from violence. In an increasingly interconnected and complex regional environment, political decisions and societal conversations must consider national perspectives and best practices. This strategy will call for knowledge of cutting-edge research and innovative fixes for societal issues (Ojighoro, 2021). It is vital to encourage the development of evidence-based policy recommendations and solutions. Mechanisms must be in place to promote open dialogues among decision-makers, influential people, and experts from diverse sectors to achieve this goal. (ibid)

Conclusion

For almost 40 years, warfare and state collapse have characterized Somalia. As stress from the post-war conflict is felt in Somalia, war and ethnicity have been added to the religious insurgency. The conflict has hampered growth, long-term peace, and general socioeconomic development because of its multifaceted effects. As a result, involvement in peace building and sustainable conflict resolution promotes the eventual resolution of a particular conflict, conserving finite resources and protecting human life.

The paper has addressed the case about how Somalia could get a sustainable peace. Somalis need to think seriously about their future as a nation-state. They should foster and grow the building blocks of a working nation-state apparatus and find a long-term peacebuilding resolution.

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