

State Crisis, Conflicts and International Intervention in the Horn of Africa

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The features characterising the Horn of Africa (HOA) are state crisis, conflicts and international intervention. The precarious nature of the state building in the HOA has given rise to chronic state crisis. State crisis in turn leads to festering conflicts. Stated differently state crisis and conflicts feed into each other. Another variable that plays out in this nexus is international intervention. International intervention adversely affects both the state and conflict situation in the HOA. The origin of the state that generated the two publics: the urban public and rural public, delineated societies when the rural public was alienated from the post-colonial state. The limited penetration of the rural public by the state generated a situation where the publics were estranged. The alienation of the rural public ultimately inserted serious and lasting contradiction and fracture between the two publics affecting considerably governance system. Consequently today the state in the HOA is declared invariably as fragile, failed, collapsed, predatory, patrimonial, rent seeking, rogue, etc. The state of condition gave rise to rampant conflicts in the HOA.

Apparently a host of factors stand for the crisis of the state and the concomitant festering conflicts in the HOA. Among the factors that can be accounted for the state crisis and conflicts are international interventions that pertain to colonialism, neo-colonialism, Cold War superpower competition driven by strategic, economic, political and security interests. Recently also concern of global war on terror and anti-piracy off the coast of Somalia that brought virtually the entire world naval forces to the region have compounded to the host of factors. The project of state building which is the epicentre of the crisis of the state in the HOA is fundamentally a domestic process. As such external interventions adversely affect the state building process, which make the state precarious and susceptible to intra-state and inter-state conflicts.

The aim of the paper is to explore the interrelation between state crisis, conflicts and international intervention in the Horn of Africa (HOA).