



ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
INSTITUTE FOR PEACE AND SECURITY STUDIES

**ETHIO-SUDAN RELATIONS:
COOPERATION AND CONFLICT IN THE 1990s**

By:
GEBRESILASSIE GIDEY TEFAY

JUNE 2023
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
INSTITUTE FOR PEACE AND SECURITY STUDIES**

**ETHIO-SUDAN RELATIONS:
COOPERATION AND CONFLICT IN THE 1990s**

**BY:
GEBRESILASSIE GIDEY**

**A Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies of Addis Ababa
University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in
Peace and Security Studies**

**Advisor:
Fana Gebresenbet (PhD)**

**JUNE 2023
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

ADDIS ABEBA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
INSTITUTE FOR PEACE AND SECURITY STUDIES

**ETHIO-SUDAN RELATIONS:
COOPERATION AND CONFLICT IN THE 1990s**

**BY:
GEBRESILASSIE GIDEY**

Approval sheet for the Board of Examiners to sign

Advisor:

Name Fana Gebresenbet (PhD) Signature _____ Date _____

External Examiner:

Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Internal Examiner:

Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Director of IPSS:

Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

DECLARATION

I, Gebresilassie Gidey, hereby declare that this thesis is my original work, has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all sources of material used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name: Gebresilassie Gidey Tesfay

Signature: _____

Date June 2023

Advisor name; Fana Gebresenbet (PhD)

Signature; _____

Date; _____

Acknowledgement

I owe a great deal of gratitude to my master's programme advisor, Dr. Fana Gebresenbet, for his unwavering support and guidance. His expertise and patience have been invaluable to me and has played a crucial role in the success of this thesis.

My family, friends Desta Kahsay, Mehari Araya, Alemseged Girmay and Fasika bekele deserve a special thank you for their affection and unwavering moral support. The current thesis is not the work of a single hand; rather, it is the outcome of numerous hands that participated both directly and indirectly during the entire process.

The Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS), and Yonas Tariku in particular (lecturer and academic coordinator), deserve special thanks for their encouragement and drive. They gave me the most potent weapon they had in their arsenal.

Finally, I'd want to express my gratitude to all of the study subjects for their cooperation and readiness to share their insights. Without their help, this job would not have been feasible. Col. Tesfay G/Hiwot deserves a particular thank you for his outstanding collaboration.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgement	I
Contents	II
LIST OF TABLES	IV
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	V
<i>ABSTRACT</i>	VII
CHAPTER ONE	1
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Statement of the problem	2
1.3 Objectives of the study	4
1.3.1 Specific objectives	4
1.4 Research questions	4
1.5 Conceptual and Theoretical Perspectives	5
1.5.1 Conflict	5
1.5.2 Security	6
1.5.3 Regional Conflict Complexes	8
1.6 Significance of the Study	9
1.7 Research Methodology	9
1.8 Delimitation of the Study	12
1.9 Limitation of the study	12
1.10 Ethical considerations	13
1.11 Organization of the thesis	13
CHAPTER TWO	14
2. LITERATURE REVIEW	14
2.1 Civil wars and the role of the neighbors in the Horn of Africa	14
2.2 Trends of Conflict: Intrastate Conflicts in the Horn of Africa	15
2.2.1 Ethnic Conflict	15
2.2.2 Marginalization, political exclusion, and poor leadership	17
2.3 Inter-state matters in the Horn of Africa's conflict	19
2.3.1 Religious Fundamentalism and Violence	19

2.3.2 The Logic of Subversion	20
2.3.3 Political and Historical Issues.....	23
2.4 Border Issues.....	32
2.4.1 Expansionist Threat of Greater Somalia.....	32
2.5 Ethio-Sudan Relations.....	33
2.6 Summary	36
CHAPTER THREE	37
3. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS	37
3.1. Domestic, Regional and International Context	37
3.1.1 Domestic Context: TPLF/EPRDF’s relations with regional powers before 1991.....	37
3.1.2 Domestic and Regional Context: TPLF/EPRDF’s Relations with Regional Powers (Post-1991)	40
3.1.3 International Context: Response to the Rise of Islamic Extremism in Sudan.....	43
3.2 Confrontation and Cooperation with SPLM/A	47
3.3 Cooperation and confrontation along the border in Benishangul-Gumuz	53
3.4. Cooperation and Confrontation along the border in Metema	55
3.5 Escalating the Confrontation: Mobilising a Regional Coalition Against Sudan.....	58
3.6 Analysis: Limits to the Agency of State Actors	63
CHAPTER FOUR.....	65
4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	65
4.1 Conclusion.....	65
4.2 Recommendations	67
REFERENCES	68
Internet Sources (Web Sites and Date Accessed)	74
ANNEX I Interview Questions.....	76
ANNEX II: List of informants.....	77

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Armed Groups in the Horn of Africa and states supporting the Armed Groups: 22

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIAI	AL Itthad Al Islamia
ALF	Afar Liberation Front
AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
ANO	Abu Nidal Organisation
BPLM	Benishangul People Liberation Movement
EIJM	Ethiopian Islamic Jihad Movement
EIJ	Egyptian Islamic Jihad
ELF	Eritrean Liberation Front
ENDF	Ethiopian National Defence Force
EPRP	Ethiopian People Revolutionary Party
EPO	Ethiopian Peace Observatory
EPDM	Ethiopian People Democratic Movement
EPLF	Eritrean People Liberation Front
EPRDF	Ethiopian People Revolutionally Democratic Front
GPLM	Gambella People Liberation Movement
HDI	Human Development Index
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICG	International Crisis Group
IGDD	International Authority on Drought and Development
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
LRA	Lords Resistance Army
NDA	National Democratic Alliance

NCF	National Congress Party
NGO	None Governmental Organisation
NIF	National Islamic Frontenac
OAU	Organisation of African Union
OLF	Oromo Liberation Front
OMLF	Ogaden National Liberation Front
PIJ	Palestinian Islamic Jihad
REST	Relief Society of Tigray
SAF	Sudan Armed Forces
SLM	Sidama Liberation Movement
SPLM	South Sudan Liberation Movement
SPLM-IO	SPLM In Opposition
SPLA	South Sudan People's Liberation Army.
SRF	Sudan Liberation Front
TGOF	Transitional Government of Ethiopia
TPLF	Tigray People Liberation Front
TTP	Tehrik -e Thaliban Pakistan
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UIC	Union of Islamic Court
WHO	World Health Organisation

ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the evolving relations between the TPLF/EPRDF-led government and the Sudanese government in the early 1990s. The thesis highlights how the relationship between the two regimes shifted from cooperation and aiming towards building a cordial relationship to enmity and armed conflict. This argument is made based on primary data collected from 17 key informants with primary knowledge of the different security and diplomatic exchanges, including members of the local community, members of the Ethiopian armed forces, and diplomatic sources. The study uses three sub-cases of direct interactions between the two countries located along their borders: Gambella, Benisgangul-Gumuz, and northwestern Amhara, and a fourth case of a regional alliance created by Ethiopia, Uganda, and Eritrea, with Kenya allowing its territory as a route for Ethiopian and Eritrean troops to cross to Uganda with US' financial assistance. The analysis is informed by a critical understanding of security dynamics in weak states and the Horn of Africa and by the regional conflict complex theory. The thesis highlights that the Ethiopian government initially aspired for cordial relations and was pushing the Sudan People's Liberation Army to stop operating in and from Ethiopia. However, Sudanese interference in local politics in the Benishangul-Gumuz region of Ethiopia and the increasing tension and insecurity along the border in the north-west Amhara region forced the Ethiopian government to change its position. On top of this, the exporting of political Islam by the National Islamic Front of Sudan concerned not only Ethiopia but also other neighbours and beyond. As such, the Ethiopian government started responding with the same old tactics of supporting the SPLA, directly engaging in armed conflict with Sudanese forces, and forming a regional or international alliance to at least weaken the Sudanese regime. The thesis concludes by highlighting the limitations to the agency and aspirations of new rulers due to the historical lack of trust and structural security conditions, and would have to respond in more realistic terms to the regional conflict complex.

Key Words: Conflict, Cooperation, Security, Islamic extremism, Regional powers

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Conflict is a universal condition of all societies, often expressed when two independent parties are in competition or when their interests are incompatible. Incompatibility will lead to violent conflicts when resources are scarce (or are perceived to be) and when there is interference from third parties (Hocker & Wilmot, 1985; Omeje, 2013). Given the limited nature of resources compared to human needs and the aggressive interests of some, including the capitalist class, one cannot imagine achieving conditions of utopia with no limits on meeting one's interests (Samuelson & Nordhaus, 1989). Climate change and other causes of reduction in natural resource quantity and quality, combined with increasing demand (be it to meet demands from the increasing population or increasing consumption), tend to draw a future with increasing resource scarcity around the world, including in basic resources such as fresh water and food (Matthew, 2008).

"In the Horn of Africa, violent conflict is a common occurrence" (Maxwell & Reuveny, 2000). It is one of the most violent parts of the continent, with two successful secessionist movements (Eritrea and South Sudan), one de facto state (Somaliland), two major inter-state wars (Ethio-Somalia and Ethio-Eritrea), and Somalia's state failure (Clapham, 2017). While the local conflicts could be attributed to high ethnic diversity, political volatility, and resource scarcity, as evidenced by frequent droughts and famines in the region, we should not ignore the macro-level political factors too.

At the very least, weak state institutions and (un)intentional marginalisation and neglect fuel different forms of conflict, including those based on identity. Resource dynamics linked to land often give contestations a collective nature (Hashim, 2003). Moreover, explanations centred on local dynamics ignore the fact that the Horn of Africa is the most violence-ridden part of the continent, including inter-state wars and proxy wars by supporting the rebels of a neighbouring country (Anderson et al., 2012). The Cold War particularly was a period of violence and inter-state proxy war for the Horn, among others, due to the ideological differences of the regimes

holding grip on the countries at the time, the proliferation of liberation movements, and the geopolitical interests of s superpowers (Sharamo & Berouk, 2011).

These dynamics have not withered away with the coming of a new global order. However, the intensity of violent conflicts has declined since the 1990s (perhaps before the commencement of the wars in Ethiopia (November 2020 to November 2022) and Sudan (April 2023 onwards). In the early 1990s, there was hope that inter-state relations would be more stabilised as the TPLF/EPRDF, which had amicable relations with Sudan, came to control state power in Addis Ababa and as Eritrea, after three decades of armed struggle, gained de facto independence. This was far from the case, however, as Ethiopia and Sudan started confrontations, including military ones, by the mid-1990s, and Ethiopia and Eritrea entered a full-blown war in 1998. The agency and intentions of the leaders and governments of the two countries appeared to be dialled down to the dictates of structural and contextual causes of mistrust and conflict (including at the regional level). As indicated later in the thesis, the regional conflict complex (Buzan and Waever, 2003; Wallensteen & Sollenberg, 1998) provided the binding structure for the intentions to cooperate to soar and deteriorate into a full-scale regional alliance against Sudan.

This thesis therefore examines the changing relations between Sudan and Ethiopia since early 1991 within the context of a long history of mistrust and fighting. What started with cooperation and a strong desire to embolden the cooperation soon turned into proxy wars, interferences, and wars. Perhaps (Medhane, 2004) criticism that regimes are not sufficiently committed to transform the structural conditions they inherited but instead become products of them is apt. The thesis therefore addresses the critical knowledge gap in the comprehensive understanding of the evolution of Ethio-Sudan relations in the 1990s.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The strong hope for a peaceful and cooperative regional order in the Horn did not last for more than a few years in the 1990s. The security logic and dynamic of the global powers ‘imposed’ or ‘overlaid’ (Buzan & Weaver, 2003) onto the Horn of Africa scene were lifted with the end of the Cold War. Thus, more internally (to the region) driven security interdependence emerged by 1991, as there were friendly regimes in Ethiopia, Eritrea (de facto as of 1991 and de jure as of 1993), and Sudan, while Somalia’s state failure meant that it could not actively create troubles

for its neighbours. Combined with the TPLF/EPRDF's government view of its peaceful and non-interventionist regional policy stance, there was expectation by the new Ethiopian government that a repeat of the same old dynamics in regional security relations would not happen (Young J., 1999). (Mulugeta, 2014)

However, despite initial attempts to build positive relations and stop the support extended to each other's rebel groups, Ethio-Sudan relations started to soar immediately afterwards. Previous works examined these changing relations either with a focus on a particular moment in time or a particular geographic area (for example, engagements in Gambella by indirectly (Dereje, 2011; Mathijs, 2013); engagements in Benishangul-Gumuz by (Young, 1999); and engagements from Uganda by (Mulugeta, 2014). Therefore, there is a need to comprehensively cover the evolution of Ethio-Sudan relations across the border they share and over an extended period of time.

Moreover, there is a need to complement the material and data sources of prior authors (Young, 1999) as well as those who exclusively relied on interviews with key political and military elites of the Ethiopian government or the appropriate regional government. Therefore, there is a gap to be addressed by bringing in data and evidence from military officers who were engaged in some of these attacks and fights. This brings to light the operational details of the events while bringing in interpretations and views on what transpired from middle-level officials.

Furthermore, the available studies do not make the necessary explicit analysis of the developments in relevant theories in security studies. Therefore, there is a lack of contribution to theoretical debates that bring issues of agency (of the state elite), contextual/situational factors, and structural factors binding the security arrangements of Sudan and Ethiopia together. The analysis therefore needs to be made with proper consideration of older issues of power projection and patterns of amity and enmity between the states in a given geographic space (Buzan & Weaver, 2003), which provide a structure for new actors to play with and change as well.

1.3 Objectives of the study

Based on the gap identified (as illustrated above), this thesis research aims to comprehensively understand the dynamics and developments in security interactions between Ethiopia and Sudan in the early 1990s and examine the multi-layered and complex causes of these developments.

1.3.1 Specific objectives

The specific objectives of the MA thesis study are the following:

1. To investigate in detail the major changes and dynamics of security interactions, as well as their causes, between Ethiopia and the SPLM/A;
2. To investigate in detail the major changes and dynamics of security interactions, as well as their causes, between Ethiopia and Sudan along the border shared in Benishangul-Gumuz and the north-western Amhara region of Ethiopia;
3. To examine regional dynamics of alliance formation and engagement of global powers in response to emerging security dynamics in the Horn of Africa region;

1.4 Research questions

The key research questions this thesis answers are the following: What are the major drivers and major trends in the development of Ethio-Sudan security interactions in the early 1990s?

The specific research questions to be addressed are:

1. What are the major changes and dynamics in security interactions between Ethiopia and the SPLM/A? What are the underlying causes?
2. What are the major changes and dynamics in security interactions between Ethiopia and Sudan along the borders shared in Benishangul-Gumuz and northwestern Amhara regional states? What are the underlying causes?
3. What are the implications of these changes for regional alliance formation and the engagement of global powers?

1.5 Conceptual and Theoretical Perspectives

1.5.1 Conflict

There is no universal agreement on what conflict is, its categorization, or its causes. Some use conflict and violence interchangeably (Pettman, 1975), while in the context of this thesis, conflict is used to include non-violent forms as well. According to Coser, quoted by (Olaosebikan, 2010) "conflict is a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power, and resources in which the aim of the conflicting parties is to injure or eliminate their rivals". For Coser, the determination of the existence (or not) of conflict is not contingent on the number of conflicting parties or the intensity of the contestation; what matters more is the existence of the 'rivals' and their intentions and actions to overcome the rivalrous relations.

For (Weeks, 1998), "conflict is a prolonged battle collision; the opposition of mutually exclusive impulses, desires, or tendencies; controversy or disagreement; a complex phenomenon of human interactions." He further argues that "conflict is an inescapable part of our daily lives and the inevitable result of our highly complex, competitive, and often litigious society." The same scholar adds that "conflict is a battle to win or a struggle to gain advantage in the relationship or to attain dominance in the relationship." In addition to tangible material causes of conflict, Weeks linked conflict with psychological factors, be they personal or communal. Accordingly, he argued that conflict is inevitable as we cannot do away with diversity—be it in thought, attitude, beliefs, or identities.

To others, conflict is defined as "an act of striking together; a configuration to strike together, fight, and clash. Competition or mutual interference of opposing or incompatible forces or qualities; an emotional state characterised in decision, relentlessness, uncertainty, and tension resulting from incompatible inner needs or drives of comparable intensity; an engagement between men under arms, struggle, contest, fight" (Gove, 1976). Besides, he states that "conflict is a prolonged fighting with weapons; warfare strife; the opposition of persons or forces striking or clashing together of material bodies or substances; to contend with or against another in strife or warfare; to show variance, incompatibility, irreconcilability, or opposition." In this case, conflict refers to contexts of (armed) fighting between two or more organising actor groups. Similarly, according to George Simmei, quoted in (Mesfin, 1999), conflict is defined as "a

designed phenomenon to resolve divergent dualisms; it is a way of achieving some kind of unity."

Therefore, conflict could, in a more comprehensive manner, be defined as occurring between individuals or groups with goals that are deemed incompatible, under conditions of scarce (perceived or real) resources, and with the use of power to settle these differences (Avruch, 2002). As such, conflict is an inevitable part of life that we have to engage with as we make decisions and choices and pursue them under conditions of limited availability or perceived availability (Zartman, 1991). Irrespective of the persistence of violent conflicts in some parts of the world, such as Africa, one should also note that conflict is "a feature of all human societies and potentially an aspect of all social relations" (Avruch, 2002); see also (Zartman, 1991); (Fearnely & L., 2006), with the difference being the extent and type of violence used.

In non-violent conflicts, we don't use crude force (Jeong, 2017). The intention, therefore, is not to create a world without conflicts but to chart a way towards less use of violence in settling differences. This is an important transformation and effort, as violent conflicts lead to destruction of property and loss of life and life chances (Fearnely & L., 2006).

1.5.2 Security

Security is an essentially contested concept (Williams, 2013). For some writers, the definition of security relates to the states of being or feeling secure, freedom from fear, anxiety, danger, doubt, and a sense of safety and certainty. Therefore, security has two dimensions: the physical and objective and the psychological and subjective (Snow, 1991; Francis et al., 1991). The former is the mainstay of conventional security notions, with a focus on the protection of a state's sovereignty and national territory from external aggression (Ibid.). In this effort, the decision-making and analysis of the security conditions and environment invite the psychological and perceptual aspects of security (Snow, 1991).

In the traditional sense, security is a sub-field within international relations, with states being the primary actors and the interest being on preserving the state's territory, economy, sovereignty, and other expressions of national interest (Hough, 2008). In such cases, the state is viewed as the

primary referent object of security studies, with the threat exclusively coming from outside the state within the context of an anarchic international system and unpredictable state behaviour.

Such realist views are not satisfactory in all contexts for various reasons. First, in developing countries such as Ethiopia, the security threat could be domestic due to the incomplete levels of state building, the lack of social cohesion, and the lower capability of the state to impose itself on society (Ayoob, 2002). Moreover, others contend that the referent object could be broadened to include the human in the case of human security (Booth, 1991) and the regime in the case of regime security (Kreig, 2019). In more recent decades, it has been broadened to include other referent objects like political, economic, societal, and environmental security (Buzan B., 1991). Military security is concerned with the offensive and defensive military capabilities of a given state to safeguard itself from any physical aggression. Political security, on the other hand, refers to the organisational stability of states, their systems of government, and the ideologies that give them legitimacy. Human security refers to the ‘freedom from want and need’ of individual human beings in multiple dimensions (Williams, 2013), while societal security focuses on ensuring the continued survival and promotion of a society’s culture, language, and identity (Buzan & Weaver, 2003).

There is also an added layer of complexity if we take a constructive approach to understanding security. In this case, the focus will be on how certain issues become constructed into a security threat rather than on an objective view of the threat (Buzan & Weaver, 2003). The debate on ontological security further takes the argument to show that the threat could be to the identity of the referent object rather than the more objective economic and territorial aspects of it (Fana & Dawit, 2021).

In the context of this thesis, I will use the realist perspective on security, but with consideration of its adaptations to conditions such as Ethiopia, where internal cohesion is low and state capacity is limited (Ayoob, 2002). In such cases, military means may reduce some of the dangers from external threats, but they may not be sufficient. The low social cohesion could also be used by neighbouring states to threaten the interests of the state under question.

1.5.3 Regional Conflict Complexes

The analysis and understanding of the security interaction and international relations between Sudan and Ethiopia should not be made in isolation. As discussed above, both are weak states with an inability to ensure effective territorial control, sovereignty, and monopoly of the use of violence. Moreover, there are divided communities along the long border they share.

Despite this weakness and difficulty in ensuring full and effective territorial control, Ethiopia and Sudan are part of a larger regional security and conflict complex. This conflict is defined by patterns of amity and enmity covering different states, creating a sufficiently recognised region of security interdependence and conflict formation (Buzan and Waever, 2003; Wallensteen & Sollenberg, 1998). Although (Buzan and Waever, 2003) depicted the Horn of Africa as a proto-region, there is a clear interaction and interdependence of security and conflict dynamics in the Horn of Africa (Berouk, 2011). (Berouk, 2011) goes to the extent of arguing that the dynamics in the region fit the regional security complex theory ‘like hand and glove’.

(Dawit and Fana, 2021) further argued along similar lines, but with a constructivist turn. (Dawit and Fana, 2021) considered the delimitations of any regional space to be defined by the extent of power projection and interdependence in the security and conflict dynamics of interacting states. Accordingly, they argue that the security/conflict complex as well as the region in the Horn of Africa are not sufficiently differentiated from the dynamics and interactions from and with the Middle Eastern countries, including Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

As such, the analysis employed in this thesis takes the dynamics of interactions between the two states to be part of a larger complex with more or less similar dynamics in the region. For example, Ethiopia with Somalia and Eritrea and Sudan with Eritrea and Uganda As such, the conflict dynamics create conflict complexes that need to be understood as a structure (Wallensteen & Sollenberg, 1998). Although not very explicit, the dynamics and influences from or with the Middle East (for example, over the Nile waters and Islamic political ideologies) are also considered. More importantly, such considerations imply the necessity of studying conflict and security dynamics in the region within their totality—including more localized and internationalized/trans-national dynamics—rather than as if they occur in a vacuum.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study adds value to our knowledge of the dynamics of relations between Ethiopia and Sudan, with a focus on the 1990s. It provides detailed data, including on operational and major dynamics, across the entire shared boundary of the two countries. This helps provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relations between the two countries and has wider implications for regional alliance formation. Compared to the existing knowledge, which is more focused on particular cases, this thesis provides for a more comprehensive understanding of the evolutions in the relations between the two countries starting from the early months of the coming of the TPLF/EPRDF to controlling state power, taking the reader from Gambella (directly relating to the SPLM/A in response to relations with the Sudanese government) to Benishangul- Gumuz and the north-west Amhara region. Moreover, the reader is introduced to military operations from Uganda in alliance with Eritrea and Kenya. The thesis also contributes to the framing and better understanding of the regional security complex dynamics in the Horn of Africa region. Therefore, the thesis has relevant academic significance.

The thesis also has policy relevance. Policymakers and practitioners need to base their work on empirical and rigorous research. It is therefore hoped here that by bringing diverse viewpoints from direct participants in the main engagements of the time, the thesis will contribute to better understanding the conception of policy considerations of the time. This will provide insights into the structural conditions and proximate or situational factors providing the basis for relations between the two countries.

1.7 Research Methodology

The study used qualitative research methods to get an in-depth understanding of the issue and its complex reality. This methodology allows the few key informants approached to express their views and knowledge more openly and at length. This methodological choice is based on relevant philosophical considerations relating to the social realities under consideration.

Ontologically, the study accepts that there is relative truth, and with those multiple realities come understandings and memories of the meanings of the direct experiences one took part in in the 1990s. Ontology is "the study of being" (Crotty, 2003) and responds to the question, "What is there to be known?" (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). The point here is a careful and nuanced

understanding of the multiplicity of the nature of the security interaction between the two countries and the diverse set of actors involved in the study.

Epistemologically, as a "way of understanding and explaining how we know what we know" (Crotty, 2003), the research is focused on subjective epistemology as different actors view and give meaning to the realities they experience in their own ways. Thus, as a researcher, the task was not limited to narrowing what informants stated to a few categories; the intention was to capture the complexity of the reality under investigation to the extent possible (Creswell, 2003). In terms of values, the researcher is biased towards contributing to the sovereignty and national security of the country, and as such, the thesis itself could be viewed as a contribution to the continuation of these efforts.

Accordingly, the research approach followed is qualitative research methods, as the data drawn promise to be rich and detailed enough to get a better grasp of complex and sensitive issues. The interest is not to capture existing reality outside the experience of informants in an objective manner but rather to co-create knowledge with informants through the discussions and exchanges. This cannot be achieved through quantitative methods.

From the different research designs under the chosen methodology (i.e., qualitative), the researcher chose to use a case study research design, as a case study "allows the researcher to... support the deconstruction and the subsequent reconstruction of various From the different research designs under the chosen methodology (i.e., qualitative), the researcher chose to use a case study research design, as a case study "allows the researcher to... support the deconstruction and the subsequent reconstruction of various phenomena" (Yin, quoted in Baxter & Jack, 2008). Case studies allow researchers to approach a given complex reality from different data sources and entry points and, over time, capture the reality in all its complexity. That is the attempt in this study too.

What is attempted is a multiple-case study design. The relations and security interdependence between Ethiopia and Sudan could be studied from different points of reference. What this study does is approach the study through four major cases of interaction. Three of these are interactions over different time periods and natures along the border the two countries share: (1) along the border in the Gambella region; (2) along the border in the Benishangul-Gumuz region; and (3)

along the border in the north-west Amhara region. The four cases focus on the regional alliance formation between Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Uganda, with some support from Kenya and the US, to attack Sudan from its border with Uganda. These four case studies, while rich and complex by themselves, help the thesis be more comprehensive and address the entirety of the issue.

In each of the four case studies, primary and secondary data were collected using a range of qualitative data collection tools and strategies. Secondary data was used from already published works, such as books, book chapters, media reports, and articles. When it comes to primary sources, a range of direct informants provided data on the four cases. A careful choice of informants with direct knowledge of each case was identified and checked by a few informants per case.

A total of seventeen informants contributed to the study. Some of these informants are members of the local community in Gambella and Benishangul-Gumuz. These were approached by key individuals in the two areas, and after getting their trust, they were interviewed on the phone (and via email for one). Other informants came from different senior positions in the Ethiopian National Defence Forces (ENDF) as well as from the foreign ministry. The researcher's personal knowledge of some of these key developments also contributed to the analysis, as did counter-checking the information that I had (see Annex I).

Sampling decisions were made based on firsthand experience with one or more of the case studies being considered. The researcher's personal knowledge of some of these informants helped build trust with them, while many others also declined to share their views politely, citing sensitivity and national security considerations. Snowball sampling was used to further access informants and information based on the suggestions of the first informants (see Annex I).

An open-ended interview guide was developed and used for the study. The key informants were accordingly interviewed in person in Addis Ababa or over the phone for informants who are based in Gambella and Benishangul-Gumuz regional states. To the extent possible, informants were probed to provide detailed data on various aspects of the questions and provide meaning to the realities they experienced at the time. That allowed the co-generation of knowledge and allowed the researcher to develop a more nuanced understanding of the geo-political realities of the time.

When it comes to data analysis, qualitative data analysis approaches are used. The data collected from various sources through differing methods is analysed in five stages. Data analysis and interpretation started with transcribing and compiling all the data and producing a single document with all the data (compiling). The transcribed and compiled data was then disassembled into different themes and categories based on the cases and themes. Then the data was reassembled to make sense within each case and theme. Finally, the analysis was completed and concluded (Creswel, 2003; Yin, 2011).

1.8 Delimitation of the Study

The theoretical focus of the study is broadly about security interactions between states in the Horn of Africa in general, using the regional security complex theory as an analytical lens. However, the particular focus of the study is limited to Ethiopia and Sudan's security and diplomatic interactions. While interactions in these spheres could cover a wide range of themes and topics, what the thesis focused on were the actual on-ground interactions in Gambella, Benishangul-Gumuz, and (Metema area) West Amhara in Ethiopia, as well as the border between Uganda and Sudan (now South Sudan).

Temporally, the study is limited to the early 1990s. The context for the study starts with the assumption that the positive and cordial relations between the TPLF and EPRDF in the pre-1991 years will translate into transforming inter-state relations between the two countries. As such, the temporal scope of the study begins in May or June 1991, when the new government and army reach the western boundaries of the country in Gambella and Benishangul-Gumuz regional states. On the other side, the temporal scope of the study ends with the start of the Ethio-Eritrea war in 1998, unravelling the regional alliance Ethiopia entered with Eritrea and Uganda to fight the Sudan government.

1.9 Limitation of the study

The study was conducted under some serious limitations. The first relates to the sensitivity of the topic and the general secrecy under which such issues are kept by individuals who have firsthand information. Moreover, recent political developments in Ethiopia have also discouraged some informants from actively engaging with public life. As such, there are limitations arising from

the limited number of informants who were willing to inform the process and then from the more circumspect sharing of information.

A second limitation of the study relates to the fact that it was conducted based on data from the Ethiopian side of the story. Ideally, such a study should have incorporated views and data from all sides, particularly from the SPLM/A and Sudan, as well as Eritrea and Uganda, which became allies in the attack against Sudan. Given the resource and time constraints, the study was limited to collecting data from the Ethiopian side only.

1.10 Ethical considerations

The thesis research process respects all pertinent ethical issues. All informants were engaged in the process only after receiving their informed, free consent. As promised during the process, the whole data collection, transcription, storage, analysis, and final writing of this thesis were done in a manner that respected the anonymity of the informants and also maintained confidentiality levels. Most informants were concerned about the sensitivities of the topic at hand and the implications of the data and information they provided for national security. As such, proper care was taken to ensure that there were no secrets made public due to the research process.

The write-up also followed standard academic procedures. All informants were properly cited and quoted. Sources cited in the thesis are properly acknowledged to avoid plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct.

1.11 Organization of the thesis

The thesis is structured in four parts, including this introduction chapter. The first chapter provides the research problem, the objectives for the study, the theoretical framework for the thesis, and the research methodology sections. The second chapter reviews the available literature on the topic to situate the analysis and sense-making for the thesis. The third chapter provides the data analysis and interpretation for the four cases considered in the study before providing the combined analysis and synthesis for the work as a whole. The fourth and last chapter concludes the thesis and provides recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Civil wars and the role of the neighbors in the Horn of Africa

The Horn of Africa in particular and Africa in general have experienced more wars, both civil and international, compared to other regions of the world; this has led to the rise of "Afro-pessimism." This argument argues that in its substance, Africa is looming persistently to exist with overwhelming conflict, making both development and democratization nearly unrealistic, at least within a short period of time (Wilderson III, 2020).

"Despite the hopes and dreams brought by the end of the cold war and apartheid in Africa, the new era could as well be described as a tumultuous time on the continent. Capturing this development that seems like taking one step forward and two steps back is the enduring dilemma of political, social, and economic crises in many African countries today."

Meanwhile, these exacerbate a lack of proper functioning administration, bottlenecked deficiencies in freedom of political exercise that promote instability, fraud and embezzlement, virulent ethnic nationalism, religious extremism, civil disobedience, forceful change of government, including warfare, the spread of illegal weapons, violent crimes, a severe economic downturn, starvation, hunger, and under-development.

The lines of conflict are most frequently found in the Horn, "drawn over issues of exclusion, identity, and the frustration of basic needs under conditions of mis-development and the crumbling hold and legitimacy of an improvised state." (Anyadike & Kalu-Nwiwu, 2020), *ibid.* further stated that local conflicts over control of wealth and power in Africa are exacerbated by a global economic system that keeps the continent trapped in a cycle of poverty and dominance.

The majority of African nations that have gone through violent conflicts are marked by a significant disparity in the distribution of power and resources, both vertically between different classes and horizontally between people of different religious beliefs and ethnic and clan groups Nzoma, quoted by (Abera, 2013).

Generally, the Horn of Africa has experienced several civil wars over the past decades, each with its own unique causes and dynamics. However, most researchers agree on some common drivers of the conflict, such as political, economic, and social grievances, as well as ethnic and religious tensions. Neighbouring states have also played a crucial role in the civil wars in the Horn of Africa. In some cases, neighbouring states have provided support to rebel groups or other armed actors, either to advance their own interests or as a way to destabilise their rivals (see Table 1 on page 22). In some cases, neighbouring countries have also played a constructive role in promoting peace and stability. This chapter provides an account of the intrastate dispute and interstate conflict patterns in the Horn of Africa.

2.2 Trends of Conflict: Intrastate Conflicts in the Horn of Africa

2.2.1 Ethnic Conflict

Civil wars or intra-state conflicts are terms used to describe hostilities that occur within a state's borders. Because almost all state borders in the Horn of Africa are artificial and were imposed by colonial forces, ethnic, cultural, historical, and religious groupings there are mostly disregarded (Berouk, 2011). As a result, it contributed to intrastate conflicts, mainly in the form of ethnic conflicts, instigated mainly by demands for autonomy.

Despite the fact that the reasons for conflicts in the Horn of Africa are numerous, one of the major causes of violence in the region is ethnicity, which is related to processes of state formation (Bereketeab, 2012; Muabie, 2015).

Ethnic conflicts are conflicts in which the warring parties are defined by a combination of historical, linguistic, and cultural features (Asnake, 2014). In most cases, marginalisation becomes a favourable environment for elites to encourage ethnic conflict, which helps them maintain their own hold on power. However, the fundamental reason began with the emergence of states in Africa, the artificiality of national boundaries, the inclusion of disparate groups in one country, and the division of communities by the borders (ibid.).

There are more than 370 linguistic groups and groups of people from the Horn of Africa. Some academics contend that the nations in the region lack national coherence or a shared political identity since they have varied ethnicities, clans (as in the case of Somalia), and faiths (Tekle,

1996). Division of society along ethnic and religious lines also means "political loyalties often cut across state boundaries" (Ibid: 28).

After independence, longlasting secessionist conflicts in Ethiopia and Sudan, as well as the irredentist conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia, were fought. (Adele, 2004). The absence of nation-states and the forceful amalgamation of different ethnic groups have been security challenges for African states. (Jeffrey, 1990), described it as follows:

The majority of African states have difficulty creating viable symbols to attract the loyalty of their citizens. Not surprisingly, therefore, there are today very few attempts in African countries to forge a national consensus on major issues, much less a national identity. For instance, most formulas to decrease inter-ethnic tension concentrate only on ameliorating the negative aspects of ethnic conflict by accommodating it through decentralised government structures and preferential policies.

The post-colonial African frontiers were contested throughout the Cold War, particularly in the Horn of Africa, and the 'Pandora box' was unlocked, causing ethnic conflicts to erupt all over the continent. In the Horn of Africa, what Jeffrey Herbst argued in 1990 is still true today. There is still ethnic friction, as evidenced by the post-2013 violence in South Sudan and the post-2015 Oromo uprising in Ethiopia. (ACLED, 2017).

Border wars were also frequent in the Horn of Africa, which still bears the scars of colonialism. The major border wars in 2012 were the battles between Sudan and its Southern and Northern neighbours; the war between Ethiopia and Somalia; the war between Ethiopia and Eritrea; the war between Djibouti and Eritrea; and the war between Ethiopia and Eritrea (Bereketeab, 2012).

Despite the differences in their approaches, the majority of analysts on the subject concur that the major causes of ethnic conflict in the Horn of Africa are historical grievances, political competition, border disputes, resource competition, and external factors. In the Horn of Africa, ethnic conflict still poses a serious problem that will require a comprehensive strategy that targets the root causes of these conflicts (ibid.).

2.2.2 Marginalization, political exclusion, and poor leadership

In the Horn region, the colonial model of governance, which is based on the dominance of diversified national groups, continues to dominate in the form of dictatorial leadership and exclusivist politics. Poor governance both makes poverty worse and intensifies rivalries for control of scarce resources. Large populations in the majority of the region experience marginalisation, exclusion, and discrimination (Samson S., 2005).

The majority of the Horn of Africa's governments have conflict patterns that result from the political isolation of the populace from governance and decision-making processes that have an impact on their everyday lives. People must participate in governance and decision-making processes because governments are frequently expected to provide the basic requirements of their constituents. Denying the public's participation in this process denies them access to their needs while portraying government as a self-centred institution rather than a state institution. This causes agitation to forcibly remove governments from power, which will lead to conflicts between state and non-state actors (Neil & Sheely, 2019).

Marginality and social exclusion have their roots in the colonial era. However, much has not changed since then. The European colonial powers have been playing a divisive role that favours one ethnic group to the detriment of others. Such negative experiences are still practised and are the major causes of Africa's tragic history (Merima Ali et al. 2015).

The colonial era is when social exclusion and marginalisation first emerged. Much hasn't changed since then, though. A dividing role has been played by the European colonial powers, favoring one ethnic group at the expense of others. Such harmful behaviours are still prevalent and are the main reasons for the terrible history of Africa (ibid.).

Shortly put (www.un.org/esa/socdev/rwss/2016/chapter), social exclusion and marginalisation take the form of excluding some social groups from participating in the political decision-making process. He also further stated that this involves the right to be governed through active participation in the democratic process and is true of most contemporary grievances in countries that have introduced the rudiments of democratisation (Ibid.). As stated by (Fantu, 2002) in the

following line, neither participatory nor accountability have been transferred to local structures by post-independence governments:

In response to the inherited institutional handicap, centralization of decision-making became the preferred mode of economic and political management, greatly undermining the constitutional importance of courts, legislatures, and sub-regional governments. Thus, policies came to be determined solely by the concern for stability, order, and nation-building rather than by conditions for development. Leaders believed themselves to be above the law, using political office to confer economic privileges on themselves and their supporters.

(Seyoum, 2005) contends that colonial rule based on the dominance of several national groups is the main issue facing African nations following their independence. Almost all of the countries in the region experienced dictatorial and exclusivist political systems. Communities and national groups were subsequently marginalized, which aggravated their poverty while also escalating conflict over scarce resources and, ultimately, bloodshed. Thus, anti-authoritarian groups battled to overthrow dictatorships in various nations, notably Somalia and Ethiopia (Ibid.).

The biggest concentration of pastoralists in the world lives in the Horn of Africa, particularly in the border regions of these nations. For instance, Ethiopia is fifth globally, Somalia is third, and Sudan has the highest proportion (Mkutu, 2001). However, settled agrarian cultures wield political authority, which has a negative impact on the political effectiveness and economic viability of pastoralist civilizations. As a result, pastoralist communities were cast aside and cut off from the social, economic, and political life of their individual nations, sometimes leading to conflicts.

Therefore, as (Fantu, 2003) argued, "if the territorial integrity of many African countries is to be preserved, the prevailing gross economic and political disparities must be addressed." This is applicable to all countries of the Horn, allowing their citizens to have a say in the economic, social, and political processes of their respective countries.

All the above explanations indicate that the combination of political exclusion, marginalisation, and lack of good governance has fueled conflicts in almost all countries in the Horn of Africa. These conflicts have led to displacement, loss of life, and a severe humanitarian crisis.

2.3 Inter-state matters in the Horn of Africa's conflict

According to the section above, there are two main categories used to classify conflict patterns in the Horn of Africa. On the one hand, there are those that start out as intra-state conflicts (internal conflicts), meaning they largely involve domestic forces, issues, and patterns. Contrarily, hostilities that start between two or more nations are referred to as inter-state conflicts. But it should be observed that as other state and non-state players in the area or elsewhere become engaged, the first category of conflict eventually takes on a regional and/or worldwide character (Bereketeab, 2012).

Despite the joy brought on by the end of the Cold War and the doom of totalitarian regimes that followed, the Horn of Africa remains one of the most unpredictable places in the world. The majority of states are at odds with one another, and the following are the primary causes of inter-state conflicts that have emerged in the post-Cold War era (ibid.).

2.3.1 Religious Fundamentalism and Violence

As various researchers indicate, religious fundamentalism and violence have been on the rise in the Horn of Africa in recent years, with some key trends including Islamic extremism, Christian-Muslim tensions, inter-religious violence, and religious radicalization (Ostebo, T. 2007).

The region is considered a religious fault line for Islam, Christianity, and traditional African beliefs. Sudan, Djibouti, and Somalia are predominantly Muslim; Eritrea and Ethiopia are predominantly Christian, with a considerable number of Muslims; and South Sudan, Kenya, and Uganda have Muslim minorities. The region is also known as a breeding ground for violent religious extremism (Mulugeta, 2016).

The rise of al Shabaab in Somalia and its terrorist attacks in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, and Uganda, as well as the spread of Islamic radicalism have become one of the region's central security challenges (Bela, 2016). On the other hand, the Lord's Resistance Army, which is based in Uganda, gained a reputation for brutality after killing, raping, and kidnapping thousands of civilians during its armed uprising against Yoweri Museveni in order to establish a government based on the Ten Commandments of the Bible. (Aljazeera, 25 April 2017).

Geography is important when it comes to the growth of violent Islamic extremism. The majority of these nations are close to and have had long-standing ties to the Arabian Peninsula, which is where many of the Islamic militants of today come from. It is simple to travel by air and sea between this region and the states of the Persian Gulf (Kilonaz, 2013). More intriguingly, Osama bin Laden spent several years, starting in 1991, residing and operating out of Sudan. Moreover, in the 1990s, particularly after the 224-person death toll from the 1998 al-Qaeda bombings of the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam (Berman, 2009), Therefore, it is safe to state that one of the primary hotbeds of radical terrorism has been the Horn of Africa.

Due to the lack of a centralised government after 1991, fundamentalists and war lords gathered in Somalia. The excessive military actions have often led to terrorist backlashes, like the July 2010 suicide attacks in Kampala and the 2013 attack at the Westgate Mall in Nairobi, despite some promising successes (most notably the eviction of al-Shabaab from Mogadishu and Kismayo by AMISOM). In addition, al-Shabaab has begun attacking AMISOM in retaliation. The many thousands of battle-tested foreign jihadists from Afghanistan, Yemen, Pakistan, the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Kenya, and Saudi Arabia displayed a rising sophistication and influence in suicide assaults and roadside bombings. (Francis, 2010).

However, the LRA, a heterodox Christian cult, also operates in the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in addition to the two Horn of Africa nations of South Sudan and Uganda. Initially, the organisation went by the name United Holy Salvation Army. Later, it went by the names Uganda Christian Army/Movement and LRA. (Aljazeera, 25 April 2017). For crimes against humanity and war crimes committed in Uganda since July 2002, the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued arrest warrants for group leader Joseph Kony and four other senior leaders on October 13, 2005. (ICC, 2017).

2.3.2 The Logic of Subversion

The most prevalent foreign relations custom in the Horn of Africa has been, "My enemy's enemy is my friend." Tensions between states led to this type of relationship. Following the Ethio-Eritrean war in 1998, Eritrea began funding Ethiopian rebel organisations, which had the opposite consequence of Ethiopia hosting Eritrean opposition groups. The same holds true for Ethiopia and Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan, and Sudan and Uganda. The following table

provides a vivid illustration of how the states in the area fund the rebel organisations of their neighbours.

Uganda made significant contributions to the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) in an effort to weaken Sudan, and Sudan responded by making contributions to the LRA. After Abdullahi Yusuf's unsuccessful coup attempt to overthrow Siyad Barre's government, Ethiopia supplied bases and military support to his Somali Salvation Front (Barnes & Harun, 2007).

In the ongoing battle in the Southern and Blue Nile, Sudan has also charged South Sudan with aiding its former allies in the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N). On the other hand, the LRA, which has a history of carrying out atrocities in the south, has been accused of being supported by Sudan. In addition, Sudan started arming the SPLM-in-Opposition (SPLM-IO) after South Sudan became a full-fledged civil conflict in 2013. Periodically, the Sudanese government perceives Eritrea as a threat. Eritreans have helped the SPLA, the rebels in Darfur, and the Eastern Front at various stages in the past. (The Military Balance, 2018).

Table 1: Armed Groups in the Horn of Africa and states supporting the Armed Groups:

Country	Rebel movements (selected)	Year of establishment	Motivation	Active regional backer
Djibouti	Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy	1991	Regime Change	Eritrea
Eritrea	Eritrean Islamic Jihad	1989	Regime Change	Sudan
	Afar Red Sea Democratic Front	1989	Autonomy	Ethiopia (with interruption between 1991 & 1998)
	Eritrean Democratic Alliance	2008	Regime Change	Ethiopia
Ethiopia	Eritrean Liberation Front	1961	Secession	Sudan, Somalia, Egypt
	Eritrean People's Liberation Front	1972	Secession	Sudan, Somalia, Egypt
	Tigray People Democratic Movement	1998	Regime Change	Eritrea
	Oromo Liberation Front	1976	Secession	Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea (after 1998)
	Western Somalia Liberation Front	1961, 1976	Secession	Somalia and Eritrea
	Ethiopian People's Patriotic Front	1998	Regime Change	Eritrea
	Benishangul Peoples' Liberation Movement	1976/7	Autonomy	Sudan and Eritrea
	Gambella Peoples' Liberation Movement	1985	Autonomy	Sudan and Eritrea
	Tigray People Liberation Front	1975	Autonomy	Sudan
	Ginbot 7: Movement for Justice, Freedom, and Democracy	2008	Regime Change	Eritrea
Kenya	Shifita War	1963	Secession	Somalia
Somalia	Somali Salvation Democratic Front	1979	Regime Change	Ethiopia
	Somali National Movement	1981	Secession	Ethiopia
	Al Ittihad Al Islamiya	1983	Islamization	Sudan, Eritrea
	United Somali Congress	1989	Regime Change	Ethiopia
	Al Shabab Al Mujahedeen	2006	Regime Change	Eritrea
South Sudan	Sudan People's Liberation Army-in-Opposition (SPLA-IO)	2014	Regime Change	Sudan
	South Sudan Liberation Army	2011	Regime Change	Sudan

Sudan	Beja Congress	1957	Autonomy	Eritrea
	Anyanya	1960	Secession	Ethiopia
	Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army	1983	Secession	Ethiopia, Uganda, Eritrea
	Rashaida Free Lions	1999	Regime Change	Eritrea
	National Democratic Alliance	1995	Regime Change	Eritrea, Ethiopia
	Justice and Equality Movement	2003	Darfur	Eritrea, South Sudan
	Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N)	2011	Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile	South Sudan
Uganda	Lord's Resistance Army	1987	Autonomy	Sudan

Source: (Berouk, 2011), with some modifications

2.3.3 Political and Historical Issues

One of the causes of instability in the Horn of Africa is the political-historical tendencies that exist between and among the states of the sub-region. To completely understand the various concerns and elements relating to the contentious interstate relations that have been developing since the end of the Cold War, it is worthwhile to talk about the following:

2.3.3.1 The Political, Economic, and Historical Foundations of the Conflicts Between Ethiopia and Eritrea

One of the most significant conflicts that has been sabotaging the sub-region's peace and security is the pattern of conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia. The Ethio-Eritrean conflict is not the only one in the sub-region, and its resolution would not inevitably result in the resolution of other protracted conflicts, as (Clapham, 2007) pointed out with clarity. However, due to its geopolitical importance and its knock-on consequences for other conflict formations, especially those in Somalia, it is the most pressing issue to address.

The war situation between the two nations was significantly influenced by the past interactions between the TPLF/EPRDF and EPLF/PFDJ. Therefore, evaluating the type and nature of the relationship between the TPLF and EPLF would enable us to comprehend the primary and immediate cause of the Ethio-Eritrean War, which lasted from 1998 to 2000 (Plaut, 2006).

The TPLF-EPLF relationship was based on cooperation in the struggle against the dictatorial military regime (the Derg). As the EPLF was already in operation and had some combat experience since 1961, the TPLF received support from the EPLF. Tigrayan young students' group, who graduated from Addis Abeba University in 1975/76, created a Tigrayan peasant-based movement (Henze, 2001), looking into the EPLF "for inspiration and later receiving assistance in recognising their right to independence" (Young, 1996).

The assistance of the EPLF, however, was occasional, but relations were uneasy as the Eritreans (EPLF) looked down on the Tigrayans (TPLF) as "provincial amateurs". Given "the behaviour of the Eritreans towards Tigrayans, the expectations [strategic relations] of the former [TPLF] were unrealistic" (Medhane, 1999). For instance, during the armed struggle, the EPLF looked at the issue of Tigray's freedom at least with discomfort and at best with suspicion, as they were concerned that it might overshadow the Eritrean cause.

To further highlight this fact, (Melaku, 1994) made the following claims:

Emanating from its supremacist feelings, the EPLF's view of the Ethiopian Left was outwardly arrogant, and it has always belittled the scale of the mass revolution in Ethiopia and presented it as something inferior to the nationality movement in Eritrea.

However, based on shared hopes and objectives, relations were maintained. However, the TPLF's extremely effective peasant mobilisation in the early 1980s increased its significance in the Derg-overthrow campaign, strengthened its confidence, and suggested favourable relations with the EPLF. Moreover, the TPLF began challenging the EPLF on a range of military and political issues that bred antagonism between the two organisations (Young, 1996).

The TPLF developed its own unique policies and concepts of struggle as its support base and military might increased in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Young, 1996). Their divergent views on national self-determination were a fundamental divergence and a point of contention. All Ethiopian ethnic communities have the right to national self-determination, including independence, according to the TPLF. According to the TPLF, this rule also applied to villages in Eritrea (Young, 1996). Although the EPLF and TPLF/EPRDF worked together to defeat a shared foe and accomplish individual goals, their relationships were hampered by the fundamental ideological differences that existed between them before 1991.

Many people did not expect the 1998–2000 war, notwithstanding what an analysis of the root causes of the war shows. Several of the reasons have their roots in the histories of the two nations, as (Kinfе, 2004) suggests below:

- Eritrea's colonisation by Italy in 1889 and subsequent emancipation
- The hiatus that developed because of the separation of Eritrea while it was under Italian colonial rule, British rule, and federation with Ethiopia
- The pause that resulted from Eritrea's expulsion from Ethiopia's federation and its severance from British and Italian colonial control
- Eritrea's independent growth, including its impact on Eritrean culture and psyche;
- Resentment stemming from Eritrea's three-decade-long freedom struggle and its effects on the socioeconomic and psychological worldview of Eritrean society and others

In addition, failing to recognise Ethiopia's recent political and economic progress, which appeared to have outpaced that of the newly independent Eritrean state, may have made matters worse. As (Clapham, 2007) Observed, the EPLF's perception of itself as the leader in the liberation struggle against the Derg and the TPLF's perception of itself as the junior in that struggle, plus the obviously weaker position of an independent Eritrea, contributed to the war. Problem made worse by Eritrea's inferior strategic position to Ethiopia in terms of population, economy, and diplomatic stature.

There is also a prevalent belief that the two countries' leaders started this war as a distraction from the actual political issues facing both of their nations. For instance, the president of Eritrea was tasked with not only bridging the gap between the ELF and the EPLF but also with democratising the country and preventing ethnic strife. (Gwexe, 2001). However, given that the government has already begun taking steps to democratise the nation, it will be doubtful whether the aforementioned impression applies to Ethiopia. However, in the instance of Eritrea, when the conflict was initially sparked by the Eritrean government, the aforementioned image is accurate.

Both nations chose to coordinate their development objectives and policies on the economic front. As a result, a number of contracts covering trade, investment, and monetary policy

concerns were inked. (Kinfе, 2001). However, the type of economic relationship was "based on Ethiopia's economic patronage" (Addis, 1998), mainly because "the Eritrean economy is very small and impoverished" (HDI Report, 2007/2008). As (Henze, 2001) emphasised in this regard, Eritrea was economically dependent on the rest of Ethiopia due to its geographic location, culture, history, and experiences. This is further demonstrated by the fact that Tigray is a natural labour pool for Eritrea, while the southern Ethiopian provinces are natural sources of raw materials for Eritrean industry. Meanwhile, in both countries, trade was likewise the other economic sector (<http://www.accord.org.>: 2001).

Trade was another contentious economic issue between the two countries. The Eritreans, in particular, with their lofty idea of creating "An African Hong Kong," wanted preferential trade treatment from Ethiopia so that Eritrea could easily buy Ethiopian raw materials and flood them back into the Ethiopian market as manufactured goods. However, this plan was fundamentally flawed as it simplistically assumed that Ethiopia has neither the plan nor the ability to use her raw materials for her own industries. When Eritrea could not get such trade concessions from Ethiopia, she retaliated by refusing a landlocked Ethiopia much-needed access to the Assab port (Ibid.).

Another large market that Eritrea can export its industrial goods to is the remainder of Ethiopia. This meant that Ethiopia's support and incentives—provided at great cost to its own people—were extremely important to Eritrea's economy. In summary, Ethiopians believed that the standing agreements were biased in favour of Eritrea as a whole. (Gwexe, 2001). However, contrary to what (Kinfе, 2004) suggested,

EPRDF decided that there was a limit to the support and inducement that Ethiopia could provide to Eritrea because of its commitment and responsibility for reconstruction and development activities that needed to be undertaken in Ethiopia.

The introduction of a new currency (the Nakfa) in Eritrea and other false assumptions made by the Asmara government regarding the parity of the Nakfa with the Birr served to further exacerbate this mindset (Kinfе, 2004). Eritrea offered a rate of one to one that would be freely convertible into each of the two countries' respective currencies (Tekeste & Weilliam, 2000; Gwexe, 2001).

There was no consensus on the steps to be taken regarding the use of the new Eritrean currency, despite the fact that the Eritrean administration overlooked this obvious distinction between the

two nations on purpose. It was evident that it would be challenging to manage Nakfa because both nations had previously agreed to utilise Birr as the unit of exchange for trade between them. In the interim, the Birr's circulation would have increased the burden already placed on Ethiopia's fragile economy. Resentment on the part of Eritrea has been generated by the Ethiopian government's rejection of the new Eritrea's proposal on commerce (Kinfu, 2004).

When the trade dispute between the two sides reached its peak, the Ethiopian government proposed that the settlement of accounts between the two countries should be made in hard currency through a Letter of Credit (LC) system, similar to Ethiopia's trade with other countries, in order to counterbalance the unchecked flow of goods from Eritrea. (Medhane, 1999).

Since this strategy would prevent Eritrea from continuing to benefit from the Ethiopian economy, it immediately rejected the LC system. Furthermore, the Ethiopian government set a limit of 2,000 Birr per day and per person for transactions in border regions. As a result, the Eritrean economy crashed upon the freezing of the Ethiopian Birr in circulation in Eritrea. The protocol agreement on trade and economic harmonisation came to an end as a result (ibid.).

Many political observers have suggested that the politics within the Eritrean state are primarily responsible for the social aspect of the Ethio-Eritrean conflict. Studying the EPLF's historical ties to the Eritrean people, particularly after independence, is one way to examine the factors that led to the conflict between the two nations. Some of the signs of their connections are highlighted by (Addis, 1998) as follows:

The EPLF is not based on the motivated support of the people. This deprives it of the attributes of a popularly nurtured movement; it is foreign-inspired as it has been affected by the legacy of older movements. This sets it apart from the common folk, and as a consequence of its lack of a solid social base, its communication gap with the people is huge.

The aforementioned claims made by (Addis, 1998) are particularly challenging to accept because the Eritrean people vigorously supported the armed struggle and gave their government the resources it needed to conduct war on Ethiopia in terms of both money and people. According to this author's assessment, there haven't been any significant issues with the Eritrean population for a while due to a strong base of the general public and a lack of motivated popular support. However, the nature of the leadership and the ensuing failure to bring about a major socio-

economic transition in Eritrea are principally responsible for why it went to war with Ethiopia, as discussed elsewhere in this paper. In light of this, Isaias Afewerki was quick to launch a conflict with everyone nearby, including Ethiopia, Sudan, Djibouti, and Yemen. In order to balance the concerns coming from the Eritrean side, Ethiopia, Sudan, and Yemen were compelled by this regional security issue to establish the Sana'a Forum. Sudan, Yemen, Ethiopia, and Somalia are members of the Sanaa Forum. After three years, Djibouti attended the summit of the regional organisation for the first time. Asmara also left IGAD after criticising its stance on Addis Abeba "mediating in Somalia's affairs" (Desta, 2021) (Sudan Tribune, December 30, 2008).

2.3.3.2 Sudan's Political Islam and Its Regional Effects

Following the incident in 1989, Islamic ideology served as the foundation for Sudan's relations with its neighbours. As (De Waal, 2004) noted:

Political Islam has been tested in North-East Africa. The Nile Valley has served as a breeding ground for extreme Islamist thought and behaviour. Sudan became the most militant Islamic state in the Arab world after 1989. In the meantime, one of the key battlegrounds for Jihadists and their adversaries was the Horn of Africa.

Even though the causes of disputes inside and between the governments of the area vary, religion didn't take centre stage until the National Islamic Front (NIF) came to power in the Sudan following the 1989 coup and proved that its Islamic goal was never confined to domestic affairs. (De Waal, 2004). The NIF made it apparent that it believed the post-colonial nation state was a failure and that a new Islamist force was at work that would alter the international system of nations. Its intellectual head, Hasan al-Turabi, in particular, shared this opinion (Woodward, 1999). Thus, Islamic theology served as the foundation for Sudan's interactions with the outside world in the 1990s. The Sudanese government saw the rise of the EPRDF to state power in Ethiopia, the perception that Ethiopia is split along ethnic lines, the demise of the SPLA, and Eritrea's independence as additional leverage that would help it carry out its plan to Islamize the entire subcontinent (Young J., 2002).

Al-Turabi consequently came up with a bold scheme to create a Muslim Common Wealth that would include all Muslims in the area. The Popular Islamic and Arabic Conference (PIAC), which was founded in 1991 and has al Turabi as its secretary general, is dedicated to supporting

Jihad Eritrea among the Muslims of West Eritrea and Oromiyyah Islamiyyah among the Oromo of Ethiopia (ibid. +).

The introduction of radical Islamism in Sudan then led to its covert spread. Sudan's relationships with its close neighbours consequently suffered a severe decline. Sudan soon became a centre for the export of jihadist ideologies, putting it into covert conflict with its most significant neighbours and ultimately with the US (De Waal, 2004).

Most notable is Sudan's participation in the Gama'a al Islamiyya assassination attempt on the Egyptian President in Addis Ababa on June 25, 1995. Evidence indicated that Sudan Airways was used to carry the weapons used in the attempted assassination and that the terrorists' travel documents were also made there (Kinfu, 2005; De Waal, 2004). Many political analysts suggested that the Ethiopian government review its idealistic foreign policy orientation towards its neighbours, especially Sudan, and see this as a wake-up call. Despite the fact that ties quickly returned to normal following the outbreak of the Ethio-Eritrean conflict, the Ethiopian government has responded by taking a number of diplomatic steps, even at the risk of causing some tension with some of Ethiopia's most important neighbours (ibid.).

Under the sponsorship of the US administration, a coalition of Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Uganda was created to stop this in an effort to confine, isolate, and, if feasible, topple the NIF government. Due to the Ethio-Eritrean conflict, which drove both Ethiopia and Eritrea to seek help from Sudan, this alliance disintegrated before producing the desired results. Ethiopia, however, was able to effectively realign relations with Sudan. (Plaut & Gilkes, 2000). In subsequent years, the Sudanese government showed its pragmatism by expelling Osama bin Laden in 1996 and the handover of 'Carlos the Jackal' to France in 1994 (De Waal, 2004). The cooperative agreement that was signed, which covered a variety of topics including but not limited to petroleum trade, mining and energy, trade and industry, investment, customs and port usage, road infrastructure and transportation, transport and communication, and air transport and aviation, further strengthened Ethio - Sudanese relations, according to Kinfu. Some of the understandings that have emerged over the Nile clearly reflect the strong connection between Ethiopia and Sudan. (Kinfu, 2006).

However, because of the Eritrean government's intervention in the conflicts in southern and Eastern Sudan, the two countries' bilateral relations were not as strong as they had been before 1991. The SPLA has received comprehensive support from the government of Eritrea while it has been deeply involved in the Darfur crisis. (Kinfe, 2006). The post-Derg regime in Ethiopia and Eritrea provided support for the SPLA and the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in response to assistance by the NIF to a host of Islamist groups attempting to overthrow the EPRDF and EPLF (Young J., 2002).

The military engagement of Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Uganda to support the SPLM/A and subsequent military victories of the SPLA, as well as the isolation of Khartoum from neighbouring countries created a new pragmatism in Khartoum. Conscientious of the lack of a solution to the South Sudan problem through military means, the NIF returned to the IGAD negotiation table. In October 1997 and May 1998, they agreed to use the Declaration of Principle as the framework for talks (Mulugeta, 2014).

2.3.3.3 State Collapse and the Proliferation of Terrorist Groups in Somalia

A power vacuum has existed throughout all of Somalia for more than 30 years as a result of the fall of the Siad Barre regime and the subsequent collapse of the Somali state. For international terrorists, this has provided a favourable environment for growth. The following is how Robert I. Rotberg characterises the situation in the Horn of Africa in his book, "Battling Terrorism in the Horn of Africa":

Although Afghanistan and Iraq are at the epicentre of America's war on terror, terrorist groups threaten other parts of the world as well. One of the most dangerous is the greater Horn of Africa region—Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, and the Sudan—along with Yemen, their volatile neighbours. Al Qaeda has already stuck in the region, and the area's complex history, shared poverty, poor governance, underdevelopment, and renowned resistance against Western colonisers have created an intricate web of opportunity for potential terrorists (Rotberg, 2005).

According to Solomon (A. 2009), Somalia's total collapse on the eve of the end of the Cold War, marked by ongoing internal unrest, a long unguarded coastline, a porous border, and deteriorating socio-economic conditions, provided a favourable environment for the harbouring

of terrorist groups with ties to other international terrorist organisations. An ICG report also clearly outlines this. (ICG, 2017) as follows:

Islamist organisations have become more prominent in the past decade. The most important, the indigenous al-Itihaad al-Islamia, aims to establish an Islamic state in Somalia and in the Somali-inhabited region of eastern Ethiopia (then Ogaden). In the early to mid-1990s, it organised militias in an attempt to gain control of several key Somali towns. It committed several acts of terrorism against Ethiopian government targets in 1995. While its goals have focused relatively narrowly on Somalia and Ethiopia, it has had links with international Islamist terrorists in the past, including al-Qaeda. The possibility of continued or renewed ties should be closely monitored.

These groups' activities were not restricted to Somalia's external boundaries. In actuality, the eastern Somalia border posed the greatest danger to Ethiopia's security (De Waal, 2004). Instead, since Al-Itihaad Al-Islamia (AIAD) took responsibility for the terrorist attacks in Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa, their cross-border actions have sparked an Ethiopian military engagement in Somalia since 1996. Armed opposition groups opposing the Ethiopian government, such as the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), and most recently, al-Itihaad, have long used southern Somalia as a base. (ICG, 2017).

Similarly, hundreds of civilians were also killed by an explosion at the premises of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania on August 7, 1998. Mehari (2006) argued that the territorial irredentist claims under the "Greater Somalia" slogan, including religious resentment allied with the mentality and practises of ethnicities, clear the way for these historical and religious justifications to mobilise moderate Somalis and radical Islamists within and outside Somalia. (Mehari, 2006) further quoted Dahir Aweys, leader of the Union of Islamic Courts and known for his inflammatory remarks, as saying vehemently on a number of occasions that "Ethiopia is the Israel of the Horn of Africa, and we shall not allow it to meddle in the internal affairs of our country" (ibid.).

In the early 2000s, the UIC and the TFG were not the only parties to the extensive and protracted war in Somalia; there were also "a multitude of other combatants that have clear regional implications and a reasonable possibility of reigniting further conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea and fomenting acts of terrorism in these vulnerable neighbouring states." (Mehari, 2006)

As (Pham, 2006) asserted, foreign militants, Arabs, Pakistanis, and Sudanese included, were fighting alongside the Islamists in Somalia. This is a clear manifestation of the involvement of not only actors in the sub-region but also other actors outside of the Horn of Africa.

2.4 Border Issues

The history of colonialism and its continuation have had a significant impact on the inhabitants and nations of the Horn of Africa. Similar to other regions of the continent, the sub-region's inter-state conflicts have a variety of interconnected and intertwined causes and reasons with colonial antecedents. Many of them are the outcome of the states' internal political events. However, in order to deflect the attention of their people, leaders frequently engage in disputes with the nations that are right next to them under the guise of reclaiming lost territory. Boundary disputes have occasionally been exacerbated by the arbitrariness of the borders that the colonial power imposed as well as the existence of divided populations. (Markakis, 1994) observed that:

The contemporary state in the area experienced an expansion tendency that started with the colonial partition of the Horn and persisted in the post-colonial period, incorporating regions that were never truly integrated into its structure, not even administratively. To adequately comprehend the situation in the Horn, it is important to address the key disputes along the Ethiopia-Eritrea border and the Ethiopia-Somalia cross-border conflict.

In addition to the above explanation, historical grievances, political differences, and ethnic and religious differences could be taken as part of the border issue in the Horn of Africa.

2.4.1 Expansionist Threat of Greater Somalia

One of the most significant sources of conflict that has defined Ethiopian-Somali relations since Somalia's independence is the Ethio-Somali conflict, also known as the Ogaden War.

According to (Griffard, B. et al. 1994), the 1980s are when this dispute first started. The most disconcerting issue has been that several Somali authorities have rejected the pre-independence boundary agreement, denouncing it as an attempt by colonial powers to extend their influence without the knowledge or approval of the Somali people. Conflict raged until the governments of Ethiopia and Somalia signed the 1988 agreement on the normalisation of relations between the two nations, which was mediated by the IGADD. Somalia had claimed Ethiopia's Ogaden region

in the east. Ethiopia, according to (Mehari, 2006) However, for Somalia, the Ogaden War of 1976–1978 was an expansion of the building of the "Greater Somalia" goal rather than a struggle against the Ethiopian invasion. Officially stating multiple times that his group "will not leave any stone unturned to integrate Somali brothers in Kenya and Ethiopia and restore their freedom to live with their ancestors in Somalia," UIC Shekh Aways' elder (Mehari, 2006). This and other statements made by UIC officials caused the Ethiopian government and UIC to have unpredictable ties, which ultimately resulted in Ethiopia's military incursion.

However, Ethiopia's 1,600-kilometre-long border with Somalia, which is also the longest, unprotected, and most porous border in the world, is a source of worry for the Ethiopian government. Shepherds who speak Somali are found on both sides of the border. The proliferation of small arms and light weapons, illegally imported goods, and smuggled drugs in Somalia, as well as the near absence of border controls, have increased the level of lawlessness in this area of the sub-region (Mehari, 2006). Additionally, there are related issues like the spread of Islamic fundamentalism among Ethiopia's Muslims, terrorist infiltration into Ethiopian territory, and secessionist group insurgencies in southern and eastern Ethiopia (Seyoum, 2005). According to (Griffith, B. et al. 1994), this war has its origins in the 1970s.

To sum up, the expansionist threat from Somalia has had a negative effect on the Horn of Africa in general and on Kenya and Ethiopia in particular. It has caused tension among various ethnic groups, increased insecurity, and led to conflicts and a military buildup among states in the region.

2.5 Ethio-Sudan Relations

Sudan and Ethiopia are two words that signify the same thing but in different languages. It translates to "dark/black" in Arabic and Greek. Sudan and Ethiopia not only share the long border, but the two countries also have cross-border communities that have existed from time immemorial. The principal communal groups straddling the Ethio-Sudanese boundaries are the Bummie, Nuwer, Anuak, and Berta, (Yacob, 2007).

Sudan and Ethiopia had ancient polities with shifting political centres. In Sudan, for example, Meroe, Napata, and Funji were ancient centres of political authority prior to the Angolo-

Egyptian conquest of the country in the late nineteenth century. Similarly, until the late nineteenth century, Axum, Lalibela, and Gonder were moving centres of the Ethiopian ancient state. Both countries' historical polities strove for regional power and greater control of territory in the region. However, in the second half of the nineteenth century, the emerging revolutionary Islamic authority of the Mahdist in Sudan and the more unified Orthodox Christian in Ethiopia clashed (ibid, 193).

Therefore, Ethiopia and Sudan have a long history of both cooperation and tension, which has been shaped by various political, economic, and security factors over the years. Multiple factors strained the relations, including but not limited to border disputes, water resources, refugee crises, and political differences.

Due to their long-shared border, Ethiopia and Sudan have enormous potential for both collaboration and conflict, depending on their respective nationalities. These nations are strategically important and exposed to Middle Eastern and great power interference in their bilateral relations due to their geographic position.

Additionally, Ethiopia's historical place on the continent and the geographic area of Sudan, which is the largest in Africa and borders nine other countries, are additional elements that strongly draw the interference of outside powers to affect the relations between these countries. Early tensions between Ethiopia and Sudan were brought on by boundary disputes, disagreements over the use of international rivers, intrastate unrest, and providing support to rebel organisations fighting other governments. In addition to these, it is thought that the historical conflict between Ethiopia and Sudan—which occurred at various points as a result of slave raids conducted by both nations—as well as rivalries to control border regions with the aim of collecting tribute and exploiting resources—as well as the repeated penetration of foreign powers creating alliances with the rulers of Sudan to invade Ethiopia—have all contributed to the development of long-standing suspicion and mutual mistrust (Merid, 1968).

The fundamental cause of the boundary dispute between these adjacent nations is the requirement for border demarcation, which does not involve significant territory claims on the part of either party (Brownlie, 1979). Although Ethiopia and Sudan hold opposing views on whether their border has been properly delineated in conformity with the many treaties that have

been brought up as relevant in determining the boundary of the two countries, they have never engaged in hostilities over boundary disputes. However, there is still ongoing contention between them regarding boundary demarcation issues; a notable example is the Amhara Regional State on the Ethiopian side. (Adlan, 1999).

The Blue Nile, Sobat (Baro), and Atbara (Tekkeze) Rivers, which have their beginnings in Ethiopia, are the principal suppliers of Nile water for Sudan's requirements (Tesfaye, 2001). Although Ethiopia has not used this water extensively for development, Sudan is heavily dependent on Ethiopian waters for its survival. However, Sudan's hesitation and reluctance to accept Ethiopia's natural and legal right to use this water, as well as its cooperation with Egypt in opposing Ethiopia's right, have hampered their cooperation and, in some cases, put strain on their relationships. Both countries must have strong policies and use judgement while tackling this hydropolitical issue. The Egyptian component in this situation must also be taken into account because this nation has been advocating anti-Ethiopian policies by engaging in any actions that could damage Ethiopia and taking a position that denies Ethiopia the right to benefit from its own water, the Blue Nile (Tesfaye, 2001).

Since the creation of their respective central governments, Ethiopia and Sudan have both been dealing with internal disputes. To make matters worse, each country has been harbouring and aiding insurgents who are waging war against the other (Woodward, 1996). Since 1991, a number of variables have influenced the varyingly favourable and unfavourable relations between Ethiopia and Sudan, some of which play a decisive role while others have little impact. (Girma, 1999).

However, the combined effects of these variables have had a significant impact on bilateral ties. Some of the problems resulting from these variables are connected to agreements made in treaties about topics of shared national interest. These agreements between governments are governed by these treaties and by the principles of international law, which are crucial in determining their relations and settling disagreements.

2.6 Summary

This chapter examines the security dynamics, conflict patterns, and evaluation of the Horn of Africa between 1991 and 1998. It also includes how Ethio-Sudan relations affect regional stability and vice versa. The eight nations that constitute the Horn of Africa are Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda. The Horn of Africa is in the northeastern part of the continent. The member states are regarded as a regional complex that reflects an interconnected regional security complex because these eight states are also members of the regional bloc, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). Eritrea and South Sudan, two of the nine newest states in the world as of today, are located in the region.

Furthermore, Somaliland has been determined to be an independent state since 1991. In order to dispel the negative connotations of conflict and calamity that have been associated with the area, it is necessary to establish a stable state and carry out a peaceful handover of power. The security complex in the Horn of Africa is held together not by the positive influences of shared interests but by shared rivalries. The dynamics of security within these levels function across an extensive field of military, political, economic, societal, and environmental sectors.

The most frequent patterns of conflict in the Horn of Africa are intrastate or ethnic conflicts, which are brought on by the presence of more than 370 linguistic or ethnic groups in the area. On the other hand, poorly designed borders that cut through ethnic, cultural, historical, and religious groupings that influenced the governments of the region to claim neighbouring state regions led to interstate hostilities. Religious fundamentalism and violence, resulting from the existence of failed states and proximity to Middle Eastern states, cause regional instability. Conflicts over altered living conditions brought on by environmental degradation and climatic change, which result in a shortage of pastoral lands and water, particularly among pastoralist populations, and support for neighbouring state rebels have long been a tradition of the regimes in the region.

CHAPTER THREE

3. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

3.1. Domestic, Regional and International Context

3.1.1 Domestic Context: TPLF/EPRDF's relations with regional powers before 1991

The pre-1991 relations between EPRDF and regional and international actors set the tone for the foreign policy outlook and actions of the immediate years after 1991. TPLF/EPRDF relations with the Sudanese government date back to the 1970s. After the establishment of the TPLF in 1975, it soon started to reach out to neighbouring countries, which could support the struggle militarily and diplomatically. By then, the only closet (to its base in western Tigray) and most convenient neighbour was Sudan. However, relations between the party and Sudan were not as smooth as expected. In order to get support and trust from the Sudanese military and higher political officials, they had to pass many challenges, which took a couple of years. TPLF officials had to start from scratch by introducing themselves and eventually acquired valuable recognition and alliances from the Sudanese.¹

After its initial victories to control some areas in Tigray and the proxy destabilisation of Ethiopia and Sudan, the party managed to gradually gain some support. As relations between Sudan and Ethiopia were not always cordial, the Ethiopian military government strongly supported the SPLM/A to weaken the Khartoum government since the resumption of conflict in 1983 in Sudan. In turn, the TPLF and EPRDF have also received strong support from Sudan to overthrow the Derg regime. Thus, when it operated as a rebel movement, it often used Sudan as a stepping stone to other parts of the world.²

On top of that, the TPLF's and the Sudanese government's relations became stronger after the 1985 famine in Tigray. In that year, the lives of hundreds of thousands of people, including children had been lost because of the acute famine. By then the only closet (to its base in western Tigray) and most convenient neighbor was Sudan. However, the relations between the party and Sudan were not as smooth as it expected. In order to get support and trust from the Sudanese

¹ Informants DKAA & GSLA 20 & 22 March 2023...

² Informants DKAA & GSLA 20 & 22 March 2023...

military and higher political officials that required to passed many challenges and took some couple of years. TPLF officials had to start from the scratch by introducing themselves and eventually acquired valuable recognition and alliance from the Sudanese.

After its initial victories to control some areas in Tigray and the proxy destabilisation of Ethiopia and Sudan, the party managed to gradually gain some support. As relations between Sudan and Ethiopia were not always cordial, the Ethiopian military government strongly supported the SPLM/A to weaken the Khartoum government since the resumption of conflict in 1983 in Sudan. In turn, the TPLF and EPRDF have also received strong support from Sudan to overthrow the Derg regime. Thus, when it operated as a rebel movement, it often used Sudan as a stepping stone to other parts of the world.³

On top of that, the TPLF's and the Sudanese government's relations became stronger after the 1985 famine in Tigray. In that year, the lives of hundreds of thousands of people, including children, were lost because of the acute famine. Humanitarian agencies were not able to deliver assistance to most of the people; rather, the aid was used for military purposes by the regime. As some stated, "international aid supplied to the government and to relief agencies working alongside the government became part of the counter-insurgency strategy of the government."⁴

By then, most of rural Tigray was under the TPLF, and as such, close to 90 percent of the population was living in its governed areas. These people could not access humanitarian aid. TPLF changed its rules and advised people to take all necessary steps to save their lives, including crossing into Derg-controlled areas. As a result, the people marched into towns to get aid from humanitarian agencies, but it was very difficult, as said earlier, because the required aid did not reach the people. The government imposed on the people rigorous checks and investigations to pass, and they faced even imprisonment. The Derg also decided to displace and resettle people in western parts of the country, including Wellega and Gambella (African Watch Report, 1991), aiming to change the demography. This resulted in some social crises, like the separation of parents from children and siblings. The resettlement process is reported to have "certainly killed people at a faster rate than the famine. The mortality rate was particularly high

³ Key informant GMAA, 13 March 2023, Addis Ababa.

⁴ www.bradfordgrammar.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Ethiopia-famine-and-civil-war...pdf [An African watch report, 1991]

during the early morning's arrival at resettlement sites. (African Watch Report, 1991; 221). The TPLF took a strategic decision at the time, as the Tigray people were the source of logistics and manpower for the party, and the dangerous situation of the people also threatened the existence of the party itself. As Meles stated at the time:

There is no point in fighting if the people are finished. This is the saddest time in my life. I have seen many desperate times, but none of them as desperate as this one. Because the people that I am fighting for are dying because of a lack of food. They are hard workers, but because of a lack of support, a lack of scientific agricultural practise, and because it is not their fault, these people are dying. That is the toughest thing for a fighter to face (Meles Zenawi, the then chairman of TPLF, in an interview with the BBC in 1985).

Thus, the only option that the TPLF thinks of is to take the people to Sudan. Another major problem was how to get people to Sudan. One challenge was the difficulty of transporting the people during the day because of the air strikes and bombing, which led to the decision to do this at night, keeping the truck's lights off.⁵ Second, although the initial plan was to move through Eritrea to cross into Gedarrif, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) did not agree to this (see Young (1996) too). This led to the TPLF's decision to construct a concrete road through Adiet-Hirmi to west Tigray and then walk for four to five weeks to reach Sudan. This is reflected by the African Watch Report (1991: 183) as follows: "A disagreement between EPLF and TPLF in March 1985 led the former to close the key road from Tigray to Sudan. Which runs through Eritrea, forcing the refugees to use the longer and more dangerous route through Gonder" (African Watch Report, 1991: 183).

The Sudanese people and government warmly welcomed the Tigrayan refugees and even allowed the TPLF and Relief Society of Tigray (REST) to open offices in Gedarif. Here, the party gains three important things. First, it increases its public support from the Tigray people because they assume that the TPLF has saved their lives despite the many challenges. Second, it strengthened its relations with Sudanese people because the refugees had come from different parts of Tigray and had learned the Arabic language and the Sudanese culture and behaviour; some even married Sudanese. Third, the party further consolidated its relations with the

⁵ For example, Roman, who was the medical assistant of the refugees and others were killed by the Air bombing.

Sudanese government and other international actors, primarily humanitarian agencies.⁶ As many media outlets, journalists, artists, and governments got a chance to know what was happening in Tigray, the party took advantage to discredit the Derg.

Therefore, these and other things and the military growth of the rebel group may better convince the Sudan government that it helps in challenging the Ethiopian army, at the time purported to be the biggest in Sub-Saharan Africa, and even hopes that it may neutralise the regime over time. As one key informant summarised it:

Since the diplomatic relationship between Ethiopia and Sudan was strained beginning with Haile Selassie's regime, Sudan supported both the EPLF and the TPLF. Prior to the 1985 drought, the party had an official presence in Khartoum, Sudan, and when the 1985 drought occurred, Sudan received hundreds of thousands of Tigrayan refugees and gave access to humanitarian aid routes through Sudan to Tigray. In addition, TPLF and REST were allowed to open offices in Gedarif to cooperate with their refugees. As a result, they fortified their connections. The relationship between them was mostly founded on the fact that Sudan supported the TPLF because it had a great desire to topple the Derg rule under the policy of the enemy of my enemy is my friend. And at the same time, the party needed Sudan as an international route and other support from Sudan to accelerate its struggle (interview with GNGA, March 12, 2023).

3.1.2 Domestic and Regional Context: TPLF/EPRDF's Relations with Regional Powers (Post-1991)

On May 28, 1991, the TPLF/EPRDF toppled the Derg regime and controlled Addis Ababa, to the pleasure of the Ethiopian people and the Sudanese government as well. The propaganda of the Derg regime appears to have frustrated civilians in Sudan, with the remembered phrase being ‘የምስራቁ ነግ ተንፍሰዋል የቀረው የምዕራቡ ነው’ (We have dealt with the Eastern problem [Somalia], we are now left with the western—implying Sudan).⁷

Immediately after assuming power in 1991, the TPLF and EPRDF established healthy relations with the government of Sudan. The expectations of Sudan and other regional players were optimistic about creating cordial relations with Ethiopia. As Regassa (2007) stated, "When the EPRDF seized power, the National Islamic Front (NIF) government [of Sudan] believed that a greater opportunity was created to wipe out the SPLA. On the other hand, the EPRDF was eager

⁶ Interview with three key informants 13, 20, & 22 March 2023

⁷ Interview + personal observations

to establish friendly relations with the Sudan as a positive gesture to pay back what it owed the country."

The two countries also formed a committee to conduct joint border security activities, with members drawn from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the National Intelligence and Security Service, and the Police Commissions of the two countries. Therefore, they were conducting joint border engagements. And as to (Regassa, 2007), Ethiopia and Sudan signed different agreements. First, in 1992, Ethiopia and Sudan signed a friendship agreement that included the opening up of their boundaries for the free movement of people and goods. Second, the two countries agreed to expel opposition groups operating in their territories, which was very important for both governments. Because it would deprive the SPLM/A of any future assistance from Ethiopia, which would provide a good opportunity for the NIF government to gain the upper hand in the war in southern Sudan (Regassa, 2007).

In addition, Sudan was supporting the young EPRDF government in different ways. For example, Sudan gave different fields of professional training to the EPRDF fighters and also provided some professional services. And experience sharing in the field of diplomacy had been conducted as well.⁸ According to one of the informants revealed that:

Approximately two or three weeks before the takeover of Addis Ababa, TPLF/EPRDF, OLF, and EPLF leaders were also able to fly to London via Sudan for the scheduled talks with Derg representatives. Even the Sudanese government arranged transportation and other travel details for EPRDF and TPLF leaders on their way to London. Some of its leaders, including Meles Zenawi and Seyoum Mesfin, were flown back to Khartoum and then to Addis Ababa from London using Sudan government funds, crews, and planes. In this regard, Sudan's relationship with the party has persisted after the Derg's demise. In addition, following the downfall of the Derg regime, Sudan for the first time provided VIP security training (including VIP air service) to Ethiopia. At the end of 1991, Ethiopia was conducting preparation and preservation activities for the air force. Hence, Sudanese crews were operating Ethiopian VIP flights and Ethiopian air force transport facilities in Bishoftu (Debre-Zeit). Sudan played an important role in assisting the then-Ethiopian air force and EPRDF. In general, the Etio-Sudan relationship in the early 1990s was cordial.⁹

⁸ Interview with key informant 12 March 2023

⁹ Lt. General Yohanes, 12th March, 2023

At the time, it was argued that the Derg's military powers and threatening discourse against neighbouring countries created bad relations. The interstate war with Somalia, the strained relations with Sudan, Djibouti's interest in independence, the internal conflicts, and Ethiopia's ideological differences with the western powers did not provide Ethiopia with cordial relations with the regional powers. Against this backdrop, the young EPRDF government made necessary efforts to renew Ethiopia's relations with the regional powers. This was due to different reasons. First, Ethiopia was not yet stable, as more than seventeen-armed rebel groups were fighting against its predecessor, the Derg regime, all operating from neighbouring countries. Second, Ethiopia has a war-ravaged economy and therefore needs to revive the economy side-by-side with the project of peace and stability. Third, although it changed its ideology before it overthrew the Derg regime, with the end of the Cold War, it needed to avoid the suspicion of the west against its ideology. Fourth, and most important, a less 'seige mentality-centered approach would reduce the suspicions of the regional powers.¹⁰

In the context of Egypt, although there may be some shifts, the regimes previous designation of each other as strategic enemies couldn't change immediately. The primary interest of Egypt in the Horn of Africa is to isolate and prevent Ethiopia from meaningfully utilising the Nile waters by forming alliances. This interest—particularly due to the social construction of Egyptian identity anchored on the Nile waters (Fana & Dawit, 2021)—led to the persistence of relations between Ethiopia and Egypt after the Derg's fall.¹¹

In the context of Eritrea, the cooperation during the struggle and the shared identity of the people were the foundations of relations. However, Isaias' and EPLF's overambition and desire to weaken Ethiopia and become a hegemonic power in the Horn, if not in Africa, was a potential threat to the relations. The Eritreans used the slogan that they would be 'Africa's Israel' militarily and 'Africa's Taiwan' economically.¹²

The TPLF tried to establish relations with Museveni and the Ugandan government. For this purpose, senior TPLF officials and supporters of the Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement (EPDM) from abroad travelled to Uganda in the 1980s. Therefore, except for mild differences on

¹⁰ Interview with informants DKAA & GSLA 20 & 22 March 2023

¹¹ Fana & Dawit 2021 + interview with informants

¹² Interview with ke informant GMA 13 March, 2023

the issue of South Sudan, relations were cordial.¹³ Ethio-Kenya's relations have a consistency different from those of the other regional powers. In the context of Djibouti, it had already declared its independence and was an optional gate to the sea for Ethiopia. In general, except for the potential threat of Sudanese political Islam (see Chapter 2, Literature Review), the expectations of the regional powers towards Ethiopia were positive.

3.1.3 International Context: Response to the Rise of Islamic Extremism in Sudan

The early years of EPRDF's government were faced with major regional and international changes. The Cold War came to an end, Somalia's Siad Barre fell and Somalia disintegrated, and Sudan became a safe haven for suspected influential terrorists, such as the Venezuelan Ilich Ramirez Sanchez (Carlos the Jackal) and the Saudi Arabian Osama Bin Laden. The NIF was re-established and strengthened during this period, posing greater threats to the region and beyond.¹⁴

Islamic extremism has a longer history in Sudan. The Mahdist Movement of the late 19th century, named after Mohamed Ahmed (Mahdi), the leader of the movement, was anchored on Islamist ideals. Even during British colonial administration, despite suspicion and marginal treatment, Mahadist ideas flourished (Celso, 2018; Warburg et al., 1995). The political Islam ideology was expanded in Sudan with the coming of Dr. Al Turabi to the political leadership. Bin Laden and Dr. Al-Zawahiri themselves were more influenced by Al Turabi's political Islam ideology.¹⁵ Al-Zawahiri was a student of Al-Turabi at Omdurman Ahlia University Khartoum. Al-Turabi's objective of counterweighting the west by the ideology of political Islam was, however, more initiated by his Sunni Muslim comrade, Dr. Ibrahim Sinos. The movement established the popular Arab and Islamic Congress in February 1991, seeking to unify the Mujahideen and other Islamic elements in the Arab world and the rest. Based on that, its first conference was held in April 1991.¹⁶

Its second conference was held in December 1993. At this conference, Dr. al-Turabi and Dr. Ibrahim were elected as chairman and vice chairman, respectively. This was the time when

¹³ Interview with key informant 12 March 2023

¹⁴ Interview with key informant 13 March 2023 +sr113Horn terrorism.pdf

¹⁵ interview with key informant GMA, 13 March, 2023

¹⁶ uia.org/s/or/en/1100067151

Ethiopia and Sudan had cordial relations. They met for their third conference in March 1995 in Khartoum. Hundreds of political Islam leaders and advocates from different countries, including Bin Laden and al-Zawahiri, participated in this meeting. The objective of the conference was to strengthen the political Islam movements in the Arab world. By coincidence or not, the assassination attempt on Hosni Mubarak was conducted on June 25, 1995, in Addis Ababa.

Based on the third conference decisions, Dr. Hassan Al-Turabi (Sudanese), Osama Bin Laden (Saudi), Dr. Al-Zawahiri (Egyptian), and Abdel-Majid Al Zedani (Yemeni) stipulated the following guiding objectives:

- 1) Fighting western democracy worldwide;
- 2) Expanding and strengthening Islamic extremism, supporting jihadist groups, and encouraging the establishment of Islamic states such as in Sudan;
- 3) Giving serious attention to Libya, Algeria, Niger, Senegal, Tunisia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, the Philippines, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). And assessing Egypt and Iran to create fertile conditions was among the objectives (ibid.).

The NIF stood out by its efforts to export its version of political Islam to the countries of the region, and in particular Eritrea and Ethiopia with their large Muslim populations" (Young J., 2002).

In addition, to achieve their objectives in the long term, it identified seven centres of operations: (1) Sana'a as the centre for the UAE and Yemen; (2) Mogadishu as the centre for the Horn regional states, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Eritrea, and Somalia; (3) Khartoum as the centre for Uganda, Kenya, Chad, Cameroon, Egypt, Libya, and Sudan; (4) Islamabad as the centre for Afghanistan, Albania, and Pakistan; (5) Tehran as the centre for Central Asia, Bosnia and Herzegovina; (6) London as the centre for strategic studies and information sharing; (7) New York as the centre for financial support.¹⁷ For years, the Sudanese government has used its territory to provide safe haven, training bases, and staging areas to numerous terrorist organisations, including al-Qaeda, Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ), Hezbollah, Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), Abu Nidal Organisation (ANO), an offshoot of Fatah, and Gama'at al-Islamiyya. As USIP stated,

¹⁷ Interview: Key informant interview, 13 March 2023, Addis Ababa.

"Operatives not only moved freely in and out of Sudan but also established offices, businesses, and logistical bases for operations." ¹⁸

And as it has been said earlier, Al Turabi shaped al-Zawahiri's Islamic extremism. As a result, he was the leader of Egypt's Islamic Jihad, and coupled with Osama Bin Laden, they established the world Islamic Front Jihad against Jews and Crusaders. Before 2001, al-Turabi was the leader of the NIF and the speaker of the Sudanese National Congress. He leveraged these positions to expand Islamic extremism and formulate policies and structures in different sectors, including the Sudanese military and security. In addition, it had provided Jihadist groups with training and armaments. To list some, it facilitated the assassination attempt of Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, it trained different Jihadist groups, and it supported the violent Eritrean Islamic Jihad movement, which operated from Eastern Sudan and demanded to overthrow the Eritrean government and establish an Islamic state in Eritrea. ¹⁹ In addition," the NIF facilitated the entry of Afghan guerillas into the Sahel region of Eritrea in December 1993, an event that proved pivotal in the decline in relations between Sudan and Eritrea. (Young, 2007).

Al-Ittihad Al Islamiya (AIAI) was operating from Somalia. Somalia became fragmented into small clan groups rather than a unified state in the 1990s. As a result, it became a safe haven for terrorist groups. In the fall of 1991, one division of the army (called Aburar in Somali) with its seven central committees, including the chairman of the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), Shaikh Abdilahi Bade, entered Ogaden. The AIAI had conducted an assassination attempt against Dr.Abdulmejid Hussien, the then minister of transport and communication, in 1996. The ONLF was provided with support from NIF, Al Gama'a al Islamiyya, Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP), the Afghan Taliban, and Hezbollah. ²⁰ The NIF also supported Islamic extremists and terrorists through NGOs. For example, the Menzuma-Al-Da'awa-Al-Islamia (Islamic relief agency) was participating in different extremist activities. In 1993, it provoked and motivated the Somali people in Mogadishu to demonstrate against the West. In 1994, its office in Senegal was accused of participating in extremist activities, and consequently, its office was closed. The same activities were conducted in the neighbouring countries of Sudan. It had striven to establish

¹⁸ www.usip.org/sites/default/files/sr113.pdf

¹⁹ Interview: key informant

²⁰ Interview with key informants GMAA & DKAA 13 &20 March 2023

Islamic extremist cells in Ethiopia and was supporting IAIA, ONLF, and IFLO. “Dissident groups like Oromo Islamic Jihad inside Ethiopia and in border areas were backed by the NIF” (Kinfu, 2006).

Therefore, in the 1990s, Ethiopia and the regional powers faced challenges from extremist and terrorist groups. In these years, Salafism has gained renewed momentum in Ethiopia, spurred increased tensions within the Muslim community, and created concern among the Christian population. According to (Desta, 2020), to disseminate and create a strong foothold of the ideology, the Egyptian political Islam party, Al-Ikhwān-al-Muslimūn (Muslim Brotherhood), also had a certain impact on the Islamic reform movement in Ethiopia. This group mostly gives attention to schools, starting from kindergarten up to universities. As a result, in the early 1990s, multiple Islamic organisations were established. To list some, the Ethiopian Islamic Supreme Council, the Ethiopian Muslim Democratic Movement, and the Ethiopian Muslim Youth Association To internalise the objectives of the movements among their followers, the movements surfaced in multiple newspapers and magazines. Although Salafism has fertile grounds in south-east Ethiopia (Arsi, Bale, and Harar), it has also expanded to other parts of the country (Ostebo, 2007).

A number of large demonstrations had been conducted in the country, some with potential negative consequences for the harmonious and positive relationship between Muslims and Christians in Ethiopia. “The November large demonstration happened based on different interests. Some of them included the inclusion of head scarves for high school girls. Many of those activities were closely linked to and even linked out by reform movements rapidly expanding in those years. Movement that became essential in shaping an increasingly diversified Muslim community (Ostebo, 2007). Ostebo highlighted three movements: 1) the Salafi movement, ideologically and financially affiliated with Saudi Arabia; 2) the world’s largest movement, Jama’at al-tabligh, established by Sheikh Iliyas in India in 1929; and 3) the intellectualist movement of the early 1990s, primarily operating at Addis Ababa University under the guise of ethnicity and clan.

On top of that, on August 7, 1998, almost simultaneously, bombs exploded at the front of American Embassies in the capital cities of Nairobi and Dar es Salaam in Kenya and Tanzania, killing 224, including 12 Americans, and wounding about 4,500. These attacks were soon linked to al-Qaeda. In response, on August 20, 1998, the Al-Shifa pharmaceutical Factory was destroyed by U.S. Tomahawk cruise missiles in Sudan's Khartoum.

In addition, Israeli air attacks on Sudanese Yarmouk military industries were conducted in October 2012 (Young, 2020). In terms of regional forces, the Ugandan government has supported the SPLM/A, which was reciprocated with the Sudanese government's support for the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). And, the Kenya-Sudan relations were relatively cordial, but after Sudan conducted air strikes on suspected SPLM/A bases in Kenya bordering Uganda, the relations became tense. Hence, Sudanese relations with regional and other forces, including Ethiopia, Eritrea, Egypt, Uganda, and the West African communities, worsened. The Sudanese regional policy of the 1990s could be characterised by regional aggressions, among them by exporting Islamic extremism that ended up antagonising all its neighbours by 1995 (Medhane, 2004).

3.2 Confrontation and Cooperation with SPLM/A

3.2.1 Confrontations

The available literature discusses the cooperation between the EPRDF/transitional government of Ethiopia (TGoE) army and the SPLM/A to destabilise Sudan (Young, 2002). As far as the knowledge of the writer of this thesis is concerned, there is no published work on the confrontation between the two. Dereje and Mathijs did not provide details on the armed conflict between the two when they stated that:

Nuer resentment of the EPRDF's political favouritism on behalf of the Anywaa in the early 1990s and its alignment with the Sudanese government against the SPLA resulted in violence in 1992"(Dereje, 2011).

When the Derg regime collapsed in 1991, the SPLA was immediately forced to close down its operations in Ethiopia as it had lost its main political and military backer"(Mathijs, 2013).

In early 1991, the TPLF/EPRDF army marched towards Addis Ababa mainly from two directions: the north and the southwest. Yekatit Division was among the divisions that marched from the southwest. Before the control of Addis Ababa, one battalion led by Gebremedhin Fikade

(Wedi Nechu) moved to Gimbi, Ayra-Weliso, Chanka, Dembi-Dello, and Gambella. The remaining four battalions marched to Addis Ababa (one division had five battalions). The May Day division was among the divisions that marched through the north (i.e., through Debre-Birhan).

After Addis came under TPLF/EPRDF control, the May Day division continued to the southwest of Ethiopia towards Jimma, Bedelle, Metu, Mizan-Teferi, Dima, and Tepi. As the EPRDF army became the national army entrusted with ensuring the peace and stability of the country and its territorial integrity, fighters of other rebel groups were ordered to enter and/or stay in different camps. Accordingly, the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), the Afar Liberation Front (ALF), the Sidama Liberation Movement (SPLM), the Gambella People Liberation Movement (GPLM), the Benishangul People's Liberation Movement (BPLM), and others entered into camps around their regional states. Before doing so, the OLF and BPLM fighters were the first to enter Gambella, exposing residents to human rights violations until the EPRDF army took over on July 18, 1991.²¹

At that time, the SPLM/A had an office in Gambella town, specifically located at the site that used to serve as the Sudanese consulate since the period of Emperor Menilik II and is currently where the Grand Hotel is built. In addition, they had camps at the former Terb Battalion camp (ተርብ ሻለቃ ካምፕ) some 7 km from Gambella, in Bonga 35km, Itang Special Wereda 40km, Birhanina-Selam (ብረርሃንና-ሰላም) 80km, Bel-camp/Fildeng 90km, Pugnido Baro construction camp 110 km, and Dima-Town 350km from Gambella town. And its members were freely living and moving in Gambella areas.

Phase I of Confrontations: On August 18, 1991, one battalion from Yekatit Division of the TPLF/EPRDF/TGoE army led by Gebremedhin Fikaden (Wedi Nechu) and one battalion from Key Kokob Division arrived in Gambella for peace, stability, and territorial integrity. At that time, the SPLM/A had been told to leave Gambella and withdraw to southern Sudan. Most SPLA members did not heed the instruction, partly due to the claim that they were in their territory. 22

²¹ Phone and email Interview with military higher officers, elders and residents in Gambella 18 January-5 February 2023

²² In Nuer identity construction, land/territory is not key and continuous eastward expansion could be seen, and Gambella region is viewed as a natural homeland of the Nuer and thus the (South) Sudan where the majority of the Nuer live (Dereje 2011).

Over time, tensions increased, and the SPLA started ambushing the TPLF/EPRDF/TGoE army and threatening the region's security.²³

This led to violent engagements in three areas in August 1991: Bonga, Terb Battalion Camp, and Gambella Town. Following these, there were operations at Birhanina-Selam, Bilpam, and Fielding until they were liberated from the SPLA. In these conflicts, the SPLA sustained heavy casualties, and all areas were freed from the SPLA. Then after, the two battalions were changed by the May Day Division of Shila Brigade.²⁴ That brigade took over the liberated areas and prepared for the following operations. Based on that, one company troop (*Shambel*, about in number) was based in Itang. And the rest of the Division's troops were based in different areas of Gambella, far away from Itang.

Taking advantage of the dispersed camps, the SPLA conducted an operation against the company of troops based in Itang on September 2, 1991. Following the evening attack, the SPLA troops retreated to Akobo, on the border with Sudan. As a result, all but five of the company's troops, including the commanders of the company—Wedi Sudan, Wedi Keshi, and Teacher Weldu—were killed. Following this, one platoon from the Shila brigade was sent by helicopter to Akobo to take a counter offensive.²⁵

As the surviving troops and residents of the area stressed, the TPLF/EPRDF/TGoE army operations were challenged as they were less familiar with the area than the SPLA. To make matters worse, the local community was not cooperative, partly because a respected future teller and prophet prophesied that "my God told me that the Red Skinners and Highlanders came with evil days, therefore we shall wipe them out. Otherwise, we will not have a good future."²⁶ This prophecy restrained possible cooperation from the locals. Dereje indirectly provides a similar argument in his discussion of what the Anywaa provide as evidence for the lower Ethiopian credentials of the Nuer in the following manner: "In fact, the massacre of Highlanders in 1992 and the attempt by a Nuer prophet to engage militarily with the EPRDF are often referred to as 'evidence' for the 'unreliability' of the Nuer as Ethiopian citizens" (Dereje, 2011). He also adds

²³ Interview with military officers, elders and residents 18 January-5 February 2023

²⁴ The Brigade is named after a martyred TPLF commander called Shila in the battle against Derg at Guna Mountain of south Gonder.

²⁵ Interview military officers 28 January 2023

²⁶ Phone and email Interviews with military officers, elders and residents 18 January-5 February, 2023

that "The extreme violence in Itang in 1992 was related to the activities of Wutnyank Gatkek, who was at that time one of the most powerful Nuer prophets in southern Sudan" (Ibid.). Later on, two company troops from the Shila brigade led by Kishafa (nickname) were mobilised to Itang, but on their way, the SPLA ambushed and crushed them, resulting in heavy casualties.

Second Phase of Confrontations: the TPLF, EPRDF, and TGoE mobilised for a second operation to wipe out the SPLA from Gambella in two directions: (1) through Mizan Teferi, Dima, and then Gambella; and (2) from Terb Battalion camps. Anom Battalion, led by Tsegay Gulel and second commander Halefom, took the first direction. They received orientation from a top TPLF/EPRDF/TGoE commander at the Ethiopia Hotel of Gambella before proceeding to Itang. In Itang Anom, the Battalion met with the Brigade stationed there, under the command of Abraha Tselim. In the second direction, from Terb Battalion Camp, they marched through Akobo, Guba, Baro-construction camp, and Pugnido to push the SPLA across the Gilo River to southern Sudan. The SPLA sustained heavy casualties, while on the Ethiopian side, many, including Tiruye, a command member of May Day Division, were killed. Artillery, air defence, and mortars were used, but they were not effective. Because the areas were covered by densely populated and long trees, specialty roads to Itang, Abol, and Akobo were also swept by floods and were muddy. At the same time, SPLA members in Dima were pushed back to the Rad of South Sudan. In 1992 and 1993, the SPLA conducted similar operations around Akobo; nonetheless, the operation was not effective. On top of that, the split of BPLM fighters and the killing of Agua Alemu, the then leader of GPLM and interim administrator of the regional state, spoiled the peace and stability of Gambella.²⁷

Third phase of Confrontation: On the night of February 23, 1994, SPLA units operating in Lare and Makoy districts of southern Sudan crossed to Ethiopia's border areas of Jikawo and Akobo and opened a ruthless attack against the Shila battalion of May Day division. The battalion's attempt to resist and push back with full capacity did not bring the desired outcome due to the absence of cooperation from society, the unfamiliar operational environment, and the large number of SPLA troops.²⁸ Moreover, the SPLA unit which took the offensive is said to

²⁷ Interview with higher military officers,

²⁸ While the EPRDF/TGoE army was 80 to 100 thousand strong at the time, the SPLA was more numerous. As Regassa (207: 13) stated "the SPLA grew rapidly in numerical and military strength. By 1991, it was between 100,000 and 120,000 strong almost the size of the Sudanese government armed forces, excluding the air force and

have been a commando unit. It was crushed almost to the end.²⁹ Understandably, this attack angered the EPRDF/TGoE military and military officers. Based on that, they prepared for countermeasures. Hence, within a short period of time, one Para-Commando Brigade (from the three brigades that were trained in Hurso at that time) travelled by helicopter to Jikawo and Akobo. After collecting important intelligence, the Brigade entered deep inside southern Sudan, especially Nasfa, Milwalyate, and other districts. Thereafter, they opened rigorous attacks against the troops who participated in the previous operation and others. This time around, the SPLA paid heavy costs, while the EPRDF/TGoE army liberated Akobo, Jikawo, and Telut from the SPLA and ensured sovereignty and territorial integrity. One informant³⁰ quoted John Garang as narrating his disappointment to Col. Tadele as follows: "This may be the first time in my life of struggle that my troops sustained such a heavy loss."

The cause of the confrontations and conflict was the SPLA's insistent unwillingness to withdraw from Gambella, even going to the extent of some of its top leaders claiming that parts of Gambella are their territory. Second, the SPLA started to ambush the TPLF, EPRDF, and TGOE armies. Third, the transitional government needed to maintain its relations with Sudan, as Mulugeta (2014) confirmed that the EPRDF supported good neighbourly relations and oversaw the expulsion of the SPLM/A from its territory as part of that commitment." Fourth, there was a need to ensure an active military presence given the shaky and fluid political and security conditions in the peripheral areas of western Ethiopia in general.³¹

The second phase of this military cooperation between the SPLA and Ethiopian forces was from Benishangul-Gumuz, crossing the border to drive the SAF close to Damazine and control Kumruk, Gisan, and militarily important mountains. As a result, most of the Southern Blue-Nile states were liberated from SAF. This will be discussed in detail in relation to confrontations in the Benishangul area.

the navy." While the majority/all of SPLA army were stationed in/close to Gambella, the EPRDF/TGoE army was stationed throughout the Ethiopian territory.

²⁹Informants from military officers and survivors 23 February 2023

³⁰ Interview with Military higher official

³¹ Ibid.

3.2.2 Cooperative Relations with the SPLM/SPLA

The relations between the TPLF, EPRDF, and TGoE with the SPLM/A were not based on principle and varied depending on the former's relations with the Sudanese government. The confrontations didn't last long, as Ethio-Sudan relations quickly faded, getting to a low point by the fall of 1994 and early 1995. The final blow to relations was the assassination attempt on President Hosni Mubarak in Addis Ababa on June 25, 1995. Thereafter, the relations became openly confrontational and conflictual with Sudan, which resulted in the revival of cooperative relations with the SPLA and SPLM. The cooperation could be categorised into four phases: the two phases along the Ethiopian border and the other two along the Uganda border.

First phase cooperation: In this phase, the Ethiopian army works jointly with the SPLA along the western borders of Ethiopia in two phases. The first phase started in Gambella Regional State around Dima areas in 1996. The Ethiopian troops crossed the Gilo River, marched to Fichela, and jointly attacked the SAF in Fichela. Hence, after they fought for about eight hours, they fully controlled Fichela and its surroundings. During this engagement, the SPLA gained some heavy armaments and territories. The operation's plan to drive the SAF up to Juba was not met due to the constraints of the operational environment.³² One of the informants put it in the following way:

*After controlling Fichela, the Ethiopian army had to return to Ethiopia. But I and other 11 [Ethiopian] soldiers and SPLA fighters travelled up to (I think/Hadgu) the Wainay River to conduct an operational environment assessment [i.e., the possibility of crossing the river]. The river was full. I had to stay there for one month, reporting to the then-Head of Operations of the Ministry of Defence Head Quarters. Afterwards, I was told to come back to Ethiopia.*³³

Second phase cooperation: This military cooperation between the SPLA and Ethiopian forces was from Benishangul-Gumuz, crossing the border to drive the SAF close to Damazine and control Kumruk, Gisan, and militarily important mountains. As a result, in early 1997, most of the Southern Blue-Nile states were liberated from SAF. The third phase of cooperation is along the border in Uganda. And will be discussed on page 61.

³²Interview with col.Hadgu, 2 February, 2023

³³ ibid

3.3 Cooperation and confrontation along the border in Benishangul-Gumuz

Cooperation: The Benishangul-Gumuz regional state of Ethiopia neighbours the Blue-Nile regional state of Sudan. The Benishangul-Gumuz has five indigenous ethnic groups and other ethnic groups, while the Blue Nile has more than forty ethnic groups (Ethiopian Peace Observatory, 2023; WHO, 2023). And among the different localities of the Blue Nile, Menza, Kumruk, Geissan, and Wad Al-Mahal border Ethiopia from South to Southeast. Among them, especially Kumruk and Geissan localities share tribal linkage with communities in Benishangul-Gumuz regional state. For example, the Berta ethnic group of Benishangul-Gumuz also inhabits the Kumruk locality of Blue Nile.

Therefore, the two regions share different things in common, such as language, culture, and religion. As the Blue-Nile River crosses through these regional states, they are critically important to the hydropolitics of the two countries and to the rest of the upper and lower riparian countries. In addition, communities on both sides of the border conduct cross-border economic, social, and trade activities. However, most of the activities were largely informal.³⁴

In addition, the two regional states were conflict-ridden. For example, the Sudan Berta used to clash with the Sudan Hausa due to competition for resources and dynamics in relation to indigeneity and autochtony. Similarly, the indigenous communities of Benishangul-Gumuz clashed with the Highlanders, and there were clashes among the Falata pastoralists and the regional state police.³⁵ There were also armed opposition groups that fought against their respective central governments (ibid.).

Therefore, although there were tensions in the border area, formal and informal conflict resolution methods were used to ensure peace and stability and conduct peacebuilding. Thus, elders, local administrators, regional higher officials, and security sector officers from both regions formed joint committees at different levels. These helped them equip themselves with relative capacity and awareness for conflict early warning and response mechanisms. Because of this, the conflicts became fertile ground for the opposition movements in both countries. With the security breakdown in the Blue-Nile region, it will become a theatre for movements of groups

³⁴ Interview with some residents of, Benishangul-Gumuz 03 March, 2023.

³⁵ The Falata are considered as stateless in the area but are indigenous to Nigeria). These pastoralists came to the area in Winter with tens of thousands of cattle.

opposing the Ethiopian government (Al Jazeera, July 19, 2022). In addition, the two regional states cooperated on security, economic activities, trade (e.g., exchanging agricultural products such as onions and others such as Sugar, soap, and perfume from Sudan and others from Ethiopia), societal relations, and cultural exchange. Even the communities freely travel to both countries. And by using those as a springboard, the regions were cooperating in security, conflict prevention, resolution, and peacebuilding.

Confrontation: In 1994, minor conflict erupted between the Highlanders (Amhara) and indigenous (Gumuz and Shinasha) communities in the Wenbera Wereda area of Benishangul-Gumuz regional state. In late 1994, the Benishangul People's Revolutionary Movement (BPLM), Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), Gambella People's Liberation Movement (GPLM), and some Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP) members were trained and were operating from the borders of Sudan, i.e., Kumruk, Gisan, particularly Bullen, and crossing Guba, Kumruk, Sherkole, Homsha, and other places of Benishangul and Gojam (Amhara regional state). These units were spoiling the peace and stability of the regional state. As to some of the informants, BPLM took hostages and killed local administrators and Highlanders from their homes, public transports, and other places. In the summer of 1996, the BPLM ambushed, killed, and injured members of the Ethiopian army.³⁶ Thus, BPLM and others have become key challenges to the security of the regional state and the security sector.

In relation to that, a trend of defections to Khartoum, Sudan, by higher officials of the regional state started. There were also indications, as of late 1994 and early 1995, of clandestine Islamic movements in the region with the support of the NIF. This is captured by Molla (2002) in the following manner: "actions were alleged to have been taken to create conditions in Ethiopia for the rapid proliferation of Islamic NGOs that were affiliated with the NIF." According to my informants, the terrorists who conducted the failed assassination attempt on Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak crossed from Sudan through Benishangul-Gumuz and got an Ethiopian identification card there. And some people in this region were provided with double citizenship.

In mid-1995, the assassination attempt on Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak was designed to align with his arrival in Addis Ababa for the 31st OAU on June 25, 1995. These events had

³⁶ For example, Col. Tsigabu was seriously injured and his guards were killed, and Sergeant Kefalegn Abera and others were killed in the same manner in the same year.

hastened a downturn in ties with Sudan. And in the same year, there was a clash between the Ethiopian army and the Sudanese in Fichela. ”This early phase didn’t, however, last long, and by the early 1990s, the NIF was pursuing an aggressive Islamist-based foreign policy parallel to its domestic policies” (Young J., 2002).

In November 1997, the two countries entered into an almost full-fledged war on different fronts. And the Benishangul-Gumuz border with Sudan was among the fronts. Violent armed conflicts were opened by the Ethiopian forces at fortified trenches of the SAF in Kuruk, Geissan, Challe, and other districts. The Sudanese army, including its air force, was defending, while the Ethiopian air force did not participate. The conflict had continued for two days. And the Ethiopian forces alongside the SPLM/A drove the SAF for about 100 kilometres, deep inside, close to Demazin. According to Lt. General Tsadkan, quoted in Mulugeta (2014), "the third military operation brought the whole military engagement to a different level by opening an active front that directly threatened Khartoum from a close vicinity.". Fichella came under the control of ENDF for the second time. Thus, the SPLA had provided military and territorial gains. As to one of the informants, Jhon Grang, the leader of SPLM/A, explained his success to Col. Hadgu and his friends in the following way:

*Thank you all for the sacrifices you made along with us. And after we declare our referendum, I promise you that I will invite you to Juba. But upon our discussion, do you know that Gambella and Benishangul were ours? Ethiopia simply annexed them.*³⁷

In that war, the SAF sustained heavy losses. In the next, it will be discussed the cooperation and confrontations along the Metma-Ethio-Sudan border.

3.4. Cooperation and Confrontation along the border in Metema

Cooperation: Based on the friendship agreement between the two countries signed in 1992, there were different activities to promote the free movement of people and goods. To strengthen the cordial relations between the two people, trade in certain goods valued at 2,000 Birr or less was made tax-free to local communities, both in Birr and Sudanese Pound. The actual volume of local trade, mainly in agricultural commodities—Faba beans to Sudan and onions to Ethiopia—

³⁷ (Key informant HLE 1 Aprile 2023 and Interview with Col. Hadgu, 2 Feb, 2023).

was, however, much larger than this allowed amount. As the two countries were eager to strengthen their relations, there were invitations from higher-level regional and central government officials to the other side.³⁸

The Sudanese businessmen also invested huge amounts of money in Ethiopia in different sectors. For example, the meat processing factory in Bahir-Dar, the regional state of Amhara, and others are invested. The Ethiopians also invested in Sudan in the sector of agriculture and sell their products within Sudan, as the policy of Sudan doesn't allow selling out of the country. And to ensure peace and stability and strengthen the relations, people-to-people relations had been made, especially in the borders of the regional states of Ethiopia, Gambella, Benishangul-Gumuz, Amhara, and Tigray with their partners of Akobo, Upper-Nile, Blue-Nile, Gadarif, and Kassalla of Sudan. In addition to people-to-people relations, in the early 1990s, military officers at the border areas established joint committees and held meetings every three months for information sharing about security situations in the border area and then finding solutions to the challenges. The meetings were held in Gedarif, Sudan, and Gonder, Ethiopia. Higher officers of Ethiopia also invited their friends from Sudan to Bahir-Dar as well. Such discussions were not restricted to what had been said earlier but also included regional and federal officials. Hence, both countries governments were eager to strengthen relations.

Confrontation: The cordial relations between Ethiopia and Sudan did not last long. It started to fade at the end of 1993 and the beginning of 1994 in the northwestern part of Ethiopia, around Metema, with the eruption of some minor conflicts between the Sudanese army and the Ethiopian borderlanders, primarily over resources. Often, the Sudanese agricultural investors encroached onto the farmlands of the Ethiopian farmers. This happens with the Sudanese army first building their temporary camps and then conducting encroachments aggressively. This would be followed up with the clearing of the land for firewood, construction, and furniture before the actual farming of the grabbed land started. The resistance of Ethiopian farmers was met with countermeasures by the Sudanese army, such as harassment, torture, and, in rare cases, killings.³⁹ Furthermore, in 1994, Sudanese army units took and killed six members of the

³⁸ Interview: key informant HLE 1 April, 2023

³⁹ As to my informant, an Ethiopian agriculture expert at the border had been killed. These were happening due to unethical relations between the Sudanese army unit commanders and their business men rather than through chains of commands.

Ethiopian People Democratic Movement (EPDM)/TGoE army. And as to my three informants, countermeasures had been taken by the Ethiopian transitional army on February 28, 1994, at Tiha camp in Sudan. As a result, two days later, about 30 Sudanese troops came to the Angereb River in two military trucks and clashed with the Ethiopian army units there. The Sudanese army unit sustained heavy casualties.⁴⁰

Consequently, the Sudanese army entered deep inside Ethiopia until the Guang River in the north part of Metema, controlled 13 stations, and cultivated sorghum and sesame on 4800 hectares in Klogo around the Guang River. In early 1995, Ethiopian higher military officers—the then Chief of Staff, Lt. General Tsadkan Gebretensay, and Major General Abebe Teklehaimanot—and the then Sudan’s Ambassador to Ethiopia, Ambassador Osman—arrived on the site to observe and stabilise the situation. In the same year, Ambassador Osman, the Gedarif and Kassalla administrators from Sudan, and Lt. General Tsadkan, Major General Abebe Teklehaimanot, Major General Mesfin Amare, and the then Amhara and Tigray regional state administrators held discussions in Addis Ababa. The meeting ended with the establishment of a reconciliation team. At first, Sudan assigned a junior military officer, but General Tsadkan insisted that Sudan assign a senior General. Finally, from Sudan, the then Chief of Staff, General Ibrahim, and Special Advisor to the President, Mr. El Fatih Erua, were assigned, as were General Mesfin Amare from Ethiopia. In that discussion, Gen. Mesfin told the Sudanese to withdraw from the areas they encroached on within 18 days. After exhaustive discussions, the Sudanese agreed to withdraw from the areas they controlled. Upon their withdrawal, the cultivated land was handed over to the Amhara regional state.⁴¹

The macro-political concern of NIF’s continued export of political Islam continued as a challenge. After Sheikh Muhamad Amin returned from exile in Sudan to Gondar Ethiopia in 1992, Takfiri movements grow in Gondar and other areas of Amhara regional states and Ethiopia. On top of that, the failed assassination attempt of Hosni Mubarak had happened. Hence, despite the positive developments in border related matters the two countries entered into violent conflict in different fronts in 1997 along the Metema border. Heavy fighting happened in

⁴⁰ Interview: key informant GMAA 13 March 2023 and other military officers.

⁴¹ Ibid

Almehal, Abecher, Timot, Tahiya, Bazra, Jizra, Delolo one, Delolo two, Metema vicinities, Alaw and others.⁴²

3.5 Escalating the Confrontation: Mobilising a Regional Coalition Against Sudan

As it has been discussed above, the relations of Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Uganda with Sudan were gradually strained, primarily due to the NIF's export of political Islam to the immediate region and beyond. Therefore, in the 1990s, especially after 1995, after the failed assassination attempt of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, the regional powers and the superpowers also depicted the NIF as an international threat due to its support for the proliferation of Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism. In addition, the Security Council Press Release, 31 January 1996, SC/6170, stated that "based on its anonymous adoption of Resolution 1044 (1996), the Security Council considered and condemned the Hosni Mubarak assassination attempt as a violation and attempt to spoil the peace and security and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ethiopia and the region. On top of that, the three terrorists who participated in the assassination attempt escaped to Sudan. However, Sudan was not willing to transfer them to Ethiopia."⁴³ As a result, the front-line states, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Uganda, with the active urging of the United States of America, formed a coalition to military pressure the NIF, while Kenya allowed Ethiopian and Eritrean troops to cross through its territory to Uganda. Thereon, the front-line states, alongside the SPLM/A, attacked the SAF through Uganda.

As Young (2007) summarised it, "in a bid to export Islam, Khartoum brought the path of the front-line states to itself." However, there were differences among the states as to the final result of the military engagement. As to most of the military officers (informants), Ethiopian interests were to deter or contain the NIF, while Eritrea and Uganda interests were to overthrow the NIF. "In 1997, Eritrea gave every appearance of leading the campaign to overthrow the NIF" (Young J., 2002).

First phase cooperation (third phase of Ethiopian cooperation with SPLM/A): As the relations started warming up, in addition to providing material support, Ethiopian higher officers trained

⁴² Interview with key informant HLE 1 April 2023 + other military officers.

⁴³ (www.washingtoninstitute.org/poliy-analysis)

SPLA fighters in Equatorial and other places in southern Sudan and Ethiopia. Young J. (2002) further argues that "the EPRDF, however, largely looked to building up the SPLA as the best means to challenge the NIF. And as it has been explained above, Ethiopia and SPLM/A jointly attacked SAF around Gambella and Benishangul-Gumuz border areas. Thereafter, Ethiopia, Uganda, and Eritrea, jointly with the SPLA, conducted major military engagements and attacked the Sudanese military forces at the Ugandan border in 1995. On this engagement, Ethiopia and Eritrea contributed troops and armaments such as artillery, air defence, and others, which were transported through Kenya. The military operations had helped the SPLA control and liberated large areas of the Eastern Equatoria of South Sudan, close to Juba. This war was led by the top commander of the Ethiopian army, and the troops stayed there for months. After several months, the troops returned to their respective countries. On that operation, the SPLM gained some military and territorial control.⁴⁴

Second phase cooperation (Fourth phase cooperation of Ethiopia with SPLM/A): A second round of military cooperation with the SPLA has been conducted since February 1997 by a new contingent of troops led by another top commander of the Ethiopian army. First, in the period 1996–98, Ethiopia trained and supplied some 10,000 SPLA fighters in southern Ethiopia (Young J., 2002). "On November 27, 1997, the United States of America imposed sanctions on Sudan, and Madeline Albright met Sudanese opposition group leaders; thereby, on December 1, she gave them public blessing for their efforts against the government in Sudan.⁴⁵ This time Ethiopia contributed more than two brigade troops, that is, one tank brigade, one artillery brigade, one air defence regiment, and one anti-tank company. Uganda contributed armaments, that is, tanks, artillery, and air defence, and then Ethiopia and Uganda held joint military trainings for weeks. Eritrea did not participate in the second-round operation. The war started on March 23, 1997, and on the following day, they pushed the Sudanese Armed Forces 20 kilometres into Sudanese territory. When they conducted this operation, the Ethiopians had their own front, while joint Ugandan and SPLA forces were on another front. The second operation itself had three phases. The first phase was by crossing the Niken Bridge into southern Sudan and marching westward, then controlling Way and Bontiye. The central goal of the war was to control Yei, which they managed to do in the second phase. In the third phase, they controlled Bontiyo, Bor, Denk-Bor,

⁴⁴ Interview with military officers 3 February 2023 and Mulugeta, 2014

⁴⁵ <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/sudan-may-emerge-irritant-us-egyptian-ties>

Malakal, and other small towns and rural districts.⁴⁶ That operation liberated large areas of western Equatoria.

In an interview with a senior retired ENDF officer, he iterated his recollection of discussions with their SPLA friends in the following manner:

*You are fighting alongside us against the Sudanese armed forces. But after some time, we will fight against you. Because the land and the people of Gambella and Benishangul-Gumuz are ours. The people are identical to us and are our descendants. Their culture, behaviour, language, religion, colour, the geographical topography of the land, and the '(Mekiee tree in Tigrigna)' are similar to what you find in our territory. The red colours are not indigenous; they are highlanders/resettle.*⁴⁷

On that military operation, the joint forces again drove the Sudanese forces deep inside. And the second military unit also stayed there for months. On the second-round operation along Uganda, the SPLA controlled large areas of West Equatoria, South Sudan. As a result, the SAF sustained losses. However, as the objective of the operations was to deter or contain the NIF, the forces did not continue to push the SAF.

Eritrea: Sudan-Eritrea relations were strained due to the threat of overthrowing the regime in Asmara to establish an Islamic government. Eritrea's strategically important geographical location and large Muslim population, combined with Sudan's involvement in the terrorist movements in the Middle East, rendered it critically vulnerable. For example, the Eritrean Islamic Jihad Movement (EIJM) was established in the 1980s by the remnants of the former Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF). The ELF had greater public acceptance in western Eritrea (which is predominantly Muslim) than the EPLF in earlier years; thus, the EIJM also gained relative acceptance in the west lowlands of Eritrea. In addition, the settlement of the Beja and Rashaida ethnic groups is on both sides of the border, in East Sudan and West Eritrea. And this helps both countries to indirectly destabilise each other.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Interview with ChTGSG 23 February, 2023

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ The contested candidate who was running for regional state of Sudan, Casella's president in the 2000s election, that he was Eritrean may be was an indication of that. On top of that, both countries were using opposition groups of these ethnic groups to counter destabilize each other.

With this complex political situation in the region (East Sudan and West Eritrea), the EIJM has also been provided with official support, including hosting a news conference in Khartoum. Making matters worse, the Sudanese government also facilitated support to reach EIJM from elsewhere too, as the following quote from Young (2007) indicates: "The NIF supported Eritrean Jihad from a base in Eastern Sudan and facilitated Afghan guerillas interring the Sahel region of Eritrea in December 1993, an event that proved pivotal in the decline in relations between Sudan and Eritrea."

To counter this and based on the hegemonic ambitions of the EPLF, Eritrea was fighting alongside the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF), close to Khartoum, to overthrow the National Congress Party (NCP) and establish a secular state. Therefore, Eritrea was supporting rebellions in East, South, and West Sudan. And with the same objective as Ethiopia, Eritrea joined Uganda in 1995 to change the regime in Khartoum (Eritrea did not participate in the 1997 operation against the SAF through Uganda). "With a military tradition derived from its years fighting the Ethiopian Derg, the EPLF (renamed the People's Front for Democracy and Justice, PFDJ) looked to military means to end the threat posed by NIF support for Eritrean Islamist and other armed groups operating from Sudanese territory or refugee camps along the border" (ibid.).

Ethiopia: starting from Emperor Haile Selassie up to the 1990s, Ethiopia was interested in a unified, but ethnically and religiously diversified, Sudan based on the assumption that a Christian and Muslim unified Sudan could counterweigh Egypt on the hydro-politics of the Nile River. After 1991, Ethiopia's interest in Sudan was not different: "although the government in Addis Ababa had changed, the strategic interest of Ethiopia in Sudan had ; just as before, Ethiopia wanted to neighbour a single Sudan, with whom it could develop its water resources and which would protect stability at its borders in order to develop its democratic economy" (Mathijs, 2013).

However, the Islamist government in Khartoum did not seem like a long-term strategic partner for the secular, multi-ethnic, and multi-religious Ethiopia, as it has been providing safe haven, training, and arming groups to launch attacks in or on Ethiopia. There are indications that "training camps were opened in the East of the country [Sudan], which sent fighters from

Lebanon, Afghanistan, and Algeria to cross the border to neighbouring Eritrea and Ethiopia." ⁴⁹ Therefore, Sudan's increasing support for Islamic armed groups inside and outside of Ethiopia, from the East, South, and West Niala of Sudan, and from Somalia, posed critical actual and potential threats.

Uganda: Ugandan-Sudanese relations were based on the proxy destabilisation of each other using their respective dissidents. For many years, Uganda supported the SPLM/A, and as a response, Sudan supported the LRA. The LRA was designated by Uganda and the West as a terrorist group, while the SPLA was designated by Sudan as anti-Arab and Islamist. Unlike Ethiopia, Uganda insisted on changing the regime in Khartoum. Moreover, unlike Ethiopia's previous interest in a unified Sudan, Uganda's interest was bent on liberating southern Sudan. Moreover, the NIF posed threats to Uganda from Islamic extremism and terrorism operating from Khartoum and Somalia. Therefore, Uganda joined the front-line states.

Kenya: Kenya's role was limited to giving the pathway to the Ethiopian and Eritrean troops in the first phase of the front-line states' operation in 1995. Kenyan and Sudanese relations were not tense like those in the front-line states of Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Uganda. But as Kenya gained economic benefits from the NGOs supporting the refugees from South Sudan and as Kenya provided the route for SPLM/A armaments and logistics and the SPLA had bases in its territory, Sudan was not happy with such activities. As a result, Kenya accused the Sudanese of conducting an aerial attack on the suspected base of the SPLA in its Northern part, close to Uganda. "While Kenyan-Sudanese relations never reached such a low ebb, they became increasingly tense as Khartoum objected to aerial bombing of northern Kenya with Nairobi's logistical assistance of the SPLA and political and humanitarian operations (Middle east Times ,10,09,1995, quoted by Young J. 2002) Furthermore, the terrorist groups in Somalia and Al Qaeda supported by the Sudan NIF government posed a threat to Kenya. For example, the 1998 attack in Nairobi was done by al Qaeda. In general, the urging of the US seems to have impacted the cooperation of the coalition and front-line states.

United States of America: The Horn is situated in a critically important geographical location. And this seems to pique the interest of the great powers and the middle powers. Hence, this

⁴⁹ www.usip.org/sites/default/files/sr113.pdf

makes the Horn their playground. And after the end of the Cold War, the world became unipolar, with the US as the uncontested superpower. NIF's Islamic ideology, the repeated conferences, and the export of fundamentalist ideas were not viewed positively by the US. Moreover, although Osama bin Laden later left for Afghanistan and Carlos the Jackal was transferred to France, these and other suspected terrorists were living in Khartoum. There was also the 1995 failed assassination attempt on Hosni Mubarak in Addis Ababa. Therefore, Islamic Sudan, then the second-largest country in Africa bordering the Red Sea, was not in the interest of the US. Thus, the US supported the regional alliance to fight the Sudanese army: "anxious to support these efforts and ensure the security of its regional allies, the US provided US \$20 million in military equipment to the front-line states of Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Uganda" (Mulugeta, 2014). Moreover, as Alterman (1998) indicates, "in 1998, seven US government officials met with Sudanese rebel group leaders in Asmara. The meeting followed months of signs that the US government was stepping up efforts to weaken, if not overthrow, the Sudanese government." But as for him, the Egyptian and Sudanese governments' relations grew significantly cordial.

3.6 Analysis: Limits to the Agency of State Actors

In the first months and years of the TPLF/EPRDF-led government, there was a degree of optimism and deliberate effort towards regional cooperation. This led to the SPLM/A being prevented from operating in Ethiopia, including through armed confrontation. Before long, however, the structural realities of the Horn of Africa, which constrain the agency of all actors, came into play. This structural condition was the regional security and conflict complex with its historical nature, which bred mistrust and conflictual relations (Buzan and Waever, 2003; Wallensteen & Sollenberg, 1998). At the root of this complex regional conflict is the issue of unresolved border issues and contestations over the sharing of Nile water resources (Yacob, 2007). The conflict complex has been shaping the behaviour of state actors in the region (as well as Egypt when it comes to the Nile waters) for decades and has created rigid 'role conceptions' (Holsti, 1970) when it comes to foreign relations as well as the security and conflict dynamics of the regional states. These resulted in rigid, hostile routines—with routines being defined as "internally programmed cognitive and behavioural responses to information or stimuli. Routed responses are unthinking or habitual—options are not weighed; information is not updated. Unlike rational action, routines are not chosen in any meaningful sense but taken for granted;

reflection is suppressed" (Mitzen, 2006). Changing any routine takes deliberate action over the long term to break old patterns of enmity and construct new traditions of amity and cooperation. This could essentially require a transformation of the actors, the regional space, and the logic of interactions (Buzan and Waever, 2006; Medhane, 2004).

However, the proximate conditions did not favour the transformation of the structural factors determining security interdependence in the region. By 1991, the NIF was in power and was seriously pursuing the agenda of political Islam as an ideology internally as well as for export to the region. This led to the hosting of various terrorist groups in Sudan and the inevitable hostility with all of Sudan's neighbours as well as the global powers. Eventually, this culminated in the assassination attempt on the Egyptian President, Hosni Mubarek, in Addis Ababa and bombings in regional capitals (Kedir, 2014). As such, the Ethiopian government's attempt was in vain, and by the second half of the 1990s, the Ethiopian government had to recalibrate its engagements with Sudan. This was expressed in re-establishing cordial relations with the SPLM/A for proxy war and later on in direct engagements along the border in Benishangul-Gumuz regional state and Metemma area of north-western Amhara region. Ethiopia also led a regional alliance to attack the Sudanese army from Uganda under the financial support of the US (Mulugeta 2014; Young 1999).

Accordingly, the powers and agency of new actors are constrained by structural and historical factors that deter transformation. The interest and ambitions of transformation on one side will not necessarily bring the desired outcome, as the case illustrates well.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusion

Sudan and Ethiopia have a difficult relationship, particularly after Sudan's independence in 1956. The two countries and societies share a long history of trade, migration, and cultural exchange while simultaneously viewing each other as the source of the other's threat. During the Derg's time, the two countries used proxy war to destabilise each other, and the TPLF/EPRDF had Sudanese support as it marched towards controlling Addis Ababa in May 1991.

The TPLF/EPRDF relations with regional powers before 1991 were marked by tensions and conflicts, as well as cooperation, as the group worked to consolidate its power and overthrow the central government of Ethiopia. During this period, the TPLF/RPRDF was leading the fight against the central government of Ethiopia. Hence, the objective of its relations with any regional power was to obtain military and diplomatic support. Following this objective, the group received various forms of support from Sudan, including allowing it to operate bases on its soil. During this period, this relationship was at times strained when the Ethiopian government accused Sudan of supporting rebels, forcing Sudan to downscale its support.

The post-1991 Ethio-Sudan relations initially were fueled by the TPLF/EPRDF's aspirations to have cordial relations with Sudan (and other regional states) and to have new, friendly relations, while implicating the Derg for the hostile relations it had with Sudan (and others). These positive developments were short-lived, however, as occasional flare-ups in the form of border conflicts and others started occurring. One of the main factors that exacerbated and weakened the relationship between Ethiopia and Sudan in the early 1990s was ignoring the structural causes of security concerns and threats, such as historical tensions, a shared border, shared international water (the Nile), and regional power dynamics. These structural security conditions were further deteriorated by contextual factors, including NIF's ambition to export political Islam to the region and the interferences in emerging ethnic and regional politics in areas bordering Sudan, particularly Benishangul-Gumuz regional state, taking advantage of the presence of communities divided by the border.

This led to the TPLF/EPRDF re-calibrating its relations with the Sudanese government back to the same tactics of proxy fighting and directly engaging in armed confrontation with the Sudanese army. After being pushed out of the territories it used to operate, train, and attack the Sudanese forces from in 1991, including by force, the SPLM/SPLA was invited back later in 1995. Furthermore, the relatively small-scale skirmishes, attacks, and political interactions along the borders of both (in Benishangul-Gumuz and north-west Amhara) further deteriorated into organised violence involving senior army commanders. This largely ended in Ethiopia's favour, with Ethiopia pushing Sudanese forces from areas located along the border and taking various war materials after the defeat of the Sudanese army units.

Over time, particularly because of the NIF's continued interventions in various countries and the export of political Islam, a regional alliance was formed in 1995 and 1997. This regional alliance brought armed units from Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Uganda, with Kenya's permission for the logistical operations on or through its territory and the attack being launched from Uganda's territory. The US government provided financial support for the regional attack against Sudan.

What we therefore see is the presence of major structural factors that expose members of the Horn of Africa region to mainly hostile relations. Other situational or proximate factors—such as the ideological factors related to the export of political Islam—further heightened tension. Therefore, the main finding of the thesis is that rulers of the region have to contend with major structural factors that constrain their ambitions (if there are any) to form positive, cordial relations. These structural conditions are built over mainly historical and material conditions of water and territory and, as such, are more permanent. That essentially disabled the TPLF and EPRDF's initial ambitions. In essence, the regional conflict complex in the region is more likely to persist over the short to medium term, and political leaders at best could cope with these challenges rather than transform them into cordial, interdependent relations.

4.2 Recommendations

Improving the relationship between Ethiopia and Sudan will require a concerted effort from policymakers and scholars in both countries, as well as from regional and international actors. This could materialise only through a long-term and cumulative process that resolves the concerns of both states through dialogue and negotiation, builds positive and trusting people-to-people as well as elite-level relations through cultural exchange programmes, resolves issues related to contested borders and the Nile in a manner that meets the legitimate concerns of both states, and promotes joint infrastructure and security-ensuring initiatives.

These solutions do not all have to be implemented at the same time. Instead, they are steps to be taken based on their priority. Since healthy diplomacy must start with the neighbour, the leaders and decision-makers of both countries should pay special attention to the above-recommended solutions.

It might also be worth learning from the diplomatic and security arrangements of the 1990s with Sudan as we currently chart new territories in relations with Eritrea and Somalia. The commencement of very positive and cordial relations with these two countries in 2018 was not sustained. As the details of the deals made in 2018 are not clear, we cannot go at length to give detailed reflections or recommendations. But it is necessary to highlight that such major changes and hopes in regional security and diplomatic arrangements need to consider structural issues and the persistent patterns of amity and enemies in the region. As such, considering the whole regional security arrangement will be a pre-requisite before considering Ethiopia's relations and interests in isolation.

Last but not least, there is the role of researchers. Concerned scholars should further investigate the advantages and disadvantages of the relationship between Sudan and the (Addis, 1998) TPLF and EPRDF in the 1990s in order to draw enough conclusions. Because it has the potential to significantly contribute to a healthier relationship between these two neighbouring nations with important historical ties.

REFERENCES

- Abera, S. (2013) *Conflict Patterns in the horn of Africa in post cold war periods*. College of Social science Center of African Studies, Addis Ababa University.
- ACLEDA. (2017). *Popular Mobilization in Ethiopia: an investigation of activity from November 2015 to May 2017*
- Addis, B. (1998). *Eritrea a problem child of Ethiopia: Causes, Consequence and Strategic Implication of the 'conflict*. London: Marron Books.
- Adele, E. (2004). *Sudan's History since Independence in relation to civil Societies Movements*: Nairobi.
- Alberto, A. et.al (2011). *Artificial States*. *Journal of European Economic Association*.vol.9 No, 2(April 2011), pp 246-277.Oxford University Press.
- Asnake, K. (2014). *Federalisms: Some Trends of ethnic Conflicts and their Management in Ethiopia*. . The Quest for Peace in Africa. Addis Ababa: OSSERA.
- Avruch, K. (2002). *Cross-cultural Conflict*. Institute for Conflict Analysis & Resolution, George Mason University.
- Ayoob, M. (2002). *Inequality and Theorizing in International Relations: The Case for Subaltern Realism*. Oxford University Press Vol. 4, No., 27-48.
- Barnes, C. & Harun, H. *The Rise and Fall of Mogadishu's Islamic Courts*. *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 1/2. 2007.
- Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2008). *Qualitative Case Study Methodology: Study Design and Implementation for Novice Researchers*. *The Qualitative Report* Volume 13 Number 4 , 544-559.
- Bela, H. (2016). *Becoming Somaliland*. Oxford: James Carry
- Berman, E. *Radical. Religious and Violent: The New Economics of Terrorism*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2009.
- Berouk, M. (2011). *The Horn of Africa Complex*. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: ISS.
- Buzan, B. (1991). *New Patterns of Global Security in the Twenty-First Century*. Oxford University Press Vol. 67, No. 3, 431-451.
- Buzan, B., & Wæver, O. (2003). *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Celso, A. (2018). *The Islamic State (IS) and the Sudanese Mahdiyyan: A comparative analysis of two failed apocalyptic Jihadist states*. *International Journal of Political Science*, 4(1): 28-42.
- Clapham, C. (2017). *Horn of Africa: State Formation and Decay*. London: Oxford University Press.

- Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (2nd ed.). CA: Sage.
- Crotty, M. (2003). *The Foundations of Social Research: Meaning and Perspectives in the Research Process, 3rd edition* . London: Sage Publications, .
- Dagne Francis Markey. (ed.) (2010). *New Sudan in the makingi Essays on a Nation in painful search of Itself*, Tarenton, NJ and Asmara: Red Sea Press
- Dawit Y. and Fana G. (2018). *Transregional Conflict Crossing the red Sea: The Horn of Africa. Comparativ*, 28(6): 90-108.
- De Waal (ed.) (2004). *Islamism and its Enemies in the Horn of Africa*. Addis Ababa: Shama Books.
- Dennen, J. M. (2005). *Introduction: On Conflict. The Sociobiology of Conflict* . London: Chapman & Hall,, 1-19.
- Dereje, F. (2011). *Playing different games, The paradox of Anywaa and Nuer Identification strategies in the Gambella Region, Ethipia*. New York Oxford: Berghahn publications.
- Desta, K. (2021). *The Conflict in Yemen and its Shadow on the Horn of Africa*. Addis Ababa: Shama Books.
- Fana, G., & Dawit, Y. (2021). *New Dimensions in the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam Negotiations: Ontological Security in Egypt and Ethiopia*. African Security Volume 14 - Issue 1, 80-106.
- Fantu C. (2002). *African Renaissance: Roadmaps to the Chalenge of Globalization*. London: Zed Books.
- Fearnely, L., & L., C. (2006). *Understanding Armed Conflict and peace building in Africa*. unpublished.
- Gebru Tarekegn. (2019). *The Ethio-Somalia war of 1977 Revisited. The international jornal of African Historical Studies*. Vol.33.No.3 pp 635-667. Boston University African Studies center.
- Gilkes, Patrich & Plaut, (2000). *The war between Ethiopia and Eritrea*. Foreign policy in focus.vol.5,No.25
- Girma Kebede. (1999). *Sudan's predicament: Civil war, Displacement and Ecological Degradation*. Aldershot: Ashagate publisher.
- Griffard, Bernard F. & John F. Troxell. (1994) “*Enhancing Professional Military Education in the Horn of Africa: The Ethiopian Defense Command & Staff College Initiative*.” Issue Paper; U.S. Army War College Center for Strategic Leadership, Volume 13/09.
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1989). *Fourth Generation Evaluation*. . London: SAGE Publications.

- Hashim, T. (2003). *Conflict-Management Structures and Intervention under the Ethiopian Constitutions*. First National Conference on Federalism, Conflict and Peace Building, Ministry of Federal Affairs and German Technical Cooperation. Addis Ababa: United Printers.
- Henze, B. Paul (2001). *The Horn of Africa: From War to Peace*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.
- Hocker, J. L., & Wilmot, W. W. (1985). *Interpersonal Conflict*. Wm. C. Brown.
- Holsti, K.J. 1970. *National Role Conceptions in the Study of Foreign Policy*. *International Studies Quarterly*, 14(3): 233-309.
- Hough, P. (2008). *Understanding Global Security* (2nd ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203932674>.
- IISS. *The Military Balance: The Annual Assessment of Global Military Capabilities and Defense Economics*. London: Routledge 2018. 461.
- Jeffrey, H. (1990) "War and the State in Africa". *International Security*. 14/4.
- Jennefer, Mitzen, (1970). *Ontological Security in World Politics: State Identity and the Security Dilemma*. *European Journal of International Relations* 12(3): 341-370.
- Jeong, H.-W. (2017). *Peace and Conflict Studies: An Introduction*. Routledge.
- Joy C. Kalu-Nwivu & Kennedy C. Anyadike, (2015). *Conflict Resolution and Development: A Panacea for the activation of Nigeria's vision beyond 2020*. *Academic Discourse: An International Journal*, volume 8 No.1. August, 2015:2277-0364
- Kedir Daro Arerro, (2014). *Global Terrorism and Ethiopian Foreign Policy Dynamics: A Narrative Analysis*. Addis Ababa University, School of Graduate Studies.
- K. J. Holsti, (1970). *National Role Conception in the Study of Foreign Policy*. University of British Columbia.
- Kenedy Mkutu. (2001). *Pastoralism and conflict in the Horn of Africa*. Africa Peace Forum/Safeworld/University of Bradford.
- Markakis, J. (ed.) (1987). *National and Class Conflict in the Horn of Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University press.
- Mathijs, V. (2013). *HOW TO HANDLE YOUR NEIGHBOURS' CONFLICT: ETHIOPIA'S RELATIONSHIPS WITH SUDAN AND SOUTH SUDAN*. UNISCI Discussion Papers Num 33 (pp. 123-138). Madrid: Universidad Complutense de Madrid.
- Matthew, R. A. (2008). *Resource Scarcity: Responding to the Security Challenge*. International Peace Institute,, 1.
- Maxwell, J. W., & Reuveny, R. (2000). *Resource Scarcity and Conflict in Developing Countries*. *Journal of Peace Research*, 301.

- Medhane, T. (1999). *The Eritrean-Ethiopian War: Retrospect and Prospect. Reflection on the Making of conflicts in the Horn of Africa 1991-1998*. Addis Ababa: Mega Printing Enterprise.
- _____. (2004). *Turning conflicts to cooperation in the Horn of Africa*. Friedrich –Ebert-Stiftung .
- Melakou Tegegn. (1994). *Eritrea: Evolution towards independence and beyond*. In. CV.24:45-76.
- Merid Wolde Aregay. (1971). *Southern Ethiopia and the Chirstian Kingdom 1508-1708, with special Refrence to the Galla Migration and their Consequences*. University of London School of Orental and African Studies.
- Merima Ali, et.al (2015). *Colonial legacy, state building, and the salience ethnicity in Sub-Saharan Africa*. JEL classification: N 47, N 97, O17, O55, H10.
- Muzafter Ercan. (2006). *Religious Fundamentalism and Conflict*. International Jornal of Human Science. ISSN:1303-5134.
- Mesfin, W.-M. (1999). *The Horn of Africa Conflict and Poverty*. Oklahoma State University Archives.
- Mitzen, J. 2006. *Ontological Security in World Politics: State Identity and the Security Dilemma*. European Journal of International Relations, 12(3): 341-370.
- Molla M. (2002). *Ethio-Sudanese Relations: 1991-2001*. Addis Ababa University, School of Graduate Studies.
- Muhabie, M. (2015b). *Ethnic Federalism: A means for managing or triggering factor for ethnic conflict in Ethiopia*. International Jornal of political science and development.4 (4), 94-105.
- Mulugeta, G. (2014). *Regional peace and security cooperation under the Intergovernmental Authority on Development: Development and challenge*. Eastern Africa Social Science Research Review, 30(1), 105-131.
- Mulugeta Gebrehiwot. (2016). *African Politics, African Peace: The African Peace and Security Architecture*. World peace Foundation, institute For Human Security.
- Munene, M. (2022). *Geopolitical Dynamics in the Horn of Africa region*. The HORN Bulletin Volume V • Issue I.
- Neil & Sheely. (2019). *Governance as a root cause of protracted conflict and sustainable peace: Moving from rhetoric to a new way of working*. Stockholm international peace research institution.
- Okechukwu, E. (2004). *Africa and the Crisis of Instability*. . Vanguard.
- Olaosebikan, J. (2010). *Conflicts in Africa: Meaning, Causes, Impact and Solution*. semanticscholar.

- Omeje, K. & et.al (2013), *Conflict and Peacebuilding in the African Great Lakes Region*, Indian university press,
- Plaut & Gilkes. (1999). *Conflict in the Horn: why Eritrea and Ethiopia are at war*. Chatham House. Ocha Service.
- Redie Bereketeab, (2012). *The Horn of Africa intra-state and inter-state conflict and security*. Pluto Press. The Nordic Africa Institute.
- Regassa Bayisa. (2007). *The Derg-SPLM/A Cooperation: An Aspect of Ethio-Sudan Proxy War*. Ethiopian Journal of the social science and Humanities. Vol. 5 No.2
- Rotberg, R. (Ed). (2005). *Battling Terrorism, the Horn of Africa*. World Peace Foundation. Massachusetts: Bookings Institution Press.
- Samson Siyume. (2005). *The Sudan Conflict. In Conflict in the Horn of Africa*: What can civil society do to bring about solidarity and cooperation in the region. Nairobi.
- Samson Siyume. (2005). *The Sudan Conflict. In Conflict in the Horn of Africa*: What can civil society do to bring about solidarity and cooperation in the region. Nairobi.
- Samuelson, P. A., & Nordhaus, W. D. (1989). *Economics*. McGraw-Hill.
- Sharamo, R., & Berouk, M. (2011). *Regional security in the post-cold war Horn of Africa*. Institute for Security Studies.
- Seyoum Hamsa (2005). *Issues and Dilemmas of Multiparty Democracy in Africa*. *WetsAfricaReview* <http://www.africaresource.com/war/vol3.2/hameso.html>. accessed on February 2023
- Seyoum Mesfin. (2015). *Federalism at the margine of the Ethiopian State: the lived experience of the majang people*. Addia Ababa University.
- Solomon A. Derso. (2009). *Somalia Conflict: Implication for peace making and peace keeping efforts*. ISS paper 198.
- Tafesse, O. (2008). *Conflict and conflict resolution in the Horn of Africa: Towaeds the study of regional peace and security*. . Ethiopian Journal of the Social Sciences and Humanities Vol. 6 No. 1-2.
- Tekeste, N. & Kjetil Weilliam. (2000). *Brothers at War Making Sense of the Eritrean-Ethiopian War*. Oxford: James Current Ltd.
- Tesfaye Tafesse. (2001). *The Nile Question: Hydropolitics, Legal wrangling, Modus vivindi and perspectives*. London: Transaction Publisher.
- Wallensteen, P., & Sollenberg, M. (1998). *Armed Conflict and Regional Conflict Complexes 1989-97*. Journal of Peace Research, 621-634.

- Warberg, G. (1995). *Mahdism and Islamism in Sudan*. Cambridge University press, International Journal of Middle East Studies volume 27, Issue 2, May 1995, pp. 219-236.
- Warburg, G. (2003). *Islam, Secterianism, and politics in Sudan snice the Mahdiyya*. London: Hurts & co.
- Wilderson III, F. B. (2020). *Afropessimism*. New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation.
- Williams, P. D. (2013). *Security Studies: An Introduction 2nd Edition*. London : Routledge.
- Woodward Peter (1990). *Sudan 1898-1989: The Unstable State. XIV, 217pp.boulder: LynneReinner.London: Lester Crook Academic*. Cambridge University Press
- Woodward. (1996). *The Horn of Africa: Politics and International Relations*. New York: Tauris Academic Studies.
- Woodward Peter (2012). *Sudan after the South's scission: Issues of Identity*. Palgrave Macmillan. Suadan divided pp 89-102.
- Yacob Arsano, (2007). *Ethiopia and the Nile: Dilemas of National and Regional Hydropolitics*. University of Zurich. ISBN 3-905696-14-2.
- Young, J. (1996). *The Tigray and Eritrean peoples' Liberation Fronts: A History of tensions and pragmatism*. The Jornal of modern African studies, vol.34, No.1
- Young, J. (1999). *Along Ethiopia's Western Frontier: Gambella and Benishangul in Transition*. The Journal of Modern African Studies Vol. 37, No. 2, 321-346.
- Young, J. (2002). *Revolution in Ethiopia: Tigray Liberations Front*. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.
- Zartman, W. (1991). *Conflict and Resolution: Contest, Cost, and Change*. The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,, 11–22.

Internet Sources (Web Sites and Date Accessed)

- Alexander Mecklenburg. *Changing Ethnic Relations. A Preliminary Investigation of Gambella, Southwest Ethiopia*. Asien-Afrika- Institutes der Universitat Hamburg. <http://www.uni-koel.de/phil-fak/afrikanistik/kant/data/MA2-kant1.pdf>. Accessed on February, 2023. Annual Governance Report.
- Al Jazeera English. "Talk to Jazeera - Meles Zenawi - 18 March 2007 - Part 1". [youtube.com.14May 2007. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EZh3ppcedBc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EZh3ppcedBc), Accessed on Accessed 20 November 2022.
- An African watch Report, (1991). *Evil Days: 30 years of War and Famine in Ethiopia*.
- Avoiding *Conflict in the horn of Africa U.S. Policy toward Ethiopia and Eritrea*. <http://icar.gmu.edu/ethiopa-EritreaCSR21.pdf>. Accessed on January 2023.
- Conflict Theory and Conflict Resolution DFID, The Causes of conflict in Africa, march Report of the International Crisis Group on Somalia* <http://www.globalpolicy.org/nations/sovereign/failed/2004/0330criris.htm>. Accessed on January 2023.
- Desta Heliso, (2020). *Ethiopia's Increasing vulnerability To Islamic Extremism and What that mean For The Horn of Africa*. Religious Unplugged. <https://religiousunplugged.com/news/2020/11/17>.
- Eritrea –*Ethiopia conflict: The search for a lasting resolution of the Ethiopia/Eritrea conflict*?. <http://www.ploughshares.ca/content/MONITOR/monm99c>. Accessed on 5 October, 2022.
- Ethio-Sudanese relations before, during and after the Ethio-Eritrean conflict*. A paper Presented at the Africa University of Khartoum. Khartoum, Sudan January 16, 2023. <http://www.ak-sophiabooks.org>. Accessed on March 2023.
- Gwexe, Sadile G. *Brothers at War? Reflections on an Internecine Conflict between Ethiopian and Eritrea*. <http://www.accourd.Org.za/ajcr/2001-1/acocrd-v2n1-a8.html>.
- Hizkias Assefa. *Ethnic Conflict in the Horn of Africa: Myth and Reality*. <http://www.unu.edu/unupress/unupbooks/uu12ee/uu12eee06.htm>. Accessed on March 2023.
- Knife Abriha. (2006). *Sudan: Towards A Resolution of the conflict in the South*. In <http://www.addis.epiid.org>.
- Marxted, J. & Abebe Z. *Human Stability and Conflict in the Horn of Africa: Part One*. Published in African security Review Vol 10 no 4. <http://www.iss.co.za/PUBS/10No4/Maxted.html> Accessed on April, 2023.

- Okechukwu Emeh (2004) *Failed States, or the State as Failure?* Rosa Ehrenreich Brooks Georgetown University Law Center, rosa.brooks@law.georgetown.edu
- Ostebo, T. (2007). *The question of becoming: Islamic reform -movements in contemporary Ethiopia*. CMI: CHR Michelsen Institut. Website Uia.org/s/or/en/1100067151
- Ross, Michael. *What do you know about Natural Resources and Civil War?* Journal of Peace Research. <http://jpr.sagepub.com>. Accessed March, 2023.
- Shale, Victor. *Post Cold War Diplomatic Training: The Importance of multi-Stakeholder Approach to inter and Intra-State conflicts*. <http://www.diplomacy.edu/Conferences/MSD/papaers/shale.pdf>. Accessed on February 2023.
- Seyium Hamso (1990). *Issues and Dilemmas of Multiparty Democracy in Africa*. WetsAfricaReview <http://www.africaresource.com/war/vol3.2/hameso.html>. accessed on July 2022.
- Sisay Abebe (2004). *The Horn of Africa: background, scope and Regional Initiatives* <http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/33/025.html>. Accessed on April, 2023.
- Social Development in the horn of Africa: Challenges and prospects*. March 2023. The inter-African Group. <http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Hornet/IAGW-March.html-54k>.
- Strands of Islamation in Somali and the Horn of Africa and options for Combating Extremisms*. <http://www.ak-sophiabooks.org>. Accessed on February 2023.
- The Causes and Prevention of Violent Conflict*. www.dehai.org/conflict/analysis/alemsghed3.html. Accessed on 5 June, 2022.
- The Challenge of Territories of Africa and Perspectives of African States*. <http://www.aksophiabooks.org>. Accessed on April, 2023.
- www.un.org/esa/socdev/rwss/2016/chapter

ANNEX - I Interview Questions

1. What do you think was the first mode of diplomatic or political relationship between the TPLF/EPRDF and the Sudanese government in the early 1990s? What underpinned that relationship?
2. How did this relationship change or evolve in the course of the 1990s? What were the determinants of that change (internal or external)?
3. Who were the key personalities or officials determining the evolution of this relationship on each side? What was the role of Al Qaeda and other Islamist groups, the Egyptian, and the Eritrean governments in the evolution of this relationship?
4. How did this relationship indirectly or directly affect Ethiopia's relationship with the SPLM or SPLA? What about its impact on Ethiopia's relations with Middle Eastern countries?

ANNEX II - List of informants

Coded list of informants from different fields of discipline.

SN	Interviewee's name	Areas of profession	Personal, telephone, email	Place	Month	Year
1	AKATG	Was playing elderly role in Gambella	Phone and email	Gambella	February	2023
2	AKAG	Was playing elderly role in Gambella	Phone and email	Gambella	February	2023
3	AEJAG	Was playing elderly role in Gambella	Phone and email	Gambella	March	2023
4	MEAB	Benishangul Resident	Phone	Benishangul	March	2023
5	ABHB	Was playing elderly role in Gambella	Phone	Benishangul	March	2023
6	ALBB	Firs was serving as security officer, later served as lawyer in different positions in BG	phone	Benishangul	April	2023
7	CLTGSG	Senior ENDF officer	Phone and email	Gambella	January	2023
8	MHAGA	Junior ENDF officer	personal	Addis Ababa	January	2023
9	CLHAGMG	Senior ENDF officer and survivor of Jikawo and Akobo operation	Phone and email	Gambella	March	2023
10	CLHAGRA	Senior ENDF officer	personal	Addis Ababa	March	2023
11	KIDARG	Junior ENDF officer and survivor of SPLA'S Itang operation	Phone and email	Gambella	March	2023
12	GYGA	ENDF higher officer	personal	Addis Ababa	March	2023
13	GMAA	Was playing elderly role in Gambella	personal	Addis Ababa	April	2023
14	CLKUNA	Senior ENDF officer	personal	Addis Ababa	April	2023
15	CLHALA	Was playing elderly role in Gambella	personal	Addis Ababa	April	2023
16	DKAA	Junior diplomat	personal	Addis Ababa	April	2023
17	GSLA	Was playing elderly role in Gambella	personal	Addis Ababa	April	2023

The military officers participated in different military operations in boreal areas of Gambella, Benishangul, Metema, Uganda, and other places. In addition, they served as military attachés, Military intelligence officers, UN peacekeeping observers, and peacekeepers, and the junior diplomats were also in Ethiopian Embassies abroad, which also included elders and residents of Gambella and Benshangul-Gumuze.