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**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE &
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

**The New Geo-politics in the Horn of Africa and its
Implications for Ethiopia's Foreign Policy**

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AU	The African Union
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
CFA	Cooperative Framework Agreement
CARI	China Africa Research Initiative
CJTFFHOA	The Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa
DP World	Dubai Ports World
DRC	The Democratic Republic of Congo
EPRDF	Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front
EU	The European Union
EUNAVFOR	The European Union Naval Force
FBC	Fana Broadcasting Corporation
FANSPS	Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and Strategy
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FMB	Foreign Military Base
GCC	The Gulf Cooperation Council
GERD	Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam
ICU	The Islamic Court's Union

IDFC	International Development Finance Corporation
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NBI	The Nile Basin Initiative
OAU	The Organization of African Unity
OPEC	The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
PLAN	People's Liberation Army Navy
PSC	Peace and Security Council
UAE	The United Arab Emirates
UN	The United Nations
USA	The United States of America
WB	World Bank

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Abstract

It is well established that the Horn of Africa region is a diverse, complex and dynamic region with its own unique history of state formation pattern and age-old external interventions in the region. The Horn of Africa is undergoing far-reaching changes in its regional geopolitical dynamics and its external security landscape in the backdrop of shifting international system. A number of regional and global state actors from the middle eastern region and Gul and internal powerhouses including the US, China, Russia and possibly the EU are currently competing for influence, power, resources and hegemony in the region. This research studied the new geopolitics in the Horn of Africa and its implications for Ethiopia's foreign policy. Previous reports and research largely focused on the country specific approach to study the region failing to provide a broader and comprehensive framework to the understand the new geopolitics from a foreign policy and geopolitical perspectives.

The dearth of scholarly work on regional political analysis from the broader international relations and geopolitical perspectives is considered as a huge challenge to both scholars and policy makers. The study attempted to answer the emerging superpower competition between global superpowers in the HoA and the new middle eastern involvement in taking into account the national, regional and international systemic factors. For that, a qualitative research approach with an exploratory study framework was selected. Accordingly, the study used a wide variety of secondary source of data including books, journal articles, reports, news articles, government and non-governmental sources and other reliable secondary sources.

The multidimensional and in-depth analysis of the research will try to fill the gaps identified above. The findings of the research will be important in widening the existing body of knowledge on the region and in the arena of policy revision and making. The study identified that the driving factors that shape new the geo-politics of Middle Eastern power dynamics in the Horn include: the post-Arab spring leadership vacuum, the Yemeni civil war, the rivalry with Iran, geo-economic drivers, the GCC crisis and the strategic significance the region. The implications for Ethiopia's foreign policy are wide ranging including on its economic development, the GERD hydro-politics, regional peace and security and the future of inter-state relations in the Horn of Africa.

Chapter One

1.1. Background of the Study

The significance of area studies in the scholarship of International Relations has long been recognized in the world of academia. The ever increasing interdisciplinary and diverse nature of the study is a fascinating task with complex patterns worth exploring. The theoretical as well as practical significance of the need to provide country-region specific analysis is immense. The Horn of Africa as a region is not an exception. In the history of the region the interests, intentions and interventions of foreign powers have been influencing and determining the historical trajectories of the countries in the region for long. From the era of the scramble for Africa to the Cold war geo-political contestation, the Horn has been a theatre of global geo-politics among diverse players.

The attempt to understand the history, politics, society, culture, geopolitics, geo-economics and international relations of the Horn of Africa region is a complex academic and scholarly task. The importance of providing a contemporary geopolitical analytical framework that gives context-sensitive and situation sensitive analysis and discussion is highly relevant.

In the increasingly emerging multipolar world order, the Horn of Africa is undergoing far-reaching changes in its external security landscape. A wide variety of international actors—from Europe, the United States, the Middle East, the Gulf, and Asia—are currently operating in the region (Melvin, 2019:1). As a result, the Horn of Africa has been experiencing a proliferation of foreign military bases and a build-up of naval forces (Ibid). The global competition emerging in the region driven by geo-strategic interests is creating a new regional order in which new alignments and political configurations in the international relations of the region is taking place. The Trump administration's new Africa Policy and Strategy was unveiled by Former National Security Advisor Ambassador John R. Bolton on December 13, 2018. In the policy statement given the former National Security adviser, John Bolton addressed the situation in the Horn of Africa in the following way:

“And soon, Djibouti may hand over control of the Doraleh Container Terminal, a strategically-located shipping port on the Red Sea, to Chinese state-owned enterprises. Should this occur, the balance of power in the Horn of Africa—astride major arteries of maritime trade between Europe, the Middle East, and South Asia—would shift in favor of China...And, our U.S. military personnel at Camp Lemonnier, could face even further challenges in their efforts to protect the American people. Russia, for its part, is also seeking to increase its influence in the region through corrupt economic dealings.”

The coming of President Donald Trump to power with the new foreign policy of “America First”, Africa took a marginal place in the policy circles in the United States. However, the 2018 new Africa strategy was introduced with the tone of great power rivalry in which Africa is to make a choice between the United States over China and Russia in their foreign policy including economic, military and geopolitical relationships. The foreign policy whitepaper clearly stipulates that: "Great power competitors, namely China and Russia, are rapidly expanding their financial and political influence across Africa. They are deliberately and aggressively targeting their investments in the region to gain a competitive advantage over the United States." The geopolitically motivated foreign policy of the USA in Africa will have multidimensional and wide-spread repercussions for the political economy, foreign and international relations of the Horn of Africa region.

With regard to the ever-increasing involvement of China in the Horn of Africa, China opened its first permanent overseas military base in its modern history in Djibouti in 2017 leading to the proliferation of foreign military bases in the country. And also, the 2013 multi-billion-dollar global infrastructure investment connecting China with the wider world establishes a broader economic, security, cultural, political and geo-strategic linkages between China and the Horn of Africa. The flagship Belt and Road Initiative project in the Horn of Africa region, the Addis Ababa Djibouti railway and other infrastructure projects play a critical role in the creasing influence and expansion of China in the continent and the Horn in particular.

Dr. Mehari Taddele, a scholar of peace and security specializing in the Horn of Africa in his recent article on *Aljazeera* titled “*A new cold war in Africa*” argued that the continent of Africa is emerging as a new frontier “with increasing foreign military presence and growing diplomatic tensions, the continent is already witnessing the first signs of an emerging new cold war.”¹ The global superpower rivalry in the Horn Africa decades after the end of the Cold war takes place in the backdrop of fragile political environment and still divided regional politics.

In addition to the global great power competition, the Horn of Africa is also becoming a theatre of geo-political contestation among Gulf and Middle Eastern powers. Regional actors from the middle east region are accelerating their competition for allies, influence and physical presence in the Red Sea corridor, including in the Horn of Africa (Crisis Group, 2019:1). With already developed cultural and social ties, more economic connectivity and commercial interests play an important role. With the proliferation of military bases, political linkages, foreign policy complementarities and geo-political developments, Horn-Gulf relations are getting complex more than ever. According Zach Vertin in his article published in *Foreign Affairs Magazine*:

*“Gulf states with deep pockets and big appetites are asserting themselves in the Horn of Africa as never before in which the flurry of new economic and military investments is reshaping geopolitical dynamics on both sides of the Red Sea, as two formerly distinct regions are fast becoming one.”*²

Gulf and Middle Eastern such as the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Turkey, Iran are increasingly re-orienting their foreign policy direction in the Horn of Africa region to advance their geo-political, security and economic interests and influence for the already fragile, unstable and weak states in the region. In a foreign policy aimed at alliance building, political reconfiguration and other broader regional dimensions in the Horn of Africa, Gulf states are scrambling to find partners in the geo-strategic competition in the region.

¹ Mehari Taddele. (2019, July 1) A new cold war in Africa. *Aljazeera*, Retrieved from <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/cold-war-africa-190630102044847.html>

² Zach Vertin (2019, January 15) Red Sea Rivalries: The Gulf States Are Playing a Dangerous Game in the Horn of Africa, *Foreign Affairs* retrieved from: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/east-africa/2019-01-15/red-sea-rivalries>

The already dangerous and violent rivalry in the Middle Eastern geo-political arena is being extended to the fragile, weak, and vulnerable Horn of Africa region with wider political, economic, social and regional implications. In this regard, the new geopolitics in the Horn of Africa regional has a transregional dimension of creating new types and forms of relations and interactions between the Middle East and the Horn of Africa. The new geopolitics is adding a new regional and global dimension to the Horn of Africa region with its own problems, fragmentation and instability leading to further regional crisis.

*The Gulf States are looking for new allies in the Horn of Africa, in a battle for hegemony in the Middle East in which with their deep pockets and big appetites these countries are using economic investments, new military bases, and strategic political alliances to change geopolitics on both sides of the Red Sea.*³

In terms of the involvement of state actors, the new geopolitics in the Horn of Africa constitutes middle eastern countries such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar and Turkey vying for power, influence and dominance in the region. And also, global actors like the USA, China, Russia and possibly the European Union competing in the new scramble for Africa in the 21st century. The other important aspect of what can be termed as “the new geopolitics” is that, it is multidimensional in its very characteristics and manifestations in the Horn Africa and beyond. It includes wide-ranging activities including geo-economic, diplomatic, military, ideological, and geopolitical dynamics that shape foreign policy and political developments in the region. The other important aspect of the new geopolitics is how constantly dynamic new power relations and political developments are. In this wider geopolitical environment, political alliance often changes based on the balance of power politics and political configurations are subject to external interventions. And also, the geopolitical climate is highly unpredictable partly due to the very nature of the Horn o Africa politics and partly due to the volatile international system.

³ Johnson, Hilde. (2019, October 28). Gulf States Are Making Their Way to the Horn of Africa, retrieved from <https://blogs.prio.org/author/hilfjoprio-org/>.

As a result, major political developments in the Horn show that the competition for ports developments, major proliferation of foreign military bases, ever-increasing militarization and a build-up of naval forces are creating a more complicated regional politics. In the Horn of Africa, inter-state relations are being affected by the new power relations among middle eastern powers and great powers. The merging geopolitical dynamics of regional and global actors in the region is part of the wider geo-economic, geo-political and military networks—across the Middle East and the Gulf, and the Indian and Pacific oceans. In the new geopolitical situation, international state actors have unprecedentedly increased their interaction, intervention and influence in the political, security, economic developments of the region. It is increasingly attracting a serious academic attention for research and study. Provided all the major political developments in the international relations of the Horn of Africa, the new geo-political landscape since the end of the Cold war needs fresh analysis and study with new insights.

1.2. Problem Statement

A scholarly authority on the Horn of Africa for half a century, Christopher Clapham expressed in his recent book that:

“One great compensation of studying the Horn is that the region’s historical depth, its social complexity, and the traumas through which it has passed in recent years have attracted the attention of a community of scholars, both indigenous and external fascination with the area is every bit as great as my own, and on whose research and insights I have been able to draw.” (Clapham, 2017: VII).

Studying the Horn of Africa region is an intellectual voyage of discovering unexplored historical developments that shape states in the region, societies, governments and international relations. The attempt to understand the complex socio-economic contexts and dynamic geopolitical situation in the Horn of Africa deserves a necessary attention of researchers of the region and beyond. Despite often differing and many versions of constituents of the Horn of Africa, the Horn of Africa as considered in this thesis comprises of the countries in the region: Ethiopia,

Eritrea, Somalia, Djibouti and sometimes Sudan when necessary. This classification is often expressed as ‘Horn proper’ given its geographic shape.

It is one of the most conflict prone areas of the world, rendered particularly vulnerable because of its strategically critical geographical location, which makes its politics particularly strongly influenced by events in the Middle East (De Waal, 2017:4). The Horn’s geography has been central to its political, social and economic development for centuries (Woodward, 1996:11). The geo-political understanding of the Horn is part and parcel of the politics and strategic significance of the region that still and continues shape its external relations. The region’s wider geography has also been significant in which the Nile, the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean have all exposed the region to outside influences (Ibid).

Here transboundary water resources play a key role in the geopolitical dynamics of the region. The Nile basin is an integral part of the political geography of the Horn of Africa as an important factor shaping inter-state relations in the basin. Ethiopia is often considered as the ‘water tower’ of the North East Africa with 12 major river/drainage basin many of which are transboundary water resources. The geopolitics of hydro-politics continues to shape regional geopolitical developments in the Horn of Africa region and beyond. Since the end of the colonial period, the region has been undergoing through many different domestic upheavals and changes in its external dynamics. In the post-colonial history of the region, inter-state wars, border conflicts, civil wars, internal strife, famine and drought and external interventions have been shaping the international relations and foreign policy of the Horn of Africa region.

In the post-World War II and Cold War periods, external interventions further exacerbated the region’s pattern of power and of politics, where the ‘enemy of my enemy is my friend’ and alliances kept shifting in the regional political arena (Keller, 1997). In the post-Cold War period the combined policies and interventions within the domestic, regional and global political arenas to avoid the recurrence of war in the Horn of Africa have led to divergent outcomes (Woodward, 1996:2). Global powers and Gulf States are expanding their influence and capacity in the Horn of Africa as never before in which unprecedented surge in political, economic, and strategic engagement across the region.

This is challenging old assumptions, geopolitical status quo, foreign policy decision making and orientations, and security dynamics. It is self-evident that the emerging geo-political dynamics represents a significant development in the post-colonial history of the Horn of Africa after the end of the cold war period. That is why it is essentially important to study the factors shaping the new geo-politics in the region. One important element in the exploration of the available literature on the Horn of Africa as a region is the dearth of academic research on the geopolitical and foreign policy analysis of the new geopolitics from a regional perspective. The literatures largely provide individual country level analysis.

According to Alex De Waal, a prominent scholar on the Horn of Africa region: “The Horn of Africa and the Red Sea constitute one of the most strategically important, complex, volatile and yet under-studied regions of the world.” (2017:4). He identifies the very absence of a shared working definition of the ‘Horn of Africa’ as well as the scarcity of scholarly work on regional political analysis as a huge challenge to both scholars and policy makers. There is a clear need to examine the new geopolitical developments from a broader foreign policy, international relations and political geography framework in taking into account the Horn of Africa as a strategic region. And also, the need to study the factors shaping the new geopolitics and its implications for Ethiopia’s foreign policy in the short-term and long-term future is essential. In the past, researches have focused on the global “war on terror”, the inter-state, intra state conflicts, and other relevant areas affecting political development in the region.

This research studied the new middle eastern states competition and superpower rivalry in the Horn of Africa region and its implications from a foreign policy analysis dimension. This is particularly important in further including a literature of international relations and foreign policy to the study of the Horn of Africa region. The other important aspect is that the study of the implications of the geo-political dynamics on Ethiopia’s foreign policy orientation has hardly been investigated. Specifically, a comprehensive study of the implications of the recent geo-political developments in the region for Ethiopia’s foreign policy has not been studied broadly. In addition to that, the current working FDRE Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and Strategy crafted in 2002 is significantly obsolete and outdated.

It failed to consider the new political, security and geo-strategic developments in the region. Ethiopia's current foreign policy and national security whitepaper was developed around 18 years ago against the backdrop of the 1998 Ethiopia-Eritrea war and internal opposition during the premiership of the late Meles Zenawi. However, many geopolitical developments, foreign policy challenges, systemic international changes and domestic political-economy changes have taken place. Therefore, there is a critical need to take into considerations the new realities and forces of change in the Horn of Africa vis-à-vis Ethiopia's foreign policy. Beyond the reviewing and reassessment of the foreign policy of Ethiopia, the importance of crafting a new foreign policy and strategy that responds to the new developments in the region is essentially needed.

Thus, this research project will be important in contributing in expanding the body of knowledge on the region's new international relations. It will be essential for policy makers, practitioners, diplomats, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other relevant institutions and agencies. And also, less emphasis has been given the significance of balancing the risks and opportunities associated with studying the middle eastern involvement in the Horn of Africa region. The balanced study of the opportunities and risks associated with the emerging geo-politics deserve a research and policy analysis. The importance of providing state, regional-level and systemic level analysis is immensely needed since the developments in the political, military, economic, diplomatic, and geo-political realm are largely interlinked and multidimensional. Its consequences are beyond the narrow Westphalian conception of sovereignty, state boundary and independence.

The analysis of the new geopolitics on peace and security, stability, regional integration, economic development and democratic practices should be dealt with. And also, in the past, the Horn of Africa and the Middle East have been studied as separate and different regional entities with their own area study departments and portfolios in both the academia and ministries of foreign affairs. It is true that the historical, geographic, political, cultural, social and commercial interaction between the Horn and the middle east is well established. Currently, the engagement and connections are expanding and increasing adding dimensions and characteristics to the regional landscape of the Horn of Africa. And also, the new geo-political, strategic and economic engagements are creating a new trans-regional identity with ever increasing interlinkages and developments. Thus, the research will be significant in employing the emerging trans-regional

approach to studying the Horn of Africa. The accomplishment of the research will not only study the emerging geopolitics dynamics in the Horn of Africa and its implications for Ethiopia's foreign policy, but also will confront, challenge and clarify old assumptions and misperceptions in our understanding of the Horn region and explore new developments.

1.3. Central Argument

The emerging competition among middle eastern powers and the global superpower rivalry in the Horn of Africa is intensive in its engagement, multi-dimensional and complicated in its nature, often unpredictable in its futurity and far-reaching in its implications for the peace, security and international relations of the region.

1.4. The Overall and Specific Objectives of the study

The overall objective of the research is to the emerging geo-political dynamics in the Horn of Africa and its implications for Ethiopia's foreign policy. Specifically, the paper aims at:

- ❖ Understanding the relationships and interactions of regional powerhouses in the Horn of Africa (HoA)
- ❖ Exploring the strategic competition between global superpowers in the HoA in the new 'scramble for Africa'
- ❖ To study how new geopolitics of foreign military presence is shaping political dynamics in the Horn of Africa and its implications for peace and security
- ❖ To assess the new geo-politics of ports vis-à-vis foreign involvement in the Horn is shaping the politics and foreign policy of states
- ❖ To investigate the dynamics of Ethiopia's foreign policy in the face of the new geopolitics in the Horn of Africa
- ❖ To examine and identify the implications of the new geo-political dynamics in the Horn of Africa for Ethiopia
- ❖ To identify and analyze opportunities and risks in a balanced approach

1.5. Research Questions

The questions that this study examined are the following:

- How is the superpower competition between global superpowers in the HoA is emerging?
- What are the relationships and interactions of Middle-Eastern regional powerhouses in the Horn of Africa (HoA)?
- What are the most important developments with regard to the foreign military presence in the Horn of Africa and its implications for peace and security?
- How is the new geopolitics of ports emerging in shaping the region is dynamics of politics and international relations?
- To what extent are the fundamentals of Ethiopian foreign policy aligned with the emerging geo-politics in the Horn of Africa, as well as adjusted to recent political, security, economic, diplomatic and geopolitical developments in neighboring countries?
- What are the implications of the new geo-political dynamics in the Horn of Africa for Ethiopia?
- What are the opportunities and risks associated with the emerging regional order, in terms of geo-politics, geo-economics and other factors?

1.6. Methodology and Methods of Data Collection

The term methodology is a system of explicit rules and procedure in which research is based and against which claims of knowledge are evaluated (Ojo, 2003). The researcher employed qualitative research methodology. It's basically well established that qualitative methods are best for describing, interpreting, contextualizing, and gaining in-depth insight into specific concepts or phenomena.

The methodological approach employed in the research is part and parcel of the study an attempt to ensure the overall integrity and reliability of the findings and make a well-founded conclusion of the study. Exploratory studies are a valuable means of understanding what is happening; to seek new insights; to ask questions and to assess phenomenon in a new light (Yin, 1994). In the study of social science, exploratory research aims at asking the relevant research questions,

formulating research problems more clearly, developing the right conceptual framework and accumulating the necessary explanation. In an attempt to answer the research questions, I have focused on the exploratory study approach in order to examine and dig into the new geo-political dynamics in the Horn Africa with particular emphasis on its foreign policy nexus of Horn states and other external actors.

Accordingly, the study used secondary source of data; collected from books, published journal articles, published and unpublished theses and dissertation, governmental and non-governmental organization reports and magazines and other internet sources. Given the data gathered are qualitative, the study employed qualitative data analysis techniques. This thesis also employed a variety of documentary sources the provided additional information for the analytical aspects of the research. These include government statements, and speeches by higher officials in the region, reports by research think tanks, and other important sources. The study also used news articles, news analysis, and other secondary sources of information.

1.7. Scope of the Study

This study mainly focused on the examination new geo-political dynamics emerging in the Horn of Africa region involving many global and regional actors and its overall implications for Ethiopia's foreign policy orientation towards the region and beyond. Therefore, the focus of the paper was only the regional geo-political analysis involving the four countries of the region: Djibouti, Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia and sometimes Sudan when discussions are deemed necessary and relevant. Nevertheless, whenever it is necessary issues and developments regarding other states based on its relevance and significance have been incorporated. Although the other proximate manifestations of strategic contestations and rivalries in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden is emerging, the study only gave attention in consideration of the research question and objectives identified. This research does not represent a comprehensive analysis of the overall emerging geo-political scramble for Africa in the new era. But, only regional and global geo-political contestations in the Horn of Africa region with its implications for the region and Ethiopia is studied.

1.8. Limitation of the Study

This study was also limited by the very dearth of scholarly literature studying the Horn of Africa as a region. Often country specific analysis is provided, rather than considering the overall and comprehensive aspects of geo-political developments in the Horn of Africa as a regional security complex. The constraints associated with time and budget are two important limitations identified by the researcher and implicated in limiting the scope and study of the area. The current global Covid-19 pandemic and its effects on Ethiopia has had a particularly limiting and negative impacts on the research methods I have chosen at the outset of the paper due to the restrictions and measures associated with the health and state of emergency.

Plans of in-depth-interviews and discussions were cancelled as a result. Thus, attempts to collect primary sources of data have not been successful. And also, with respect to relevant information access and policy materials, it will directly and indirectly impact the research study. All the data necessary for the research were not available in the media and new policy developments were barely accessible. However, the study tried its best to reduce the impact in employing statements from government departments, partly available and accessible policy documents, reliable news articles and data, scholarly reports and other sources

1.9. Significance of the Study

The findings and explorations of this research are hugely important in contributing to the clearer and reliably researched understanding of the new geo-political dynamics of the Horn of Africa. The analysis, findings, and studies of the paper are essential in broadening the area study of the Horn of Africa from an International Relations and Foreign Policy perspective. The study of the implications of the new geo-politics in the Horn of Africa for Ethiopia's foreign policy is highly important for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other public service agencies in bringing and urging the necessary policy evaluation, policy review and possibly policy change. Provided the obsolete and outdated nature of the current foreign policy and national security, this research is important in identifying new realities that shape political developments, balance of power politics and geo-strategic policy decisions.

Therefore, the outcomes of the research will contribute in the arena of foreign policy review and change. The study also contributes in widening the existing body of knowledge and the literature on the Horn in light of the emerging geo-politics. And plus, the exploration of the nexus between the new geopolitical dynamics and foreign policy expands the horizon of foreign policy study and international relations of the Horn of Africa region. The study is also significant for the academia, research think tanks, civil societies, international organizations, and other relevant actors and stake holders that have both purely academic and practical significance.

1.10. Ethical Considerations

It has become a norm that the ethical considerations in conducting a research is getting more important emphasis and significance. The current study is subject to certain ethical issues. Therefore, the researcher will be adhering to the necessary research ethics and respect the codes, values and principles in doing the research: in properly acknowledging sources and information and other important issues.

1.11. Organization of the Study

The study consists of five chapters and a conclusion. The first chapter considers background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, scope and limitations of the study, significance of the study, methodology and methods of data collections and ethical considerations. The second chapter provides a review of existing body of literatures and the conceptual frameworks with regard to geopolitics and the nexus between foreign policy and geo-politics. Chapter gives emphasis to the new geopolitics in the Horn of Africa with emphasis to the Middle Eastern Countries involvement and interactions in the Horn of Africa. The fourth chapter provides the analysis and presentation of emerging superpower competition in the Horn of Africa.

The fifth chapter will focus on the analysis and presentations of Ethiopia's foreign policy and diplomacy in the face of the new geopolitics in the Horn of Africa including: the challenges, opportunities and risks associated with the emerging regional order, in terms of geo-politics, geo-

economics and other factors including security. The final chapter considers and provides the conclusions part of the study.

Chapter Two

Literature Review, Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

2.1 Understanding the concept of Geopolitics

It is generally argued that “geopolitics” is a much-overused, abused and vaguely understood term. In an attempt to define what geopolitics is, it is perhaps worthwhile that we do emphasize the contested and debated nature of the term geopolitics. Scholars, journalists, commentators, writers, observers, and practitioners of international politics frequently employ the term to describe, explain, or analyze specific foreign policy issues and problems. However, such overuse ignores the fact that geopolitics as a method of analyzing international relations has a history that includes a common vocabulary, well-established if sometimes conflicting concepts, an established body of thought, and a recognized group of theorists and scholars (Sempa, 2007:3). The understanding of geopolitics as an analytical tool to explain important geopolitical developments of huge foreign policy significance is highly important.

Going beyond dichotomized, dominant and mainstream International Relations theories of liberalism, realism and constructivism. it is important have a pragmatic and policy-oriented approach. The forces of geopolitics have always been a fundamental part and parcel of international relations. Foreign policy objectives defined along geopolitical lines has been one of the major driving forces of the two world wars. The study of international relations is impossible without a firm grasp of geography in which the geographic factor in world history is the most fundamental because it is the most constant (ibid). Classically speaking, the tradition of the study of geopolitics has been largely associated with the impact geography on politics. However, the meaning, understanding and scope of geopolitical studies has expanded over the past century to include broader and wider dimensions.

In academic circles, the study of Geopolitics involves the analysis of geography, politics, international relations, economics, history and social science with reference to spatial politics and patterns at various scales. The term was coined by Rudolf Kjellén, a Swedish political scientist, at the beginning of the 20th century.

Rudolf Kjellén was originally inspired by the German political geographer Friedrich Ratzel, who popularized in English by American diplomat Robert Strausz-Hupé, a faculty member of the University of Pennsylvania. Here it is worthwhile to mention that Halford Mackinder played a great role in greatly pioneering the field and contributing to the overall conceptualization of geopolitics. Although the term geopolitics was originated in the intellectual contribution of Kjellén, the field of geopolitics as a Western intellectual tradition and a representation of the national interests of the body-politik and identity politics dates back further to the academic institutions, universities, geographical institutes of different European countries of the late nineteenth century.

The term signified the interlinkage between the political realm and the geographical realm. For Kjellén, geopolitics was “the science which conceives of the state as a geographical organism or as a phenomenon in space (Cahnman, 1943:57). Pride of place is given to the geopolitical ideas and theories of Halford Mackinder, Alfred Thayer Mahan, Nicholas Spykman, and James Burnham in which these “geopoliticians” combined brilliant analyses of past events with remarkable predictions of future developments (Sempa, 2002:3). Subsequently,

“it has been assumed to signal a rather hard-nosed or realist approach to international politics, which posits certain law-like statements about the importance of the “facts” of physical geography, such as the distribution of landmass, the extent of the oceans, and the importance of particular strategically located regions, in determining patterns of global political power.”⁴

However, here it is important to note that classical geopolitical concepts have implicated in western imperialism, colonial adventurisms and international wars and conflicts. Historically speaking, geopolitics emerged in response to specific late 19th-century geo-political realities that shaped international relations of the time that led to many imperial maneuvers and expansions unprecedented in the modern history of the world in its form and consequences.

⁴ Dodds, K. (2018, January 11). Classical Geopolitics Revisited. Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies. Retrieved 23 Feb. 2020, from <https://oxfordre.com/internationalstudies/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.001.0001/acrefore-9780190846626-e-379>.

It is also important to emphasize that the study of geopolitics perhaps reflected more the foreign affairs realities of post-1648 European nations states that craved more expansions, resources, influence and territories beyond their legalistic territorial jurisdictions. However, the developments in Europe were never natural in a sense some geopoliticians claim. It is important to begin with the most basic question: what is “geopolitics”? There is no single universally accepted definition of what geopolitics is.

According to the Encyclopedia Britannica geopolitics is the —analysis of the geographic influences on power relationships in international relations.⁵ The other important conceptualization is provided by Hagan: “geopolitics is a contemporary rationalization of *Real-Politik* of the modern state system and nation state”. Hagan tried to draw the direct nexus between contemporary power politics and geographical determinants in the world of international relations. Geopolitics can also be defined as describing geographical settings and their relationship to political power and setting out spatial frameworks embracing political power units such as hemispheres, oceans, land and maritime boundaries, natural resources, and culture.⁶ In addition to Hagan, Karl Haushofer in 1920 stated that geopolitics is and should be the geographical conscience of the modern state system, that is the primary unity of the international system.

Its subject matter is to study the major vital correlations of modern man within modern space and its aim is to coordinate phenomena that link a state with space. According to Cohen:

geopolitics is defined as ‘the analysis of the interaction between, on the one hand, geographical settings and perspectives and, on the other, political processes.... Both geographical settings and political processes are dynamic, and each influence and is influenced by the other. Geopolitics addresses the consequences of this interaction’ (2003:12).

⁵ "Geopolitics," Encyclopedia Britannica Online, 15 June 2010, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/229932/geopolitics>.

⁶ Saul B. Cohen, *Geography and Politics in a World Divided*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973): 29–33

Here it is useful to note that in the history of the world since time immemorial, international conflicts and global geopolitical contestations occur between regional powers and global powers and aspiring great powers for control over territory, society, political systems, natural resources and other important geographical positions or places (such as ports and harbors, canals, river systems, etc.). Saul Cohen argued that the quintessence of geopolitics is the study of the existing relationship between international politics of power and the respective geographical characteristics, especially those geographical features on which the sources of power grow (Cohen, 2003).

Geoffrey Parker (1997) in his master book *Geopolitics: Past, Present and Future* understands geopolitics “as a study of international relations from a spatial, geographical perspective with the interface of geography and international relations”. Parker stresses the importance of understanding the inadequacy of existing geopolitical structures and the need to devise new ones more relevant to the needs of the contemporary world, paying particular attention to ideas of world order (ranging from the classical "balance of power" to general systems theory, and the relevance of these to the better understanding of the contemporary world), and contemporary western approaches to the subject (Perker, 1997).

Here it is important to note that special reference should be made of the definition of the late Professor Nicholas John Spykman (1969) of Yale University, who was one of the few American scholars to perceive that the term Geopolitics describes “the option of considering a country’s problems in geographical terms, so that the findings can be used directly and promptly by politicians, whose task is to plan the foreign policy”. Broadly speaking, geopolitics can be understood as a conceptual framework to systematically analyze the relations and interactions between states in geo-political terms including the role of non-state actors that are capable of shaping policy decisions. However, it is not limited to the dynamics of political geography. But also, the role of macro-economic factors in shaping and influencing foreign policy and domestic policy making. Here, in the era of globalized world recognizing the role of non-state actors in shaping geopolitical realities in international relations is important.

It is important to situate geopolitics as an integral part and parcel of human geography within the broader interaction among state and non-state actors in international relations influencing and shaping foreign policy and political economy. In addition to that, it is highly useful to recognize that like many other terms in the social sciences, the attempt to define geopolitics is largely slippery in which the overuse and thus misuse of the term may inevitably result in a certain degree of ambiguity. There is no consensus on a single definition. The abovementioned definitions of geopolitics should suffice to give an idea regarding what geopolitics is about. I would argue that geopolitics both as an interdisciplinary field of study and a practically oriented area has always been dynamic, not an unchanging constant to rapidly changing realities of international and domestic politics. The geopolitical framework explains the global power and wealth dynamics from the interactions and dimensions of human geography, economic, cultural and technological factors in a particular geographic space.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

It is important, relevant and necessary to broadly organize geopolitical theoretical framework into two broad frameworks so as to be able to:

- draw attention to the most important developments in the evolution of geopolitical thoughts and developments,
- seriously organize the ideas and concepts in terms of their significance and relevance,
- determine what is important from what is unimportant
- make sense of the complexity in an attempt to find coherence, simplicity, and generalizations.

The two important widely accepted theoretical frameworks are classical geopolitics and critical geopolitics.

2.3. Classical Geopolitics

In trying to explore the genesis a contemporary theoretical framework of classical geopolitics as an explanatory framework, one can locate two important zones of thought both arising around the beginning of the twentieth century. A series of core concepts, ideas and principles inform the

body of work of the earliest classical geopolitical proponents. In the initial attempt to understand the realities and theories of geopolitics, often associated with the idea of *the organic concepts of the state*, showed a Germanic concern with “scientific laws” that contributed to states’ survival in an increasingly unstable world, represented by its two key figures, Friedrich Ratzel and Rudolf Kjellén.

Friedrich Ratzel (1844-1904), German geographer, ethnographer and a principal influence and one of the principal figures in the evolution and development of classical geopolitical thoughts believed that nation-states had many of the key characteristics of living organisms. He crafted the organic theory believing that the state was organic because he believed that political bodies, such as modern Eurocentric nation states, conduct their foreign relations in a biologically similar pattern to that of biological living organism. That is why the name is associated with the organic conception of the state. He developed, according to Haggman (1988), the idea that a state had to grow, to expand, and to establish living frontiers or borders that were dynamic and subject to change. He originated the concept of Lebensraum, or “living space,” which relates human groups to the spatial units where they develop. Ratzel writes:

“The state in all stages in its development as an organism contends with the necessity of preserving its connection with the terrain and therefore, they should be studied from a geographical point of view. As shown in ethnology and history, a state develops on a spatial basis--conjugating and merging more and more--and extracting from it more and more energy. Thus, a state turns out to consist spatially, maintained and animated by this space, and should be managed, described, and measured through geography. A state is described in a series of phenomena, with the expansionary principle being the most prominent”
(Ratzel,1897).

The Ratzelian conceptualization of political geography is profoundly influenced by the organic approach by focusing on territorial expansionism as a process of natural growth in a similar pattern to that of the growth of living organisms. It is the concept of life-space or lebensraum that is Ratzel’s contribution and which directly encompasses his Law of Expansion. The geopolitical understanding of Ratzel that constitutes that the life of the modern state that includes

the natural capacity of states to naturally enlarge their life space by incorporating the life-space of defeated individuals, groups, or species. Invariably, Ratzel (1940) was referring to German expansionism and Prussian superiority.

The other key prominent thinker in the classical geopolitical thought is Rudolf Kjellén. He was an influential Swedish geo-political scientist with Ratzel in the conceptual evolution German geopolitics as two preeminent founding fathers. As I have stated above, Rudolf Kjellén is esteemed for the coinage of the term and further augmentation of Ratzel's organic states theory. According to the concepts of Kjellen, it is always necessary for modern states to employ and effectively practice five important mutually reinforcing policies in an attempt to accumulate more power. These 5 policies were- "Econopolitik (economic resources of the state), Demopolitik (population and the state), Sociopolitik (social structure of the state), Kratopolitik (governmental organization) and finally Geopolitik (geography and the state)". He declared that geopolitics was realistic, instead of idealistic or legalistic, with its feet on earth i.e. it had realistic foundations.

His organic view of the state was an attempt to regard the state as an independent object of study with its own dynamic and logic, power and will, an organic unity of land and people in which 'the state-body' as an organic unity of land and people, and as an organic individual with vital parts like 'heart' and 'arteries' must be regarded as a metaphor, illuminating a process or internal logic, not as a dogmatically fixed concept.⁷ The geopolitical analysis of Kjellén also includes the current debate on ethnicity and territoriality, on power and identity, on metaphors and discursive analysis, despite the fact that he is confined to a time in which political science was in its infancy (Ibid). The second depicted geographic placement of states and regions as conditioning foreign affairs actions. Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan, Halford Mackinder, and Nicholas Spykman contributed to this intellectual endeavor. Both versions enjoyed respect and consideration by foreign policy makers and scholars.

⁷ Tunander, O. (2001). Swedish-German Geopolitics for a New Century Rudolf Kjellén's 'The State as a Living Organism'. *Review of International Studies*, 27(3), 451-463. Retrieved February 2, 2020, from www.jstor.org/stable/20097746

Alfred Thayer Mahan and Geopolitics

Alfred Thayer Mahan, the American historian, naval officer, strategist, and established geopolitical thinker, stands out as one of the foremost thinkers on naval warfare and maritime strategy. He might be considered the thinker on sea power and the for understanding the strategic importance of the maritime commons in determining the rise and fall of great powers. He was one of the prominent thinkers to have inspired the emergence of geopolitics as a field of study. Alfred Mahan attached great significance to the role of history and geography to the study and practice of international relations. His insights that the international system centrally lacks a central governing authority and the anarchical nature of international politics, the importance of geography to the global balance of power, the role of sea power in national security policy, and history's ability to shed light on contemporary world politics remains relevant to the 21st century world. Alfred Thayer Mahan's defense of imperialism-often couched in terms of national interest and balance of power- and the norms of American power in world politics providing the will-to-power behind American expansion and involvement, matched by a willingness to employ the tools of realism-particularly traditional diplomatic methods-as a way to uphold historic national goals and moral vision in American foreign policy (Russel, 2006).

Mahan argued that naval power was one of the key foreign policy determinants and an integral aspect of national power. A state that controlled the high seas (as Britain did at the time) could dominate international relations. The ability to achieve such control, however, was dependent on a large well-armed navy, long coastlines, and adequate port facilities. The great master of naval strategy and geopolitics Rear-Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan famously stated: "Control of the sea by maritime commerce and naval supremacy means predominant influence in the world ... (and) is the chief among the merely material elements in the power and prosperity of nations."⁸ Like most realist strategists Mahan believed that international politics was mainly a struggle over who gets what, when and how. The struggle could be about territory, resources, political influence, economic advantage or normative interests (values). The contestants were the leaders of traditional nation-states; military and naval forces were their chief instrument of policy.

⁸ Cited in William E. Livezey, *Mahan on Sea Power* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1981) 281-282.

He attempted to combine realist orientations of international relations theory with a less formidable but still important part of Mahan's idealism. His two books *Influence of Sea power upon History* (1890) and *The Interest of America in Sea power* (1897) were important influences in shaping the American geopolitical school of thought beyond American and plus the foreign policy decision making of the USA abroad asserting that sea power was the key to global predominance.

In the book, Mahan argued for the importance/supremacy of sea power over land power, and that naval superiority was the fundamental principle and basis of foreign policy. Moreover, Mahan 's distinction between land and sea-powers continued to influence geopolitical thinkers throughout the Cold War, as Mahan had also advocated an alliance with Britain to counterbalance Eurasian land-powers (Flint, 2006:20). Generally speaking, Mahan was a close student of international relations and policy analyst of strategic affairs highly influencing the evolution of the geopolitical thought of classical geopolitics by making an attempt to apply the study of history to understand foreign policy and strategy problems of his own day.

Halford J. Mackinder, Geopolitics, and the Heartland Thesis

The British geographer, strategist, prominent geopolitical thinker, Sir Halford J. Mackinder, was not the founder of geopolitics, but by a wide margin he was its most profound and influential theorist. The Heartland theory is a geopolitical concept which made an attempt to analyze the political-economy achievements and success of the world's region through the views of the geographic determinants. In his paper to the Royal Geographical Association entitled, "The Geographical Pivot of History" in 1904. According to the views of Mackinder the center of power and influence in the international political economy is the Heartland. A region of the world situated in Eurasia due to its sheer size, a wealth of resources, and a high population (Mackinder, 1904).

Mackinder stated that the nation in control of the Heartland had the potential to "command the world" but also highlighted the great natural barriers which surrounded the Heartland. The theory had great political ramifications, and some historians believe that the theory was the inspiration behind Germany's invasion of Russia during the Second World War (Ibid).

In stressing the strategic importance of Eastern Europe Mackinder concluded that:

*"Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland;
who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island;
who rules the World-Island commands the world." (Mackinder, 1960).*

However, it is nearly impossible to take geographical factors a single determining force in international relations and global political economy in the 21st century given the role of technological advancement, military capability, economic statecraft, alliance and other important calculations. According to Ashworth (2011), a closer analysis of Mackinder's realism (1) underscores the links between geopolitics and realist strategic studies; (2) demonstrates the diversity of realist approaches in interwar IR; and (3) shows that it was possible to be a realist and also support the League of Nations.

2.3. Understanding critical geopolitics

Critical geopolitics is a multidisciplinary field that emerged in the late 1980s at the interface between Political Geography and International Relations. There are key thinkers and figures in the field include geographers such as John Agnew, Gerard Toal, Simon Dalby, Derek Gregory and Klaus Dodds.

Critical geopolitics is concerned with the geographical assumptions and designations that underlie the making of world politics in which its goal is to elucidate and explain how political actors spatialize international politics and represent it as a "world" characterized by particular types of places (Kuus, 2017:1).

Critical geopolitics investigates the geographical assumptions and designations that enter into the making of world politics (Agnew 2003:2). It seeks to illuminate and explain the practices by which political actors spatialize international politics and represent it as a "world" characterized by particular types of places (Ó Tuathail and Agnew, 1992:190).

The aforementioned meanings and understandings of critical geopolitical thinkers states the politico-ideological influences and driving forces shaping our understanding of geopolitics. These historical forces include: colonialism, imperialism, world dominion, masculinity vis-à-vis

feminism and other forces. Thus, the analysis, concepts, theories, knowledge production and distribution, and its application in the international arena are influenced, affected, and effected by a particular intellectual statecraft and national groups. Thus, critical geopolitical theorists attempt to explore politicization of geopolitical study as a field of study and its consequences of geopolitical adventurisms in the practical world. In this case, that of Europe and North America.

As a newly emerged field in social sciences critical geopolitics is aimed at revisiting and unpacking the foundational assumptions of classical geopolitics. Critical geography attempts to deconstruct the main pillars of the classical geopolitical theories including geographical determinism. It makes an attempt to revisit the epistemological assumptions and ontological foundations of classical geopolitics. In John Agnew's (2003: 3) words: "The world is actively 'spatialized,' divided up, labeled, sorted out into a hierarchy of places of greater or lesser 'importance' by political geographers, other academics and political leaders. This process provides the geographical framing within which political elites and mass publics act in the world in pursuit of their own identities and interests".

Given its multidisciplinary nature and its broad spectrums, four general components of critical geopolitical frameworks can be identified: popular geopolitics, formal geopolitics, structural geopolitics, and practical geopolitics. Critical geopolitical scholarship continues to engage critically with questions surrounding geopolitical discourses, geopolitical practice (i.e. foreign policy), and the history of geopolitics. Critical geopolitics also examines geopolitical practices with the goal of understanding geographical and political reasoning and how it conditions practices in world politics. It examines geopolitical tradition, revisiting the historical and geographical context of ideas about geography and politics, the relation between geopolitics and popular culture, and last but not least it studies structural geopolitics linking the practices of statecraft to globalization and information networks (Dodds, 2001).

Through the 1990s geographers used the term critical geopolitics to encompass a diverse range of academic challenges to the conventional ways in which political space was written, read and practiced (Ó Tuathail and Dalby, 1998; O'Tuathail, Dalby and Routledge 1998). The emphasis was on deconstructive readings of geopolitical reasoning, in leading author Gearoid O'Tuathail (1996a: 68) words, from his key book on the subject simply titled *Critical Geopolitics*:

“Critical geopolitics is distinguished by its problematization of the logocentric infrastructures that make “geopolitics” or any spatialization of the global political scene possible. It problematizes the “is” of “geography” and “geopolitics,” their status as self-evident, natural, foundational, and eminently knowable realities. ... In contrast to the strategic ambition of imperial geopolitics (which is about the establishment of place or proper locus), critical geopolitics is a tactical form of knowledge. It works within the conceptual infrastructures that make the geopolitical tradition possible and borrows from it the resources necessary for its deconstruction.”

Here it is important to note that a significant portion of critical geopolitics aims at deconstructing the fixed, deterministic, rigid territorial assumptions of classical geopolitical thinking, often ideologically oriented and politically motivated. It seeks to showcase the continued dependency in geopolitical analytical frameworks on binary understandings of power and spatiality, on notions of East and West, security and danger, freedom and oppression. More recently, geographic scholarship has foregrounded how the “war on terror” works with these same binaries (Agnew, 2003; Gregory 2004; Gregory and Pred, 2006).

In conclusion, comparisons between classical and critical geopolitics are made with the suggestion that both versions, although different in most respects, are equally legitimate for study and perhaps may be brought closer together, at least in ways that may complement each other, after inspection of their comparative approaches (Kelly, 2006). It is also important to note both classical and critical geopolitics are concerned with how geography shapes international relations and foreign policy decision making of states.

2.4. The Nexus Between Geopolitics and Foreign Policy: A Conceptual Framework

In this section, the paper will provide the conceptual framework in an attempt to explore exploration the most important geopolitical developments, describe the major events in terms of their implications, provide the right analytical framework given practical nature of geopolitics and become a model of operations for research – decision making. At the systemic level of

international relations, geopolitics as a systematic analytical framework is a method of studying foreign policy to understand, explain and predict international political behavior through geographical and strategic variables. These include area studies, topography, demography, geography, natural resources, and applied science of the region being evaluated.

2.4.1. Foreign Policy.

In the modern Westphalian world of international relations, the making and framing of foreign policy is a necessary activity of the modern state. Every state follows a particular foreign policy. Each society, when it is organized into a state, has a social code that contributes to its own identity, and which activates and energizes all political action. The term foreign policy has been conceptualized, defined, and redefined in various ways by scholars and practitioners; however, there is a general consensus that it is part and parcel of national policy concerned with behavior of a state actor towards the external environment of international affairs including state and non-state actors.

A brief definition of foreign policy can be given as a starting point: foreign policy is the sum of official external relations conducted by an independent actor (usually but not exclusively a state) in international relations. The phrase 'an independent actor' enables the inclusion of non-state entities (Hill, 2016: 4). The politics of foreign policy are perpetually changing, depending on the country or the region, often unpredictably giving significance to the importance of case and country studies (Ibid). Foreign policy vis-à-vis domestic policy is unique in a sense that its arena of implantation is the external international and regional domain despite being the continuation or extension of domestic policy. Hence policy refers to the general pattern and direction revealed by the aggregate of a state's specific understandings and the broad principles that undergird them." (Lerche, 1967:23)

George Modelski, defines it as "the system of activities evolved by communities for changing the behavior of other states and for adjusting their own activities to the international environment. Foreign policy must throw light on the ways states attempt to change, and succeed in changing the behavior of other states." Modelski, noted only those aspects of policy that aim at the change in the existing behavior of states, as the primary objectives of foreign policy. However, foreign policy is not only to change, but also continuation of the behavior at different

times.⁹ Here it is important have an operational framework of foreign policy as the field of implementation of geopolitics, stressing that its particular method of analysis uses geographical factors that contribute to the formulation of appropriate policies, in order to reach certain legitimate objectives.

2.5. The Nexus between Foreign Policy and Geopolitics

Since ancient times, geopolitical conditions have determined the courses and strategies of many different polities, empires, kingdoms and civilizations driving them into dynamisms of conflict and cooperation. Or into collapse of one polity and civilization and the emergence of a new. During the European imperialism and adventures and the 19th century, the geopolitics became a necessary knowledge for statesmen in the conduct of the foreign policy of *Real Politik* and the naked pursuits of the narrowly driven national self-interests. For European foreign ministries, statesmen and diplomats, the shrewd and crafty understanding of geopolitics provided the knowledge necessary and the awareness needed about actors shaping balance of power, alliance, and world politics about their assets and liabilities, strengths and weaknesses.

Nicholas Spykman in his book "*The Geography of the Peace*" simply and plainly observed: Geography is the most fundamental factor in foreign policy because it is the most permanent. Owens, 2015, 463) Author Colin S. Grey (1996:248) further defines geography as a factor which determines physical location and character of a state and its populace. Geopolitics both as an applied science and field of study encompasses the worlds of geography and political science, foreign policy analysis and decision-making international relations points of view. Geopolitics is the planning of a nation's foreign policy and national security policy on the basis of geopolitical and strategic factors. In the context of analyzing the determining factors shaping the decision making of a particular foreign policy, the geopolitical and geo-strategic assessment of pre-existing conditions including physical and human geography becomes critical. One important example can be how the landlocked of the world, are interlocked in a difficult policy environment in areas of foreign policy, national security, international trade, economic development and other domestic policy issues.

⁹ Laura N (2008) *The New Foreign Policy: Power Seeking in a Globalized Era*. Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

According to a French diplomat Jules Cambon, "The geographical position of a nation... is the principal factor conditioning its foreign policy" (Harold and Margaret Sprout, 1971:81). It has been an undeniable historical fact that the significance and role of geography in foreign policy is that it plays an immense contribution to the material position of a nation, its strength, wealth, and economy and its role in the global political economy.

Nicholas J. Spykman (1938:29) wrote that, geography "is the most fundamentally conditioning factor in the formulation of national policy because it is the most permanent". Here it is important to recognize that Spykman's argumentation of the relationship between geopolitics and foreign policy is not based on the concept of geographical determinism. Rather he argued in his two parts famous article titled 'Geography and Foreign Policy, I:

"It should be emphasized, however, that geography has been described as a conditioning rather than as a determining factor [...] It was not meant to imply that geographic characteristics play a deterministic, causal role in foreign policy. The geographical determinism which explains by geography all things from the fourth symphony to the fourth-dimension paints as distorted a picture as does an explanation of policy with no reference to geography. The geography of a country is rather the material for, than the cause, of its policy." (Spykman, 1938:30).

It must be admitted that not one of the present states has succeeded in eliminating completely the effects of geographical factors in its foreign policy. The subject matter of geopolitics includes location, size, shape, topography, frontiers and boundaries, climate and vegetation, natural resources, and population. Location, natural resources and people are important factors in the strategy of both war and peace. In his book entitled *The Grand Chessboard*, Brzezinski, treated the world stage as a chessboard and analyzed the foreign policies to be followed by the USA. He thus endeavored to determine the grand strategy for the maintenance of US 's exceptional position in the world with a special focus on Eurasia and aimed at laying out the —realities of the board on which the game would be played (Brzezinski, 2006).

Here the other important geographic factor explaining the nexus between geopolitics and foreign policy is location. Location is one of the most important single aspects of a state's physical make-up. The role a state can play in the world is strongly affected by its position on the map. It is a

paramount factor affecting the foreign policy. Additionally, the landlocked location of several states is significantly constrained in their foreign policy options and tools, helping shape their foreign policy orientations in which lack of sea access greatly impacts their foreign policy patterns and behaviors in the external environment.

In spite of technological improvements in transport, landlocked developing countries continue to face structural challenges to accessing world markets often lagging behind their maritime neighbors in overall development and external trade (Michael, et al: 2004). While the relatively poor performance of many landlocked countries can be attributed to distance from coast, this paper argues that several aspects of dependence on transit neighbors are also important (Ibid). The other important conceptual framework explaining the strong nexus between foreign policy and geopolitics is a foreign policy strategic framework developed by the preeminent American diplomat, historian and geo-strategic thinker, George F. Kennan, who developed the foreign policy and national security of *Containment* during beginning of the cold in the global struggle between the Communist USSR and the capitalist-liberal West. The Containment policy of the US Department of State was a geopolitical and strategic foreign policy framework pursued by the United States in helping the country prevail over the Soviet Union during the cold war.

It is also essential to recognize that the architect of the containment emphasized the need to revitalize diplomacy and give primacy to negotiation and compromise when a fair possibility of compromise presented itself; otherwise, both sides should frankly acknowledge the depth of their security and political differences and refrain from indulging in a war of rhetoric (Mayers, 1986: 125). Diplomacy is an indispensable foreign policy instrument for peaceful cooperation, dialogue, negotiation, cohesion and harmony between/among nations should be given a crucial place at times consequential geopolitical contestations. At the same time, it is important to emphasize that Kennan's conception of the foreign policy of "containment" was multi-dimensional and varied than many other foreign policy experts and scholars have recognized. He certainly did not believe that the USSR was operating under a compulsion to conquer the world; nor did he advocate military measures as the most important means by which to cope with the Soviets (Ibid).

Generally speaking, the understanding of the natural, dynamic and complex interlinkage between geopolitics and foreign policy decision making is important in explaining drivers that shape geopolitical developments and foreign policy orientations of states.

Chapter Three

The New Geopolitics in the Horn of Africa

3.1 Middle Eastern Countries in the Horn of Africa

At the beginning of the third decade of the 21st century, the regional geopolitics dynamics in the Horn of Africa has continued to expand, intensify and get more complex. The emerging geopolitical environment involves emerging regional powers in the Middle Easter, the Gulf region, and North Africa region (MENA) region. Situated on one of the world's most vital shipping lanes, linking Europe, the Indian Ocean and the rest of Asia, the Horn of Africa is also now fast becoming one of the world's most contested regions, as regional and global actors vie for power and profit (Gorvett, 2019). Over the last decade, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Qatar and Turkey have dramatically increased their physical, economic and political presence in Africa in which foreign policymakers in Riyadh, Abu Dhabi, Doha and Ankara each describe this new power projection as seizing a long-overlooked opportunity (Crisis Group, 2019:1).

Wider Contextual Factors

However, this increasing interactions and involvements are not completely a new phenomenon. The interaction between the two regions can be traced back to the ancient time where religion, cultures, societies, and languages interacted for many centuries. The Arab peninsula and continental Africa have a long history of interactions that has resulted in shared cultures and identities that have transcended the trials of time to show their legacy in modern day sub-Saharan Africa (Lidet, 2016:2). Historically speaking:

“the Red Sea has never functioned as a barrier but has been a bridge allowing the exchange of ideas, goods and even communities in which these exchanges and linkages have played a major role in configuring the societies and states on both sides of the Red Sea, and shaping their identities and self-image” (Alex de Waal, 2017).

The understanding of the historical linkage between the two regional is important for clearly understanding the current geo-political contestations.

The historical proximity between the Arabian Peninsula and the Horn of Africa has in recent years been increasingly experienced as a relationship of growing insecurity in which Gulf States have rapidly expanded their economic and political roles on the other side of the Red Sea (Verhoeven, 2018:1).

In the backdrop of challenging political transitions in Ethiopia and Sudan the rivalry for supremacy among the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, on the one hand, and Turkey and Qatar, on the other, is fueling regional tensions and fragmentations in an already fragile region. The new regional geo-political dynamics involving Middle Eastern powers in the Horn is bringing a foreign policy in the arena of alliance, peace and security, economy and beyond. The timing of this geo-political development is also important. At a time of the coming of the new administrations in Ethiopia, rapprochement between Addis Ababa and Asmera, unstable and divided Somalia and other geopolitical opportunities and challenges are shaping the Horn of Africa.

Food security, labour migration, and the need to pursue economic diversification and reduce their reliance on income from hydrocarbons by investing in African markets have emerged as key drivers for the GCC states to forge a new economic relationship with the region (Todman, 2019:2).

There are several factors for this new geo-politically induced political-economic development in the Horn Africa region. The contribution of different domestic, regional, and international factors has led to the emerging regional geo-political dynamics in the Horn o Africa.

3.2. New Power Dynamics in the Horn: Saudi Arabia and the UAE

The emergence of a new geopolitical power dynamics constituting the alliance between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates has extended to the Horn after its manifestation in the Middle East. The Horn of Africa and the adjacent Red sea region has become a key factor shaping the region's politics, alliance building, foreign policy and conflict-cooperation dynamics. There are several domestic, regional, global factors driving this emerging geo-strategic competition in the Horn of Africa. However, it is important to identify the driving factors that shape new Saudi-UAE alliance in a broader regional political economy and security framework.

The Post-Arab Spring Geopolitics

In the post-Arab Spring, the Middle Eastern region did not only go through a social uprising, but also a geo-political tectonic shift. Despite social revolutions in major Middle Eastern countries, its implications in the arena of foreign policy, international relations and the regional balance of power is consequential. The region faced “a “psychological and epistemological rupture” (Fewaz, 2014). With the weakening of traditional powers like Egypt, Libya, Iraq and Syria, Gulf monarchies and Turkey scrambled for regional leadership in the face of a changing distribution of power. Two contradictory axes emerged: on the one hand, Saudi Arabia and the UAE favoured strong central governments that restored security over chaotic democratic transitions ideologically led by the Muslim Brotherhood or its affiliates (Crisis Group, 2019:7). With their oil-rich economy and close diplomatic and security ties to the USA, the new state actors started to dominate the regional political landscape. The Gulf monarchies began to compete for regional hegemony in the post-Arab Spring period.

On the other hand, Qatar and Turkey cemented ties with Islamist forces during the uprisings and continued to back them financially and through the media in which they occasionally pushed back against Iran, for example in the Syrian civil war, but did not prioritise Tehran among their regional enemies (Ibid). In the new Middle East-Horn nexus amid the growing decline of US global power in Africa, the Arab Spring played a particularly decisive role. One of the geopolitical repercussions is that facilitated the emergence of a new regional power center in the

Middle East region. Thus, the new power dynamics is driven by a combination of national, regional and global geopolitical dislocations in the backdrop of a weakened and broken Middle Eastern countries by the violence and chaos of the Arab Spring, the new role of Gulf States and Turkey to expand their influence and power in the region and the new multipolar world order where regional powers dominate international relations.

The Yemeni Civil War: Extended to the Horn of Africa

Historically, Yemen has always been part of the Horn of Africa's geopolitics. Even, scholars go to the extent of including Yemen as part and parcel of the Greater Horn of Africa. Even though the Horn of Africa and the Gulf share historical relations, geographical proximity and political links, cooperation between both regions increased dramatically in the years following the Yemeni war (Soliman, 2017). The strategic importance of the Horn of Africa increased after the Saudi-led coalition's interventions in Yemen to support Abdulrabuh Mansur Hadis's government in Yemen against the Houthi-led coup (Ahmed & Mansour, 2019). The civil war created a big appetite for military bases, facilities, troops and willing partners that can be found in the geographically proximate region of the Horn. After the end of the cold war geopolitics in the region, the Horn has emerged as a new geopolitical epicenter where proxy conflicts take shape. Small, weak and vulnerable Horn states began to serve the geo-political interests of gulf monarchies in the areas of security, commerce, resource, diplomacy and foreign policy. The proximity of the Horn to the war made Horn states like Djibouti, Eritrea, Sudan and Somalia to provide bases, ports, partnership for their clients in Saudi Arabia and UAE. Those countries close proximity to the hotspots of the war including its second city, the port of Aden provided geo-political opportunities for regimes in Asmera, Djibouti, Khartoum, Mogadishu, and Hargeisa in the new power dynamics between Riyadh and Dubai.

The geopolitical implications the Saudi-UAE alliance in the proxy war in Yemen have been extended beyond the Gulf and have carried over into the Horn of Africa as well. In fact, while the military intervention in Yemen has resulted in a more concrete security partnership between the Horn of Africa allies, this has also evolved into a burgeoning collaboration beyond narrow security interests (Mahmood, 2019).

With the foreign policy of “Alliance Building” and strategic cooperation aimed at the war in Yemen, Eritrea, Somalia, Djibouti became new geo-political playground for the UAE and Saudi Arabia. Eritrea allowed the UAE to establish a military base in 2016 for naval operations and air attacks to be launch military operations in the war in which in exchange the Asmara government has been able to receive Gulf money, oil and investment. And beyond that, a report from a U.N. monitoring group on Somalia and Eritrea in October 2016 cited a former high-ranking Eritrean official who said, “400 Eritrean soldiers were embedded with the UAE contingent forces fighting on Yemeni soil on behalf of the Arab coalition.”¹⁰

After nearly long years of diplomatic isolations, the Eritrean regime saw an opportunity in its foreign policy challenge with its strategic significance for Gulf powers. The participation of Eritrea in the Saudi-led Coalition increased Eritrea’s geopolitical importance ending its diplomatic seclusion in the world. The government intensified its foreign policy of regime survival by further extended Middle East regional power competition to the Horn. Essentially, it added a new dimension to peace and security challenge to the region and many more. The war in Yemen was a key milestone in Gulf-Horn relations leading to more intensifications and engagement in the region afterward. Saudi Arabia and the UAE bloc attempted to fulfill their short-term security goals in Yemen, while laying the groundwork for long term interests in securing the Bab-al-Mandab and Red Sea maritime passageways and excluding rivals from the sea (Mahmood, 2019).

The Rivalry with Iran

The ongoing rivalry in the Middle East has generated new competition among regional powers, the resurgence of the Saudi-Iranian contestation being a major in which it is sectarian (Sunni Vs. Shiite), ethnic (Arab Vs. Persian), ideological (US supported Vs. US-opposed), and geopolitical (Bahi, 2018). Even though the main theatre of struggle between Riyadh and Tehran is in the Middle East, the Horn of Africa’s was not a neutral geo-political battleground between the Saudi-UAE coalition and Iran given its strategic significance and obvious geographic proximity.

¹⁰ Solomon, Salem. (January 09, 2016) “Observers See Several Motives for Eritrean Involvement in Yemen” VOA News. Retrieved from: <https://www.voanews.com/world-news/middle-east-dont-use-observers-see-several-motives-for-eritrean-involvement-in-yemen>

The Gulf power heavyweights were drawn into the region to challenge Iran, which had forged close ties with Sudan during the late 1980s and with Eritrea and Djibouti after 2007.¹¹ Beginning in late 2008, Iranian warships routinely called at the Eritrean port of Assab as part of the multinational campaign against Somalia-based pirates. Saudi officials charged that the Iranians took advantage of these stopovers to deliver arms and military materiel to be forwarded to the militant Ansar Allah (“Supporters of God”) movement in northern Yemen, commonly known as the Houthis (Lawson, 2017:7). The regional contestations for power, influence and dominance has religious, ideological, diplomatic and most importantly geo-political dimension.

In the Horn, where cash-stripped regimes often teeter on the brink of financial survival and alliance are made and broken with bewildering regularity, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) has found willing partners as Saudi-Iranians escalate (Taylor, 2016). However, it is important to note that the exporting of the Saudi-Iran rivalry in the Horn of Africa has serious repercussions for regional stability. The fragile security environment of the Horn is extremely vulnerable to any unrestrained external security actors. Already states like Djibouti, Eritrea and Somalia have been forced to make binary foreign policy decision against their policy independence, sovereignty and long-term interests. With the highly transactions diplomacy, the Gulf kingdoms have forces those to cut diplomatic ties with Iran citing different justifications creating client-patron relations in the post-colonial period.

Since, 2011, the most active powers are the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, which seek political support to counter Iran’s influence and the growing Qatar-Turkish influence in the region (Dentice & Donelli, 2020). The two Gulf monarchies’ searches for alignments with African counterparts has favored the continuous reshuffling of alliances with direct effects on the local actor’s strategic choices (Ibid). As a result, it has created an unpredictable regional environment in the Horn of Africa where conflicts, tensions, diplomatic disputes and historical rivalries in the Middle East are exported to the region. Provided the weak institutional capacity of states, the rivalry for power to change the Horn’s political landscape will further exacerbate the already complicated problems of the region.

¹¹ Jeffrey A. Lefebvre, “Middle East Conflicts and Middle Level Power Intervention in the Horn of Africa,” *Middle East Journal* 50, no. 3 (1996): 387-404

Geo-Economic Drivers

The other equally important factor is the geo-economic pillar shaping the new Gulf involvement in the Horn of Africa. Although Horn states differ significantly in their domestic political and economic situations as well as in the relationships, they maintain with Gulf states, Gulf Arab aid, investment and trade into the Horn is one the biggest and largest driven by an economy strategy as part of a wider foreign policy of getting influence, partnerships, resources, and alliance (Meester, van den Berg & Verhoeven, 2018). Developments like the Emirati and Saudi investments in the ports of Berbera (Somaliland), Doraleh (Djibouti), Bosaso (Somalia) and Assab (Eritrea), the ongoing Saudi support for Sudan's ambitious Dam Programme and promises of billions of Qatari riyals for agriculture, and light manufacturing and social services in Darfur are all to be understood in the context of escalating rivalries between Middle Eastern states and clashing identity paradigms (Ibid).

One off the most revealing element of the geo-economic dynamics with the new power dynamics of the UAE-Saudi Alliance is the asymmetry. The economically far richer, oil-rich, small population, petrodollar kingdoms of the Gulf and the economically impoverished, underdeveloped, resource rich, populous countries of the Horn make a huge asymmetry. The new alliance with its big cash and big appetite is by far strategically positioned to influence the domestic and regional political dynamics of the Horn. Somalia, Eritrea and Djibouti have been particularly vulnerable in this new geopolitical dynamic in the region. For instance, they were forced to side with the Saudi-UAE alliance in the Gulf crisis against Qatar. And they were also forced to cut diplomatic ties with Iran in the Saudi-Iran rivalry in the region. The increasing deterioration of policy independence and sovereignty is at a dangerous level with more Gulf money, economic support, investment, humanitarian aid and trade tied to the geo-strategic interests of Gulf regimes.

The GCC Crisis

Fourthly, the Qatar-GCC diplomatic crisis in 2017 in which Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt cut diplomatic and commercial ties by imposing an air, land and sea blockade is an important factor. Although the roots of the conflict developed earlier before that, it became another important geopolitical development to shape the new Gulf-Horn relations in which Turkey sided with Qatar. The dispute originated in the contentious relations between the ruling families of Qatar and the UAE, going back several generations, and in Qatar's support for the Muslim Brothers across the Arab world, and its accommodation with Iran. The dispute contributed to a bidding war in the Horn, with Qatar and Turkey (on one side) and Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Egypt (on the other) seeking to secure the alignment of Sudan, Djibouti, Somaliland and numerous actors in Somalia (Alex de Waal, 2019:12).

It became particularly self-evident that the ever-increasing geo-political rivalry in the Middle East region has a dangerous destabilizing effect to the Horn of Africa region. The new geopolitics further unveiled that it has implications for more fragmentation, instability and conflict.

And in the long term it posed a challenge to the hardly-won sovereignty and independence of post-colonial African states since the end of the cold war. In the aftermath of the GCC diplomatic crisis, Djibouti and Eritrea immediately sided with the blockading countries. Consequently, Qatar withdrew its peacekeeping forces from the border along Eritrea and Djibouti in the dispute over the status of Doumeira Mountain and Dumeira island claimed by both countries. The sudden and unexpected withdrawal of Qatari forces constituted adverse regional security and humanitarian implications. In the region that has had plenty of its own instability, conflicts and violence, the coming of gulf rivalry in the Horn will be devastating for the region.

3.2.2. The United Arab Emirates in the Horn of Africa

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has established itself in recent years as one of the core regional Gulf powers in the Horn of Africa with particularly assertive foreign policy and diplomacy. UAE is one of six members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), and sit in the core of the world's largest oil-producing region. The Gulf kingdom is among the top nine producers by proven

reserves within the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), which continues to be influential in global oil markets. It has been the most dynamic and multidimensional actor with articulated maritime strategy after the DP World's agreement for ports with Somaliland and Puntland in the towns of Berbera and Bosaso. The UAE has established a naval base at Assab in Eritrea and controls, via its military intervention in Yemen, at least six ports in the other side of the Red Sea (Financial Times, 2019).¹²

The growing influence of the UAE manifests itself through alliances building, humanitarian diplomacy, foreign aid, foreign direct investment. The high-profile investments in the establishments of military bases, port developments and other big infrastructures clearly indicate the potential challenges and opportunities of the new geopolitics. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) became the world's third-largest donor of humanitarian aid relative to Gross National Income in 2016 becoming among the top five humanitarian assistance state-donors in the world in terms of US dollars in 2018.¹³The kingdom of United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development currently finances the big infrastructure project of Addis Ababa-Berbera highway for logistics and transportations. Economically, it will be essentially important for landlocked Ethiopia's policy of diversifying its port service and modernize its logistics sector. Politically speaking, it will a significant development for Somaliland's foreign policy in its quest for sovereignty and recognition. Together with the US\$442 billion expansion of the Port of Berbera by another Emirati company, Dubai's DP World, the highway will turn Berbera into a major regional trading hub (Fabricius, 2020).

3.3. Turkey in the Horn of Africa

Turkey's current active engagement in the Horn of Africa is a relatively new development in Turkish foreign policy. Despite its strong historical linkage between the Horn and the Ottoman empire, until recently, Africa took a marginal place in the Turkish foreign policy agenda of post-Ottoman period. However, the country announced 2005 as "the year of Africa", and in 2008 the first ever Turkey-Africa Cooperation Summit in Istanbul with the participation of representatives

¹² Wilson, Tom & England Andrew. (2019) "Middle East's power struggle moves to the Horn of Africa". The Financial times.

¹³ OCHA 2019.

from fifty African countries (Ozkan, 2010). The coming to power of AKP (Justice and Development Party) in 2002 was an important historical change that brought a shift in foreign policy direction towards Africa opening a new chapter of Africa-Turkey relations.

Again in 2008, Turkey's then-Foreign Minister Ali Babacan declared that Africa has a special importance to Turkey within the context of Turkey's new foreign policy, and thus it was decided to open 15 new embassies in Africa within the next few years. Since then, a reorientation of Turkish foreign policy toward Africa has taken shape and become steadily more visible publicly as well. To continue building its presence in the Horn of Africa, Turkey draws on the historical legacy of empire and soft power projection: humanitarian aid, business ties and the attraction of Turkey's governing system (Crisis Group Middle East Report, 2019).

3.3.1. Turkey's Opening Up to Africa: A New Foreign Policy

As part of on-going multidimensional foreign policy changes in recent years, there has been since 1998 a revival in Turkey's relations with Africa in which the Africa-Turkey Summit and its policy of "Opening to Africa" in 2005 was the signature foreign policy doctrine of the AKP led government (Ozkan & Akgun, 2010).

After the declaration by the Government of Turkey 2005 as the "Year of Africa" and the country was given the largely symbolic observer status by the African Union. It can be argued that it created a watershed moment in the diplomacy and foreign of Turkey towards Africa. Istanbul's Opening policy to Africa dates back to the Action plan adopted in 1998. It led to consecutive foreign policy decisions that further strengthened and institutionalized the relations with the Continent in which, for example, in the year 2009 there were only 12 Turkish Embassies in Africa countries but now 39.¹⁴

The main tenets of this new foreign policy orientation includes: (a). Establishing closer political relations, (b). Supporting Africa in the economic sphere (c). a diplomacy of peaceful settlement of disputes in the Continent (d). Assistance in the areas of democracy and good governance (e). Supporting multilateralism, both regional and continental (F). Active participation in peace

¹⁴ Turkey-Africa Relations", Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, undated, at www.mfa.gov.tr/turkey-africa-relations.en.mfa.

keeping mission in Africa and finally upholding the AU principle “African solutions for African problems”¹⁵ Ozkan, a foreign policy expert on Turkey-Africa relations argues, while the emerging multidimensional foreign policy has provided the theoretical basis of opening to Africa, increased Turkish involvement in Africa at political and economic levels represents a smooth convergence of both governmental and business policies (Ozkan, 2010).

Its foreign policy agenda of openness towards the African continent and the Horn of Africa in particular was largely driven by the government’s foreign policy priorities of more regional influence. However, non-state actors including multinational corporations, humanitarian and other business organizations play a critical role in the areas of FDI flows and the rebuilding of the Mogadishu government. As commercial ties and foreign direct investment increased with the new foreign policy, private businesses, despite many with strong ties to Erdogan and his AKP, operate in places like Mogadishu and Addis Ababa and do much to further Turkey’s influence across the Horn of Africa region (Cannon & Donelli, 2019). And it is important to note that Turkey’s growing presence in the Horn of Africa forms part of its wider Africa strategy of expanding its influence, power, credibility and soft power.

3.3.2. A wider Geopolitical Competition in the Horn of Africa

The ever-expanding influence of Turkey in the Horn region is mainly driven by political economic investments and most importantly geo-strategic interests in the Horn of Africa. While initially economic and values-driven, may today be motivated by in part by geopolitical competition with Gulf adversaries, wrote analyst Zach Vertin in the Lawfare Blog hosted by the Brookings Institution.¹⁶ Here the importance of locating the new Gulf crisis as the continuation of the regional power competition in the middle east coming to the Horn of Africa is necessary. The full understanding of what is really happening and its wider implications requires a broader framework of the new geopolitics that mainly includes Turkey.

Turkey’s foreign policy orientation for regional geopolitical rivalries within the context of the new regional geopolitical realities is increasingly apparent. Since 2017, the Qatar-Gulf crisis has

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Vertin, Zach. (May 19, 2019). “Turkey and the new scramble for Africa: Ottoman Designs or Unfounded Fears?” The Lawfare Institute. Retrieved from: <https://www.lafareblog.com/turkey-and-the-new-scramble-for-africa-ottoman-designs-or-unfounded-fears>.

seen the emergence of a new strategic alliance between Turkey and Qatar against regional heavyweights Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the UAE and Bahrain. As Turkey increased its presence in the region and splits developed within the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the Horn became an important venue for proxy contests among Middle Eastern and Gulf powers (Melvin, 2019). The GCC crisis became a key political development in both the Middle East and the Horn of Africa shaping new alliance and foreign policy behaviors. The Turkey-Qatar axis has shown a divergence in foreign policy from Saudi Arabia and the UAE in its priorities in the Horn of Africa region by focusing on investment, business, humanitarian diplomacy and foreign aid.

Turkey and Qatar have become fully brothers in arms in which both states share an affinity for Islamism that shapes their regional engagement: fueled by shared ideological commitments, Turkish-Qatari cooperation extends into a variety of sectors, including defense, banking, media, and energy, and is likely to increase as their partnership deepens (Erdemir, & Varsha, 2019). They have created a mutual strategic partnership as “champions of Islamism” ideologically and the support for Muslim Brotherhoods in the Middle East, the Horn of Africa and other parts (Ibid).

Geo-economic Drivers

Turkey’s emerging economic relations involving trade, investment and foreign aid is an integral part of its active involvement in the Horn of Africa. The total trade transaction between Ethiopia, Somalia, Eritrea, Djibouti, and Turkey reached more than 100 million USD than less than 100 million it has been in 2004 (Kedir, 2016). Foreign Direct Investment only in Ethiopia accounted 3.2 billion USD, which is by far the largest in Africa and the first overseas public bank that Turkey has opened is in the Horn of Africa (Ibid). According to Investment Commission of Ethiopia, Turkey is the second largest investment with an investment capital of \$ 2.5 billion. The significant economic investment in Somalia’s port development and aviation industry constitutes a big portion of Somalia’s domestic economy. As part of its efforts to boost its presence on the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean coast, Turkey has cemented ties with several African countries, including Sudan, Somalia and Djibouti, through economic and military agreements.¹⁷

¹⁷ Future for Advanced Research and Studies (2018) “Why is Turkey’ Boosting its Economic Presence in the Red Sea?”

3.3.3. Turkey's Soft Power in the Horn of Africa

In the study and practice of diplomacy and foreign policy, soft power is an essential instrument to exert influence and power abroad in the modern world inter-connected world. Soft power, a concept developed by Joseph Nye, includes its capacity to use a state's culture, values, the legitimacy of its foreign policy, credibility abroad, and attractiveness of its culture as a source of its appeal rather than using hard power (Nye, 2004). With much increased diplomatic relations and rapid expansion of diplomatic missions across the continent, Turkey has emerged as an important diplomatic player in the Horn of Africa in particular and Africa in general.

Its wider ranging involvement in the areas of cultural interactions social affairs, educations, humanitarian diplomacy and the role of the religion of Islam are of significant importance to its rising soft power. Thus, it has established an ever-increasing encroachment and involvement in the Horn of Africa, especially in Somalia where its soft power diplomacy has won many hearts and minds in the country.

Leaders within the African Union (AU) have stated that Erdoğan has “won hearts and minds” through his humanitarian assistance and support for Muslim communities in which the increased engagement across Africa as a way for Turkey to achieve greater global relevance (Akca, 2019). Its scholarship opportunities and people to people relations beyond the pursuits of the *Realpolitik* has contributed to the hard-won acceptance, influence and credibility amidst the rhetoric of violence and war that dominate the narratives and headlines of Somalia. It has particularly provided the diplomatic and political support Somalia direly need in the backdrop of ongoing civil war and terrorist attacks. In order to strengthen the legitimacy of its new relations with Africa, Turkey has also emerged as a new donor, providing development assistance and humanitarian relief to various African nations (Kedir, 2013).

Africa policy plays a role in domestic Turkish politics, for example, since Erdoğan's 2011 visit to Somalia, his government has pitched its humanitarian aid there as a model of Islamic leadership, which offers support without interfering in internal Somali governance (Crisis Group, 2019:28).

3.3.4. Somalia and Turkey: The Special Relationship

Turkey's policy in assuming a leading in the international quest to help Somalia regain political stability and economic normalcy stemming from its humanitarian concerns but also strategic interests in Africa was part of the soft power role of Turkey in the Country (Berouk, 2012). In its foreign policy vision of becoming a major regional economic and political actor across the continent, "special relationship" have been established between Turkey and Somalia in a difficult and challenging time for Somalia facing civil conflict, famine, poverty and crisis.

Somalia has been a particular focus of Turkish economic, investment, humanitarian, diplomatic and security policies. The visit by Turkish Prime Minister Recep Erdogan in 2011 to Mogadishu, the first by a non-African leader in two decades, against a backdrop of volatile security and violence was a much-celebrated symbolic diplomatic achievement. In 2011, Turkey credited itself as being one of the only countries that supported Somalia after its devastating famine. Since then, the Turkish-Somali relationship has flourished, moving from humanitarian aid to now include security cooperation programs. As a part of this engagement, Turkey opened its largest overseas military base in Mogadishu on 30 September 2017, which is officially intended to provide training to the SNA (Somali National Army).

3.4. Qatar in the Horn of Africa

Qatar's foreign policy and diplomacy is characterized by a high degree of autonomy, showing a combination of considerable pragmatism but also an unwavering will to forge an autonomous and sovereign line of politics and international relations despite constant pressure (Hansen, 2013; Coates Ulrichsen, 2014). Qatar's push into the Horn began in the mid-2000s but has accelerated since 2017, when Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt and Bahrain cut diplomatic ties and Doha sees the continent as fertile ground for new relationships and investments that can bolster its diplomatic and economic position while under blockade (Crisis Group, 2019).

Its multi-dimensional, independent and dynamic foreign policy in the Horn of Africa is part of the Gulf Kingdom's strategy of establishing itself a regional power in the Middle East and the adjacent regions. Despite its tiny territory and populations, its strong influence in the Horn is largely visible in many areas. The Qatari engagement in the Horn of Africa highlights the

evolution of its international role, bearing in mind its diplomatic rivalry with Saudi Arabia and Iran as well as the added value and limits of Qatar's mediation in the Horn of Africa's many intractable conflicts (Berouk, 2016).

As I have already explained in the earlier parts of the paper, the Qatar crisis is a new geopolitical power competition in the wider Middle East and the Horn of Africa region with large repercussion. The New Quartet, which consists of Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bahrain and Egypt imposed a land, sea, and air blockade severing diplomatic relations with Qatar citing Qatar's alleged support for terrorism. The 2017 Gulf Crisis has proven to be one of the most important foreign policy challenges faced by Qatar since its independence, with major diplomatic, economic, social, and political repercussions across the region. The Qatar crisis has added a new dimension to regional geo-politics in the Horn where already fragile peace settlements were at stake and the security environment was vulnerable. In the backdrop of increasing Gulf influence in the region, the 2017 Qatar crisis was not limited to the Middle East and the Gulf. The Horn of Africa since then has become a geo-political theatre for Gulf regional rivalry.

The 2017 Qatar diplomatic crisis can be considered as a key milestone in the foreign policy and diplomacy of the region bringing consolidating the already emerging geopolitical realities. The crisis has had diplomatic, socio-economic and geo-political implications for the already fragile Horn of Africa region. Countries in the Horn such as Eritrea, Djibouti and Somalia were pressurized and forced to take sides and downgrade relations with Qatar. Border tensions rose in June 2017 when Qatar removed 400 observers monitoring a ceasefire on the Red Sea island of Doumeira, claimed by both Eritrea and Djibouti, to protest the two countries' support for its Gulf adversaries.¹⁸ The cash-rich Gulf powers such as the Saudis and the UAE have used a number of tactics to solicit support from the Horn countries to join the blockade utilizing "deep pocket politics" i.e. the use of money to persuade some of these countries to join their camp (Aljazeera Center for studies, 2018).

The Gulf's brand of transactional foreign policy with its short-termism and equation with simple financial deals in conducting foreign affairs on a quid pro quo basis has led to shifting alliances,

¹⁸ Abdi, Rashid. "A Dangerous Gulf in the Horn: How the Inter-Arab Crisis is Fuelling Regional Tensions." Crisis Group. August 03, 2017. Accessed October 25, 2017. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/gulf-and-arabian-peninsula/dangerous-gulf-horn-how-inter-arab-crisis-fuelling-regional-tensions>

damaged institutions and multilateralism, led to bad governance and corrupt practices, increased regional tensions and further exacerbated the dire peace and security situation in the Horn. Somalia has been particularly negatively affected by the GCC split (Frantzman, 2018). Qatari–Turkish and Saudi Arabian–UAE tensions have undercut the state-building project in Somalia through exacerbating existing domestic divisions as part of competitive proxy politics.¹⁹ In 2018, the situation became so harmful that the AU and the EU both publicly called on external actors to cease meddling in the country.²⁰

The decision of the UAE to establish active foreign relations with regional autonomous states like the Somaliland and Puntland by agreeing to construct the Berbera port and base has further increased tensions and diplomatic disputes between the Mogadishu central government and Au Dhabi. It has put the big question mark on Somali territorial integrity and sovereignty as a state in the face of gul-geopolitical competition in the region.

3.5. The Geopolitics of Ports in the Horn of Africa

Broadly speaking, the main activity of ports in history has been transferring goods from ships to other means of transport and vice versa (Jacobs, Ducruet & De Langen, 2010; 97). Due to lower transaction and transportation costs, ports also serve as nodes for production and manufacturing. For these reasons, ports often form the centrepiece a country's overall economic plan, especially in developing nations (de Langen, 2007; Humphrey & Schmitz, 2002; 1018).

For over 35 years, maritime strategy and port development in the Horn of Africa, the Red Sea corridor and the Gulf of Aden showed no significant change. Eritrea looked inward, neglecting its coast, Djibouti flourished, lucratively embracing Ethiopia's trade, overseas investors and foreign military bases and broadly Somalia's shores became synonymous with piracy.²¹

¹⁹ International Crisis Group, 'Somalia and the Gulf crisis', Report no. 260, 5 June 2018

²⁰ Reuters, 'External actors urged to stop meddling in Somalia's affairs', 30 May 2018.

²¹ Styan, David. (2018, July 18) "The Politics of the Ports in the Horn: War, Peace and Red Sea rivalries". Retrieved from: <https://africanarguments.org/2018/07/18/politics-horn-war-peace-red-sea-rivalries/>

However, over the last decade, global and regional powerhouses have heavily invested and developed various ports in the Horn of Africa as a result of emerging economic realities, new strategic significance, and previous commercial agreements with the establishment of military bases next to those ports. The immense strategic significance of the coasts of the Horn of Africa coast emanates from the fact of proximity to the Bab-al-Mandab Strait and Indian Ocean coast where nearly 20 percent of the world trade and maritime shipping pass through. Thanks to their sea ports developments, it set to be the gateway and the link that connects sub-Saharan Africa to this international trade route, Suez Canal and the Arab Peninsula on the opposite side of the Red Sea (Business Daily, 2019).²² Here it is important to emphasize that aspects of the new port developments and infrastructure initiatives are multidimensional. In this new regional and global competition, the stakes extend beyond economics, as recent developments clearly show. And currently the most crucial element, the port development projects are important geopolitical determinants in the Horn of Africa with both short-term and long-term consequences.

The coming of Gulf capital to the shores of northeast Africa is not only economical, but also geopolitical. developments like the Emirati and Saudi investments in the ports of Berbera (Somaliland), Doraleh (Djibouti), Bosaso (Somalia) and Assab (Eritrea) are good indicators of how infrastructural projects and growing power and influence in the region. The rising expansion of and competition among Middle Eastern States in port development in the Horn of Africa and Red Sea corridor have raised a number of issues with regard to its implications for the already fragile and conflict-ridden Horn of Africa region. And also, the rise of China and its ever-expanding influence and power in Africa in general and the Horn of Africa in particular raise big questions associated with it in the region. Additionally, the emerging global super-competition has ended the era of “international disengagement” in the Horn of Africa opening a new era of global strategic competition. In this backdrop, some principal questions should be raised for better understanding the issues at stake: Who are the key actors, why so many ports in the region, what are the strategic factors in considerations, and importantly what are the broader frameworks that can help us understand the emerging realities?

²² Trade Mark East Africa, (2019). “Horn of Africa sea ports gateway to trade, investment” Retrieved From: <https://www.trademarka.com/news/horn-of-africa-sea-ports-gateway-to-trade--investment>

In the race for ports developments in the Horn of Africa, China as a global super power is the predominant actor in this region with its heavy investments in the Horn of African ports linking with its global flagship infrastructure project of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The ports in the Horn of Africa play a key role in China's expanding network of infrastructure projects linking China with Europe, East Africa and broader Middle Eastern region. Forming the backbone of China's "Maritime Silk Road," investments in African ports provide a gateway to the region's trade and economic development, empower China with political leverage and clout on the continent, and provide a foothold for People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) activities.²³

China is the key actor in the development and financing of mega infrastructure projects in the Horn of Africa. Djibouti's major port development initiatives are being financed and led by Chinese transnational companies. Its half a billion Dollar Multi-Purpose Port (MPP) with new container and cargo facilities at Doraleh is managed and part owned by Chinese Merchants Group (CMG). Given the rise of China as an economic super power and being the largest trading partner for Africa, port investments are part and parcel of the broader Chinese commercial supremacy in the Horn. The other important actor in the new geo-politics of competition and rivalry for ports, bases and resources in the Horn of Africa is the UAE.

The UAE's regional infrastructure conglomerate Dubai Ports World (DP World), of which the government is the largest shareholder, signed its first agreement in the region in 2006 to develop Djibouti's Doraleh port. The company is one of the world's largest logistics and maritime firms with the capacity in directing operations 40 countries cementing the UAE's place in this strategically significant region.²⁴ In the new geopolitical competition involving infrastructure development including logistics and transportations, the UAE government plays a huge role. It is one of several Gulf States trying to gain a strategic foothold in the Horn of Africa through ports in which controlling these offers commercial and military advantages with the risks of exacerbating tensions in the region.²⁵

²³ Devermont, Judd. (2019, June 4) "Assessing the Risks of Chinese Investments in Sub-Saharan African Ports" Retrieved from: <https://www.csis.org/analysis/assessing-risks-chinese-investments-sub-saharan-african-ports?amp&-twitter-impression=true>

²⁴ The UAE is scrambling to control ports in Africa", *The Economist*, 19 July 2018, at www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2018/07/19/the-uae-is-scrambling-to-control-ports-in-africa.

²⁵ Ibid.

In its July 19, 2018 Middle East and Africa edition *the Economist* magazine described the development in the region as the UAE's foreign policy as the scramble to control ports in the Horn of Africa in the broader Red Sea Scramble.²⁶ Despite DP world's loss of the concession to operate Djibouti's Doraleh container terminal in 2018, the company maintains a strong presence in the Horn. DP World operates the port of Berbera in Somaliland and the port of Bosaso in semi-autonomous Puntland (Gulf News, July; The National, October 11, 2018). Here it is important to note that there is a necessary link between DP World's private and commercial interests and the Emirati foreign policy despite the former's insistence that that it acts interpedently.

The interlocking relationship between state and private capital, the growing authority of Abu Dhabi over political decision making, and an increasingly expansionist foreign policy have all served to ensure that the activities the DP World continue to move in lockstep with the "strategic interests of the Emiratis" (Advani, 2019).²⁷ The decision of the DP World to sign the first large international contract with Somaliland government led to political tensions and diplomatic dispute with the Federal Government of Somalia which does not recognize the latter sovereignty over Berbera. And just 25km across the Bab-al-Mandab straits, the war in Yemen has given nearby African ports new geostrategic; the UAE has been in using its base in Eritrea's port of Assab to besiege and bomb Yemen's crucial port of Hodeida since mid-June (Styan, 2019). The link between ports beyond commerce to the broader regional security dynamics is a clear manifestation how complex the emerging geopolitical dynamics can be consequential to the region.

The other two key regional actors shaping the new geopolitical dynamics of ports are Qatar and Turkey. The Qatar-Turkey alliance in the Horn of Africa is most visible in Somalia where the UAE faced several challenges with the Mogadishu based Federal Government. Qatar, in its growingly assertive foreign policy since the Gulf Crisis, has increased its investment in Somalia,

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Advani, Rohan. (2019, 9 December). "Constructing Commercial Empire: The United Arab Emirates in the Red Sea and the Horn" Retrieved from:
<https://www.google.com/search?q=The+rise+of+DP+in+the+of+Africa+Client=client=ms-opera-mini-android&channel=new>

especially after the much talked about dispute between the UAE and Somalia where it tried to fill the void latter's disengagement from the country. The UAE's regional rival has indicated via Qatar Ports Management Company that it will build a new port at the Northern Somali town of Hobyo (Aljazeera, August 2019)²⁸. The Somali port is important due to its proximity to the Babel-Mandab Strait, which is one of the most important sea crossing points in the world with the potential for access to international markets.

Turkey is the other key actor in the region. Under President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Turkey has become an increasingly active and assertive regional power in Middle Eastern, African and other important global arenas. It has also rapidly enlarged its footprint in the Horn of Africa since 2011 – most notably in Somalia. Turkey's increasingly ambitious foreign policy and growing presence in the Horn of Africa is considered as a factor of both its own domestic drivers and strategic interests in the region. Qatar's regional partner, Turkey, with its strong ties to the Federal Government of Somalia, already manages the port of Mogadishu and the country's airport via Turkish companies.

In the Horn of Africa, Ethiopia is the other key actor interested in the business of ports given its external trade heavily relies on sea ports. In the post-1991, with the independence of Eritrea, Ethiopia was forced to pay the painful price of the geopolitical reality of being one of the few landlocked countries in the world with economic and political implications. With its ever-growing populations, rising demand, fast-expanding economy, and landlocked geography, Ethiopia has short-term and long-term interest strategic interest to access to all of these ports on the Horn and the Indian Ocean to conduct its international trade. For the Government of Ethiopia, diversification of ports and reducing the overreliance on Djibouti has become a new foreign policy and national security priority for its fast-growing economic development projects and population. Ethiopia has recently started to pursue an aggressive foreign policy and diplomacy of expanding its port service in the new alignment of domestic reform and external diplomacy in the Horn of Africa region.

²⁸ Aljazeera, August 20, 2019. "Qatar to build new port in Somalia's Hobyo" Retrieved from: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/08/qatar-to-build-port-somalia-hobyo->

After the Ethio-Eritrea war of 1998, Ethiopia became over-dependent on neighboring Djibouti for its international trade creating a strategic and national security vulnerability for the country. And beyond that, given its limited options to maneuver, Ethiopia is now even more reliant on the port of Djibouti – importing and exporting a full 95 percent of its goods at the port (Gessesse, 2015). Dependence on Djibouti has rankled Addis Ababa, which has been exploring alternative options to lessen reliance on its neighbor to the northeast since at least 2006 (Giorgis, 2008). Ethiopia is understandably concerned by the strategic national security implications of being overly reliant on a single access point for trade and vital supplies. The concern arises from the threat of any domestic turmoil in that country and the role of external interference that can influence its development and foreign policy.

Arguably, the most important constraint on Ethiopia's aspirations for regional leadership is its lack of sea access in which the country has recently focused on securing access to ports in neighboring countries, particularly the port of Berbera (Cannon and Rossiter, 2017). Ethiopia's interest in other neighboring countries ports in including in Eritrea, Kenya, Sudan, and Somalia's Somaliland certainly makes sense from a geostrategic perspective and foreign policy perspective. After coming to power, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has made port developments and diversification one of the most important foreign policy priorities of the government dubbed "Neighbors First" policy approach indicating in his regional tour of neighboring countries: Sudan, Kenya, Somalia, Djibouti and finally Eritrea.

The 2018 Ethio-Eritrea rapprochement has created a new geo-political opportunity for both countries for port investments in rehabilitating Eritrean ports of Assab and Massawa. The Abiy administration has also signed deals with Sudan for access to port Sudan, in a bid to diversify its port outlets and reduce port fees and create new options for Ethiopian shipping interests. The country has also agreed a deal with the self-declared Somali state of Somaliland for a 19% stake in the port of Berbera which includes a plan to build a road from its border to the port involving the 51% stake of the UAE (BBC News, 2018).²⁹

²⁹ Olowe, Dickens (14 June 2018) "Why Landlocked Ethiopia wants to launch a navy. Retrieved from: <https://www.bbc/news/world-africa-444369382>

Ethiopia's has also acquired land in Kenya's Lamu Port to develop for logistics facilitation which is expected to speed up the Addis Ababa-Lamu road network project. Additionally, the state-owned Ethiopian News Agency reported that during May 2018 visit by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed to Djibouti, the two countries agreed for the joint development of port facilities in the Port of Djibouti.³⁰ What we can understand from the overall initiatives in the Horn of Africa region is that this is part of the ongoing regional economic integration in the Horn of Africa as clearly articulated in Ethiopia's foreign policy, Djibouti's ambitious "Vision 2035" blueprint for national development and other countries in the Horn of Africa.

3.5.2. Opportunities and Challenges

The new geopolitics of ports in the Horn of Africa is a key element influencing domestic interests and foreign policy calculations. However, understanding the opportunities and challenges it poses from both long-term strategic thinking and short-term cost-benefit analysis is important. Policy makers, foreign policy decision makers, scholars and analysts have a big role to play in trying to take into account those factors in their analysis and decision. Recently, the significance of the Horn of Africa and its sea ports was boosted by the discoveries of oil, gas, and other extractive minerals in the sub-Saharan African countries where huge exploitations of the same are in progress in Eritrea, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Sudan, Somalia, and Kenya; among others. Sea (Business Daily, 2019).³¹ And additionally, the national, regional and international competition in the new geopolitics of ports in the Horn of region is shaping political calculations, alliance building, balance of power and new conflict dynamics in the region and across the Red Sea zone. And also, it is important to recognize that port expansion, development and rehabilitation projects are essential parts to the economic growth and developments of Africa, especially since the majority of African exports depend on ports. The International Crisis Group, a global research think tank, in its September 2019 report titled, "*Intra-Gulf Competition in*

³⁰ As reported by the Reuters News Agency, the deal involves, Djibouti may look to invest in following the bilateral agreement that could include Ethiopian Electric Power and Ethio Telecom. Maasho, Aaron (May 1, 2018). "Ethiopia to take stake in Port of Djibouti, its trade gateway". Retrieved from: <https://www.reuters.com/article/ethiopia-djibouti-its-trade-gateway-state-media>

³¹ Trade Mark East Africa, (2019). "Horn of Africa sea ports gateway to trade, investment" Retrieved From: <https://www.trademarka.com/news/horn-of-africa-sea-ports-gateway-to-trade--investment>

Africa's Horn: Lessening the Impact” warned that Gulf states are injecting resources and exporting rivalries in ways that could further destabilize fragile local politics.³²

This competition for ports raises risks of new conflicts where old politics of conflicts and old wounds are still present and not yet resolved with weak institutional and democratic development in the region. The Gulf states and Turkey each claim to have interest in the “peace and security” of the Horn, but their definitions differ dramatically and conflicting interests bear seeds of confrontation. The influx of foreign actors, mixing commercial incentives with military deals, has led to the securitization of the Horn’s ports, the importing of foreign political cleavages, and has influenced intra-Horn politics (Berg and Meester, 2018). Key security, political and strategic developments since the beginning of the new millennium in the Horn of Africa pose the proliferation of external military actors.

Geopolitical developments including but not limited to maritime security, energy security, economic development and global and regional contestations have increased the geo-strategic significance of the region. The high concentration of foreign military with huge hard power has created a new diplomatic and foreign momentum in an unprecedented manner. It can be described as the race for military base making the Horn one of the hosts of highest number of foreign military presence in the world. However, associated with the new geopolitics of competition over ports is implications on good governance in the Horn of Africa in which challenges of: corruption, bribery, transparency and accountability are taken into consideration by Gulf monarchies with less regard for democracy and institutional capacity.

One important challenge is that the competition for ports in Somalia has further exposed Somalia’s vulnerabilities and fragilities in the Horn of Africa where the UAE has exploited the country’s already fragile political settlement and deep-rooted divisions. The question of sovereignty and political independence of the Horn states can be tested where Somalia and Djibouti become a theatre for regional and global competition and rivalry.

³² See Crisis Group Middle East Report N°206, Intra-Gulf Competition in Africa’s Horn: Lessening the Impact, September 2019.

3.6. The Geopolitics of Military Bases in the Horn

Foreign military base (FMB) refers to an area on land or on sea beyond a sovereign state's jurisdiction, which is stationed with a certain number of armed forces having military activities, organized institutions and military facilities (Harkavy, 2007: 2-9). Strategically speaking, it's an important aspect for military power projection in international relations, a springboard to make military operations, military interventions, safeguard overseas interest, showcase of soft power and enhance political influence abroad. The presence of military bases and installments overseas at locations leased from or owned by local national governments is a geo-political practice as old as warfare itself.³³ Military bases can be driven by commercial, trade, political, power projection or security justifications but in all eras their development has been related with the strategic considerations and balance of power relationships of the time.

The politics of overseas military bases has largely been neglected by experts and analysts of the region. Only relatively recently have researchers given serious attention to foreign military presence and their implications for local, national, regional and international politics (Olawale and Elisabeth, 2014). Despite the history of more than half-a century of African history in the post-colonial period, the security environment, policies and activities of African states remain under the dependency and influence of foreign powers, International Organizations, transnational security actors, non-state actors and et cetera.

A primary observation of the Horn of Africa's security landscape after the beginning of the 21st century indicates, the ever-increasing involvement of foreign powers in the regional security complex of the Horn of Africa involving different means, mechanisms, and methods including but not limited to the establishment of military installations, bases, training, funding, and

³³ Generally speaking, the term 'base' can be understood as a geo-strategically important location from which foreign forces conduct operations to launch or support that constitutes military forces, troops, installations or facilities that provide timely, effective, logistical or other support.

Robert H. Harkavy has argued that it is more appropriate to employ the term 'foreign military presence' that includes military languages including bases and facilities. See Harkavy, R. H., SIPRI, *Bases Abroad: The Global Foreign Military Presence* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1989), pp. 7-8.

supporting technical cooperation and assistance; engaging in joint exercises; deploying troops and other personnel; and establishing military presence.

There are several big question marks over foreign military presence in Africa. In this section of the research, I will explore the major drivers of foreign military presence in the Horn, the key important developments in the ever-increasing establishment of foreign military presence and military bases in the Horn of Africa, their implications on the already fragile peace and security environment in the region and the risks of rivalries and competitions among for foreign powers within the region. It is also clearly important to analyze the consequences of foreign military presence on African national sovereignty and political independence. In this, it is also important to emphasize and highlight the role and significance of continental and regional multilateral institutions in their desire and capacity to respond to the looming geopolitical crisis in the Horn of Africa region.

3.6.1. Drivers Foreign Military Presence

Since the end of the cold war, the small east African country of Djibouti has become the epicenter of foreign military presence. And broadly the Horn of Africa region bases 11 foreign militaries, hosting the largest number of military bases more than any region of Africa. There are several key driving factors behind this geopolitical milestone including the complex interplay of historical, local, national, transnational, regional, and global factors and dynamics. No single factor or phenomenon rightly explains the situation on the ground without looking at the overall multidimensional situation.

The Colonial Legacy in the Horn of Africa

History of the Horn of Africa is an important force impacting the overall trajectory of the region in post-colonial Africa. Despite the officially proclaimed end of the era of colonial powers in countries, its lingering legacies still shape foreign policy and political developments in the Horn region. The lingering legacies of colonialism in the Horn of Africa is another important factor playing its role in the foreign military presence in the region. While decolonization of Africa marked the formal end of Europe's dominant security role in the affairs of the Horn of Africa, the former colonial powers maintained important security relations in the region and even a

military presence, notably the French forces in Djibouti and the British military in Kenya (Melvin, 2019).

With other francophone countries outside the Horn region, Djibouti's colonial past still reverberates today in many forms. The military presence of France in the Horn of Africa is rooted in the colonial history of the region a French protectorate established its military facility and organization in Djibouti in 1883–87. After Djibouti's independence in 1977, its ex-colonial power continued to have a military presence in this eastern part of francophone Africa through bilateral military agreements in the post-colonial period. France has pre-positioned forces in Djibouti and in four other countries in Africa in which its base in Djibouti, with a permanent force of 1,450 troops, is its largest overseas military base and the biggest permanent foreign establishment in Africa (Sundberg, 2019).³⁴

The Cold War legacy

The so-called cold war not so-cold in the Horn of Africa. Through their proxies and satellite states in the region, there was an active war among states, liberation fronts, and governments. During the cold war, a fierce rivalry with a focus on the Horn developed between the USA and the Soviet Union, making the region a flashpoint for international confrontation in the 1970s and 1980s in which the USA and the Soviet Union became involved in the Horn for a mixture of ideological and realpolitik reasons (Melvin, 2019). The Horn became a geopolitical playground among two-nuclear armed superpowers. The Ethiopia-Somali war of 1977/78 was a major one war involving the two countries in which the USSR supported Ethiopia and the USA sided with Mogadishu. National conflicts and liberation wars taking place in the region are also supported by either of the two superpowers ideologically, diplomatically and militarily. The Horn of Africa became a playing field for the cold-war geo-strategic superpower competition with devastating consequences including civilian casualties.

³⁴ This text is a part of the FOI report Foreign military bases and installations in Africa. Twelve state actors are included in the report: China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Russia, Spain, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and United States. Sundberg, Anne. (2019). *“France - A Continuing Military Presence in Francophone Africa”* Studies in Africa, Swedish Defense Research Institute.

The global “war on terror” in the Horn

After the Cold War it was envisaged that Africa in general and the Horn sub-region in particular would lose geo-political and strategic significance vis-à-vis the vital interests of the Western powers (Buzan, cited in Rugumamu 2001: 9). However, this prediction was not realized given the fundamentally dynamic security development the region faced after the end of the cold war. Geopolitical developments and international relations in the post-cold war created a new security environment where transnational terrorism dominated foreign policy and security policies of the US and other state actors in the region. The collapse of the Somali state in 1991 and the failure of the U.S.-U.N. intervention in 1993 meant that the Arab countries didn't know how to deal with Somalia in which they could not adapt their modus operandi for a stateless political system (Alex de Waal, 2019).

The combination of domestic, regional, and international factors led to emergence of the so-called US-led “global war on terror” creating a new security landscape in the Horn of Africa region. The collapse of the Mogadishu central government in post-Siad Barre Somalia led to a brief American “humanitarian intervention” in the country where it ended catastrophically. And with the disintegration of the central government, a violent terrorist organization, al-Shabab, came to dominate the politico-security dynamics of Somalia and the Horn of Africa conducting terrorist attacks and violence. And in some areas entering into the politics of (mis) “governance” controlling territories.

It has been prevalent in the region since the early 1990s when Sudan welcomed Osama bin Laden in 1991 and sheltered him as he built the al-Qaeda network (Gallab, 2008). From there it was involved in the confrontation with the US-led UN intervention in Somalia in 1993 as well as the attacks on the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998 (Woodward, 2013). Developments in Somalia, especially the rise of the Islamic Courts' Union (ICU) in the mid-2000s and its destruction by Ethiopian forces with US backing, served to enhance a sense internationally of a growing threat from al-Shabaab and others, and particularly by Ethiopia which feels the most direct threat (ibid).

With the 9/11 attacks and a fundamental foreign policy shift of the American administration, towards the global campaign of the US-led “war on terror” in Middle East, the Horn of Africa

and other parts of the world. With that the American military presence necessitated a new foreign policy dynamics and geopolitical expansion in the Horn of Africa. Operation Enduring Freedom-Horn of Africa (OEF-HOA) was launched in October 2002 as a military mission to counter violent Islamist groups and piracy in the region. The Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTTFHOA) was established at the same time to deliver the aims of OEF-HOA. The Government of Djibouti leased Camp Lemonnier to the USA in 2001, and the CJTF-HOA moved there on 13 May 2003 (Melvin, 2019).

As statelessness, warlordism, terrorism and civil war reigned in Somalia, external security actors have been participating in the region for better or worse. Therefore, one of the driving forces behind the significant foreign military presence is the post-cold war US-led global war on terror. American and European forces continue to have military installments, facilities and troops in the Horn of Africa. Counter-terrorism operations are still conducted from these military bases against Al-Shabab and its facilities.

Counter-Piracy and Maritime Security

With heavy-dependence of global exports and imports by sea, maritime security becomes a necessity for states to maintain. With the rise of militant politics, terrorism, and the politics of war-lordism in Somalia, coastal Africa, specifically, the waters off the coast of Somalia, observed an unprecedented rise in incidents of maritime piracy. The economic significance and geopolitical importance of the areas has led to numerous national, regional, and international military and legal responses to combat this problem. With the rise of piracy attacks in coastal areas of Somalia, a multilateral military and security arrangement has been established in the region. According to Melvin (2019), currently, three international naval task forces are operating in the Horn: (a) a US-led multilateral naval task force based in Bahrain, Combined Task Force 150 (CTF 150), focused on maritime security; (b) the EU Naval Force Atalanta (EUNAVFOR, Operation Atalanta), established in 2008 to counter Somali piracy); and (c) CTF 151, established in 2009 and dedicated to counter-piracy operations.

In their military engagement of counter-piracy operations EU member states including Italy, Germany and Spain established military presence with UK, France, the US with personnel at Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti in the Horn of Africa. Asian powers such as China, Japan, South

Korea with world powers including Russia, Australia, and Iran have frequently deployed naval forces to the Gulf of Aden to conduct counter-piracy operations. Foreign military presence is indicative of gaps in Africa's responses to prevailing peace and security challenges, especially threats originating from terrorist groups and maritime piracy in which partly the continent's inability to swiftly operationalize the African Peace and Security Architecture, particularly its African Standby Force component, which would help contain crises (PSC report, 2019). However, incidents of piracy coastal areas of the Horn have significantly declined.

The “Blessings” of Geography and the Indo-Pacific Security

The other important factor behind the proliferation of military facilities in littoral areas in the Horn of African and along the Red sea, Gulf Aden, and the Bab-al-Mandab Strait and the Indian Ocean is the “blessing” of the Geography. This important geographical fact is largely driven by the fact the region's strategic proximity to the Middle East and Asia and the subsequent threats along the Red Sea attracts regional powerhouses and global superpowers. Those powers create the necessity to have a military presence to protect their economic, geopolitical or any other interest through hard power. However, the “blessing” can be a “curse” in a conflict-ridden, fragile, and highly vulnerable region like the Horn of Africa.

One important development is that Horn of Africa's geographic proximity to the war in Yemen has also contributed to the multiplication of foreign military presence in the region where Gulf powers, namely the UAE and Saudi Arabia, conduct military operations in their proxy war with Iran. The UAE established a military base in Eritrea for that purpose forcing Eritrea to expel Iranian presence in the country.

The geo-strategic competition of major powers and superpowers from Asia-Pacific into the Indian Ocean beyond the questions of counter-piracy, anti-terrorism, human trafficking is greatly important. Crucially, China's growing military presence in the Horn, coupled with its moves to expand its military in the Indian Ocean and to launch the Belt and Road Initiative, has confirmed to other leading Asian security actors that China has a strategy to project military power into the Indian Ocean (Melvin, 2019). As a result, Japan and India have increasingly sought to balance China's military presence in the Indian Ocean region, including through a strengthened focus on the Horn. One of the foreign militaries present in the Horn of Africa region making a late

strategic penetration is Germany. In Djibouti, Germany has a presence at a French naval airbase under the umbrella of an EU mission to maintain maritime security in the fight against piracy. However, this development is not to be taken at face value since it is only half-truth. The politics of overseas military base in the Horn region is also driven by the growing strategic importance of the region for Germany.

Regime Security and Economic Motives.

Djibouti's 'military base' foreign policy and diplomacy is also partly driven by economic calculations. Foreign military presence in Africa is also driven by AU member states leasing their territories to foreign powers for military bases, mainly for domestic economic gain. This is also sometimes driven by member states seeking external help in dealing with serious security challenges in which, for example, Djibouti generates more than US\$300 million annually from the foreign military presence on its soil (Atta-Asamoah, 2019). Ensuring regime security for the incumbent government and securing French economic interests in the host country and the region are the principal motives for such arrangements (Ibid).

Through its participation in the Yemeni civil war along the side of the Saudi-led coalition, the Eritrean regime has also been able to end its isolation in the post-Badme period emerging as one of the important regional players in the Horn of Africa. The rapprochement with Ethiopia in April 2018 has further cemented that fact further.

Initially, security threats internal to the Horn were the focus of external security actors deploying to the region—to counter terrorist groups on land, and piracy and maritime crime at sea. In recent years, security developments external to the Horn have been behind the build-up of foreign military forces (Melvin, 2019). The global superpower competition among China, the USA and Russia is increasingly emerging to take a geopolitical shape in the Horn of Africa in the new scramble for Africa. Thus, while external actors remain engaged with the Horn's security challenges, commercial and military competition is increasingly driving foreign deployments to the region.

From their outposts across Africa, foreign militaries focus primarily on protecting their interests, securing friendly regimes, projecting their influence amid rising competition among global

powers, and countering threats. The emergence of Djibouti as the major hub for foreign military bases in the Horn Africa with the largest number of military bases in the world is unprecedented. The tiny small nation of Djibouti with a population of less than a million has become the epicenter of foreign military presence. Some of the reasons why so many bases include: geopolitical factors have immensely influenced the history of Djibouti and its domestic and international affairs (Kassahun, 2012). Djibouti has been remarkably stable compared to its neighbours, particularly Ethiopia and Somalia, as a result of which it was dubbed the ‘eye of the hurricane’ (Schraeder 1993).

3.6.2. The Role of the African Union: Beyond Passing Resolutions

The role of AU as an important pan African international organization is minimal. In the post-colonial and post-cold war international environment, the continental body has not given the necessary attention to the emerging geopolitical developments in the Horn of Africa region in particular and the broader continent in general. Given its severely limited capacity to decisively act on Africa, the situation is fairly understandable.

The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union expressed concern about foreign military bases on the continent and the establishment of new ones in an April 2016 statement calling on member states to be ‘circumspect’ when ‘entering into agreements that would lead to the establishment of foreign military bases in their countries’. Despite its expression of concern, however, the Horn of Africa region is host to a rising number of foreign military operations and bases, largely as a result of bilateral agreements between some African Union (AU) member states and foreign powers, including regional and global super powers.

And recently, in the *Communique of the 868th meeting of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union on the state foreign military presence in Africa, held on 14 August 2019*, the AU strongly condemned “any external interference into the Africa’s peace and security affairs and urged that all external support to peace and security in Africa to be well coordinated and directed

towards achieving AU's objectives and priorities."³⁵ And again despite the concerns and strong condemnation of the Peace and Security Council (PSC), the Horn of Africa region remains host to a rising number of foreign military operations and bases.

However, as a key multilateral institution of the African continent, it is to the overall benefit of African states to strengthen the capacity of the AU to solve this complex security and political dilemma. Member of the region and beyond should activate and capacitate the organization to respond the emerging geopolitical development before it gets out of control. The region has experienced a significant expansion and increase in the number and size of foreign military bases since the onset of the 21st century. The growing involvement of regional and global foreign military bases in the region cannot alone be solved by state actors with limited influence. The role of international organizations like the African Union and IGAD to create a framework for cooperation and rules of the game is important. The institutionalizations of relations and cooperation in the Horn of Africa is critically important to resolve disputes and conflicts that naturally arise.

A wide range of regional and international security actors are currently operating in the Horn and the foreign military installations include land-based facilities (e.g. bases, ports, airstrips, training camps, semi-permanent facilities and logistics hubs) and naval forces on permanent or regular deployment. The most visible aspect of this presence is the proliferation of military facilities in littoral areas along the Red Sea and the Horn of Africa. However, there has also been a build-up of naval forces, notably around the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, at the entrance to the Red Sea and in the Gulf of Aden.

3.7. Implications for Peace and Security in the Horn of Africa

In a commentary titled, "*A Dangerous Gulf in the Horn: How the Inter-Arab Crisis is Fueling Regional Tensions*" Rashid Abdi, Crisis Group's Horn of Africa Project Director clearly articulated that the ever-growing scramble for military bases in the Horn of Africa are

³⁵ Communique of the 868th meeting of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union on the state foreign military presence in Africa, held on 14 August 2019

exacerbating regional tensions that risk triggering a conflict.³⁶ Implications for peace and security are significantly consequential, creating new regional divisions, exploiting fragile political settlements, and rekindling old hostilities and further creating a geo-politically vulnerable environment in the Horn of Africa. Some practical examples can be the situation where the already tense situation between Djibouti and Eritrea was exacerbated following the withdrawal of Qatari forces maintaining an armistice on the Red Sea island of Doumeira after the two countries sided with the Saudi-led alliance in June, 2017.

The UAE's attempts at exploiting the fragile political settlement and domestic political conflict by actively supporting regional states at the expense of the Federal Government in Mogadishu after the latter's neutrality in the Gulf Crisis has been largely evident. The expansion of the UAE influence and power in the Horn of Africa has clearly impacted Somalia-Somaliland relations. The foreign policy quest of Somalia to maintain its territorial integrity and sovereignty in the face of regional centrifugal forces has created a difficult and challenging condition for sustainable peace and security for the country. The quest of Somaliland for international *de jure* and *de facto* recognition has put the semi-independent region at loggerheads with the central government where Gulf powers often exploit the reality at the expense of stability and development in the country.

However, the other important downsides to this foreign military presence: First, the competition among the various foreign militaries to influence responses to challenges in Africa's hotspots has led to a multiplicity of activities that overcrowd the security landscape, especially in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa. Examples are the emergence of ad hoc regional response structures such as the Joint Force of the Group of Five of the Sahel (G5 Sahel) and the Multinational Joint Task Force. Such regional responses emerge from the willingness of some African states to address certain security challenges outside the framework of the regional economic communities, with foreign military support.

The ever-militarization of the Horn of Africa region and the increasing presence of Asian powers in the Horn of Africa represents another major geo-political risk. In the backdrop of China's expanding presence in Djibouti, the coming Asian strategic rivalry in the Horn has developed in

³⁶ Abdi, Rashid. (3 August 2017) "A *Dangerous Gulf in the Horn: How the Inter-Arab Crisis is Fueling Regional Tensions*" International Crisis Group.

which there is increasing fear of Japanese and Indian presence to in the Indian Ocean. The proximity of Djibouti and the Horn to the Indian Ocean will attract Asian competition and rivalry due to its huge significance for international trade. Weak, vulnerable, and divided states in the region will not be capable of handling and managing the new global and regional geopolitics without long-term strategic thinking involving regional multilateral organization including IGAD and the AU. This has not just exported the tensions in the East China Sea to Africa but has also made Africa practically complicit in the actions of its guests elsewhere. The latter is evident from the role of Djibouti as a base for US drone operations in Somalia and Yemen, as well as the United Arab Emirates' use of the Assab base in Eritrea for operations in Yemen.

The US-led War on Terror: Grave Human Rights Violations and Humanitarian Crisis

Arguably, the American-led drone attacks in Somalia have led to the decrease of al-Shabaab's spoiler capacity in the fight against the terrorist group creating chaos, instability and destruction in the Horn of Africa. However, the US strikes and bombs have been implicated in several civilian deaths and civilian casualties in Somalia. With reports from international human rights organizations including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, the war on terror has brought considerably grave human rights violations by the senseless attacks on civilians and non-combatants in Somalia. The drone attacks have also targeted civilians and civilian infrastructure starting during the Obama administration and intensely continuing during the Trump administration.

Also important is the potentially destabilizing impact that growing competition among major global powers may have on the continent. Rivalry between the US and China is playing out in Djibouti. Apart from turning Africa into a proxy turf for extra-regional competition, the risks of such tensions escalating are high. In such situations the host member state and Africa in general are set to house the showdown and will be on the receiving end of the ensuing destruction. Apart from the risks associated with foreign military presence and the AU's call for member states to be circumspect in their dealings, there is also no established continental consensus on the modalities for regulating bilateral initiatives that result in bases being established.

The AU's request for circumspection on the part of member states is necessary to inform urgent continental action against the increasing number of military bases. Apart from the highlighted

risks, the need for urgency stems from the self-justifying nature of foreign military presence, in the long term. The US, for example, has numerous military outposts in Africa from where it conducts drone operations, training, military exercises, direct action and humanitarian activities. The associated infrastructure, support systems and military personnel for these operations have amounted to significant American interest in Africa. The US military justifies its presence in Africa with its need to protect those interests, despite the risks to host countries. Such reinforcement won't allow for any significant downscaling of military presence in the near future, regardless of the gains made in fighting terrorism.

Owing to the sensitive nature of the situation and the extensive presence of certain powers already on the continent, discussions about the future of foreign military presence require objectivity – not just for African member states but for all actors who either have significant presence on the continent or are currently scrambling for one.

3.8. The Middle East's Mediation Diplomacy in the Horn

Although mediation of international conflicts plays an important role in international relations, the attempt to integrate mediation and foreign policy is hardly well-studied. Analysis of international mediation often treat it as an autonomous activity *that is impacted by politics but is not part of politics* (Touval, 2003). This understanding offers a politically induced explanation which views mediation diplomacy as part of foreign policy in the sense of purposive strategic behavior, a foreign policy decision motivated by a conscious calculation of interests. In addition to that, mediation is an integral part of a foreign and instrumental diplomacy that derives from the country's diplomatic and political goals, both domestic and international.³⁷ Whenever international conflicts of great significance arise, states often make various forms of third-party intervention as a way of managing and dealing with it. Conflicts in the Middle East are good examples. However, as part of the Gulf-engagement in the Horn of Africa, one of the particular foreign policy behaviors of Gulf States in the region has been “Mediation Diplomacy” backed by Gulf money. In the backdrop of declining US power at a global level and its ever-decreasing

³⁷ Saadia Touval, “Mediation and Foreign Policy,” *International Studies Review* 5, 4(December 2003):91-95

regional presence in the Horn of Africa, Middle Eastern and Gulf powers have made an aggressive attempt to establish their power in the Horn.

Mediating conflicts is a key element of GCC states' aim to increase their international prestige, and their perceived neutrality and ability to deploy substantial economic incentives to bolster peace agreements has afforded them some notable successes where others have failed. The Gulf states aggressive involvement in the Horn of Africa has attracted important attention recently, particularly the proliferation of foreign military presence, port developments and foreign aid. However, less attention has been given to the Middle Eastern countries initiatives and diplomatic interventions in attempting to resolve some of the Horn's most intractable conflicts, efforts that in some cases pre-date the more recent security and economic engagements. Gulf countries plus Turkey have received some severe criticism for the role of exploiting pre-existing divisions and destabilizing activities in both the Middle East and the Horn of Africa including in Yemeni Civil War, Libyan civil war, the ongoing transition in Sudan, and in Somalia.

Middle Eastern nations are often criticized for the destabilizing aspects of some interventions in the Horn—notably in Sudan, following the overthrow of Bashir, and in Somalia. Yet, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Turkey—the four most engaged countries—have all been involved in conflict resolution in various capacities, indicating a broader interest in the Horn beyond narrow commercial and military interests.

3.7.1. Qatar: A Foreign Policy of Peace broker?

Over the past decade, the small state of Qatar has both garnered significant attention and generated considerable controversy through its pursuit of several high-profile conflict mediation efforts (Barakat, 2014). With its peculiar foreign policy in the Middle East of maintaining a delicate diplomatic balance, it has gained the confidence to act independently and assertively elsewhere including the Horn of Africa. Although it is a small country in a dangerous neighborhood, Qatar has regional ambitions by punches above its weight diplomatically by acting as a mediator in conflicts in the Horn of Africa (Berouk, 2016). Qatar has attempted to create an image of a notable peace and security actor in the greater Middle East and HoA

regions. It is particularly carving out a portfolio as a mediator, and has engaged in several peace processes (namely those in Yemen, Lebanon and Sudan.)³⁸

In the Horn, its most recent effort was to mediate a truce between Eritrea and Djibouti in 2010 in the wake of the border dispute between these two countries in 2008.³⁹ In the framework of what has been called “economic diplomacy,”⁴⁰ Qatar not only facilitates and sponsors mediation processes, but also puts financial incentives on the table to encourage conflicting parties to come to terms. For example, when Qatar took over the Darfur peace process and mediated the Doha Agreement between the government of Sudan and the Equality Movement (JEM, the major armed opposition group in Darfur) in 2010, Qatar pledged 2 billion dollars for development plans in Darfur and brokered agro-investment deals worth 1 billion dollars in Sudan.

They have made an attempt to mediate among various Somali factions in the mid-2000s, and between Eritrea and Djibouti after the outbreak of a border conflict in 2008 (Mahmood, 2020). This wide-ranging involvement has produced different outcomes, such as the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur in 2011, and the deployment of a peacekeeping mission in a disputed area between Eritrea and Djibouti. Qatar’s approach has been unique—for example, the Eritrea-Djibouti peacekeeping mission committed ground troops in support of a political process.

Turkey’s Mediation Role in Somalia

Turkey is another actor in the Horn of Africa with a history of “preventive diplomacy” and conflict resolution efforts. It made an effort in mediating the talks between Somalia and Somaliland in which Ankara became the venue for discussions between Somalia and Somaliland, which resulted in a series of meetings between 2013-15 (Mahmood, 2020). Despite tensions and disputes remaining high between Somalia and Somaliland, the government of has shown an interest in reviving them, appointing a special envoy in 2018 to spearhead the effort.

³⁸ Sultan Barakat, “Qatari Mediation: Between Ambition and Achievement”, in Brookings Doha Center Analysis Papers, No. 12 (November 2014), p. 19, <http://brook.gs/2aQtUSx>.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Kristian Coates Ulrichsen, “The Gulf Goes Global: The Evolving Role of Gulf Countries in the Middle East and North Africa and Beyond”, in FRIDE Working Papers, No. 121 (November 2013), p. 19, <http://fride.org/publication/1169/>.

3.7.2. The UAE-Saudi Arabia: Through Diplomatic Backchannels

In July 2018, leaders of both countries— Ethiopia’s Prime Minister, Abiy Ahmed, and Eritrea’s President, Isaias Afwerki—signed a peace agreement ending two-decade hostility. The 2018 Ethio-Eritrea rapprochement was considered by many as a historical breakthrough and a foreign policy paradigm shift that ended one of the bloodiest inter-state conflicts (1998-2000) in the post-colonial history of Africa. Despite the significant role the leaders of Ethiopia and Eritrea played in their foreign policy decision making, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia and the United States (US) played a role in the peace efforts.

More surprising was the role played by a smaller nation: the UAE in which the oil-rich Gulf state has gained increasing influence in the region in recent years in which the recent rapprochement a key foreign policy milestone (Reuters, 2018).⁴¹ In his exclusive interview with Al-Ain News, Foreign Minister Gedu Andargachew appreciated the role played by the UAE in light of the historic peace accord between the countries and its role as the forefront supporter in Ethiopia.⁴² In addition to that, PM Abiy Ahmed and President Isaias Afewerki signed a peace agreement in Saudi Arabia in September 16, 2018, the second peace deal reached in which the leaders signed a “joint declaration of peace and friendship” (Aljazeera, 2018). Saudi Arabia’s Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir said, “the agreement will contribute to strengthening security and stability in the region at large” (Ibid). With their new mediation diplomacy, the UAE-Saudi alliance acted more as behind-the-scenes facilitators through their diplomatic backchannels and provided some economic incentives for cooperation. However, will all this foreign policy of conflict resolution, mediation and preventive diplomacy, the single most important common factor has been fundamental sources of conflict among warring parties are hardly resolved. They lack the big necessities of sustainability, institutionalization and resolving the deep-rooted causes of the conflict.

⁴¹ Cornell, Alexander & Fick, Maggie. (August, 2018). “In Peace between Ethiopia and Eritrea, UAE lends a helping hand” Reuters World News. Retrieved from: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ethiopia-emirati-insight/in-peace-between-ethiopia-and-eritrea-uae-lends-a-helping-hand-idUSKBNKT1QX>

⁴² Ethiopian News Agency. (6 April, 2020). Ethio-Eritrea Peace Deal Cheers New Cooperation in East Africa: FM Gedu. Retrieved from: <https://ww.ena.et/en/?p=13702>

Starting with the Darfur conflict, the regional tension in Somalia, the Djibouti-Eritrea border conflict and the recent the Ethio-Eritrea rapprochement, the conflicts do not end in short term mediation diplomacy and diplomatic interventions of middle eastern countries. Middle East states' involvement in conflict resolution efforts in the Horn has demonstrated their assertiveness in the region, underpinned by a host of national interests and an argument for the need to promote stability (Mahmood, 2020). The conflicts need long-term strategy not short-term benefits, to be applied and long-term investment to be carried out in different areas of concern. And also strengthening the role of multilateralism and democratic values in the conflict resolution process including regional multilateral organizations like the AU and IGAD is essentially necessary for its long-term success. What the Horn of Africa region direly needs is not some momentary breakthroughs, but the long-term foreign policy strategy that integrates local actors and demands with sustainable peace and development.

Chapter-4

Superpower competition in the Horn of Africa

4.1. Introduction

The concept of superpower competition is increasingly becoming dominant and relevant in explaining the emerging international system. However, there is no single interpretation of the current world system. The idea of great power competition despite its limitation and constraints, as with any attempt to define in social science, has both theoretical and practical significance. At least theoretically, a concept of great power competition rightly reflects the current geopolitical environment. And practically, it can be a useful guideline and framework for states' foreign policy in our time.

The election of President Donald Trump brought a new policy shift where foreign and defense policy leaders emphasized “great-power competition” with China and Russia in the international affairs. The 2017 National Security Strategy mentions this concept (which it calls “long-term strategic competition”) fourteen times. And also, the 2018 National Security Strategy mentions great power competition three times. However, this is not limited to only one global power. Other power centers in international relations including China, Russia, and the EU describe the geopolitical environment of the 21st century as a multipolar global order. Thus, I believe the usage of the term-superpower or great power competition in the Horn of Africa is less problematic theoretically. And also, fairly pragmatic in term of foreign policy and consistent with the current geopolitical reality in the region.

Historical Background

The Colonial Scramble

It was the Berlin Conference of 1884/85 that has come to represent the late 19th century European scramble and partition of the African continent. In modern history, the African continent has been the object of bitter imperial and colonial rivalry. Britain, France, Spain,

Portugal, Germany and Italy have all competed and often fought for possession of various parts of Africa.

Despite huge human and material devastation to Africa, the colonial scramble did signify something dangerous with repercussions of lasting impacts lingering until today. It established the rules for the conquest and partition of Africa, in the process legitimizing the ideas of Africa as playground for outsiders, its mineral wealth as a resource for the outside world not for Africans and its fate as matter not to be left to Africans (Gathara, 2019).⁴³ Symbolically, materially and strategically, it established the concept of Africa as a theatre of geopolitical competition and scramble among superpowers of the day. Not a foreign policy actor in its own international relations, but a geopolitical playground to compete over, fight over and exploit. Africa lost agency. In the post-colonial and post-euphoria independence period, African states hardly demonstrated foreign and domestic policy independence in the backdrop of external intervention, colonial legacy, domestic weakness and authoritarian government with bad governance.

The Cold war-geopolitics

As the wave of decolonization engulfed Africa, the mode of competition changed with official independence to influence countries indirectly rather than establishing direct control as was the case in the colonial era. Narrow alliances, close co-operation, and peaceful coexistence were the new labels for what are often very one-sided political and economic relationships. During the Cold War, post-colonial Africa was an important front in the geopolitical contest for international influence. Some important examples in the Horn of Africa include: The Ogaden war of 1977/78 of border conflict where the USSR supported Ethiopia, the Siyad Barre of Somalia was supported by the USA,

Africa became an important arena of political and ideological conflict for the main actors-the Eastern and Western blocs. The two superpowers, the USSR and the USA considered post-colonial Africa as a fertile geopolitical space to control and establish their own “spheres of influence in the continent. The cold war created a heavy militarization and securitization of the

⁴³ Gathara, Patrick. (15 November, 2019). “Berlin 1884: Remember the conference that divided Africa. Aljazeera.

Horn of Africa region where bloody conflicts, liberation wars, border conflicts and human rights violations became the new normal.

4.2. The New Superpower competition in the Horn of Africa

In the beginning of the third decade of the 21st century and long after the end of the cold war, brief international disengagements and indifference and the changing shift from the global “war on terror”, geopolitical, strategic, and economic realities are increasingly leading to a new global superpower competition in Africa. After the so-short-lived supremacy and unilateralism of the USA as the sole global superpower in the post-cold war period, the 21st century has unleashed a strategic competition among superpowers in the international arena on multiple levels. The new active global and regional power contestations are most vividly evident in the strategically important Horn of Africa region involving China, the USA, Russia and possibly the European Union.

Dr, Mehari Tadelle Maru, a scholar and analyst of the Horn of Africa affirms that the Horn of Africa appears to be gearing towards a new sett off by a global competition of strategic competition of strategic interest by great powers in Africa precipitated by a struggle for influence in the region by the US and China (2019).⁴⁴ The Horn of Africa region is one of the most geo-strategically important regions of the world. On the one hand, its proximity to the Red Sea, the Gulf Aden, the Bab-al-Mandab and the Arabian Peninsula; its growing geo-economic significance: its coastal opening on the Red Sea positions it along an important maritime trade artery linking Europe and Asia; it provides access to emerging markets that have attractively low labour costs; its fertile soil with the water tower of Africa; its potential for food security, its demographic power, and it is home to natural resource deposits.

On the other hand, the Horn of Africa is conflict-ridden, a highly fragile region that has seen considerable conflict and securitization over the past decades: a civil war in Somalia and continued attacks by Al-Shabaab; piracy off the coast of Somalia; civil war in Darfur and South

⁴⁴ Mehari, Taddele. (2019).” The Great Game in the Horn of Africa” TRT WORLD. <https://ww.trtworld.com/the-reat-game-in-the-horn-africa23372>.

Sudan; proximity to the civil war in Yemen; political instability and ethnic unrest in Ethiopia; and, not least, the securitisation of the Red Sea, as exemplified by Djibouti, which now hosts more foreign military bases than any other country in the world.

4.3. The Rise of China

Over the past two decades, the People's Republic of China (PRC) has undergone extraordinary economic growth, transitioning from a low-income country to a global economic superpower and maintaining its status as the largest contributor to global growth (Ursu, 2018).⁴⁵ Now the second largest economy in the world, China is playing an increasingly assertive and expansive role in the global political economy. Africa is one of the most important continents in this economic and geopolitical endeavor. A decade ago, China surpassed the United States to become Africa's largest trading partner. What Fareed Zakaria termed 'the rise of the rest' in which the growth of China, the resurgence of Russia and other emerging powers in the face of the ever-shifting patterns of power and capital in global political economy is importantly evident in the Horn of Africa.

To understand the wider and broader global level framework, understanding the dynamics of Chinese engagement with the Horn of Africa is essentially important by making a balanced and research-based assessment of Chinese engagement and activities in the region. The Horn of Africa is one of the most geo-strategically important regions of the world, and one of the main theatres in which the Sino-African four-pronged approach— based on economic, ideological, political and security interests – unfolds (Ursu & van den Berg). In the backdrop of declining US power, influence and leadership across the globe in general and the Horn of Africa in particular, ever-increasingly the Chinese growing to be more assertive, influential and becoming a key foreign actor. China's current engagement with the Horn of Africa is led by Beijing's intention to leverage its position as a rising world power and seize new areas of influence, economically and politically (ibid).

4.3.1. Influence and Infrastructure

⁴⁵ Ursu, Anca-Elena (13 June 2018) "How the US lost: China's Growing Foothold in Africa" Clingendael.

In world history including imperial history, the financing, designing, construction, ownership and operation of infrastructure has always an integral part of power and influence at a global level. The race to build new railways, ports, pipelines, fiber-optic cables, and other infrastructure and to reap the benefits that come with greater connectivity: by linking communities and powering businesses, infrastructure is often described as the backbone of economies (Hillman, 2019). However, it is important to seriously consider that the stakes extend beyond economics as recent developments clearly indicate. Despite scarce literature, the stakes are also geopolitical and strategic implications with long-term consequences. A recent Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS) report, *Influence and Infrastructure: The Strategic Stakes of Foreign Projects*, identifies some of the strategic risks posed by the threat stages of Chinese infrastructure projects, enabling Beijing to potentially restrict access to its rivals, exploit ports during conflict, and collect intelligence (Hillman, 2019).

4.3.2. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the Horn of Africa

In line with her growing stature in the international system, China has sought to exert influence on the global stage, from Latin America, Middle East, South East Asia, to Africa (Freidberg, 2005). One way of achieving this and as part of China's global grand strategy is the 21st Century Silk Road Economic Belt Initiative, informally known as "One Belt, One Road" China's President Xi Jinping introduced the project as the centerpiece of his foreign and economic policy in 2013. China's the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) launched as a global infrastructure development and investment project for international cooperation involves underwriting billions of dollars of infrastructure investment in countries along the ancient Silk Road, linking it with countries in Europe, Asia and Africa.

In the One Belt, One Road, the initiative will create the continent's largest free trade zone in the Horn and should also include flagship projects like the East African Railway Master Plan (Gopaldas, 2019). The tiny East African nation of Djibouti is at the core of this strategy in which Beijing has taken root in Djibouti through numerous infrastructure projects including anew port, two new airports, and the Ethiopia-Djibouti railway (Ibid).The sheer scale of these projects, combined with the fact that they are concentrated in a small but strategically located, cash-strapped country, make China's presence significant. The horn of Africa region, Red Sea

corridor and the Suez Canal has been a center a geopolitical theatre in both the colonial and post-colonial world order given its strategic significance to global trade, energy, economies and important resources. And the regions have also been a traditionally a Western-controlled zone with the US and her allies being the primary guarantor for maritime security.

The control of this part of the world is determinant for important maritime trade routes; ideals for naval security operations, anti-piracy patrols, counter-terror drone strikes, air-force operations, counter-terror special operations, intelligence-surveillances, peace keeping and humanitarian aid (Politico, 2018).⁴⁶ Whichever powerful state controls the security of that region, also controls the maritime trade routes between Asia, Europe and Africa. Egypt and Djibouti, 2 of the three African states part of the BRI are strategically located at the heart of global geo-politics playground. Djibouti is quite unique as it now hosts military bases for the US, France, Italy, Japan and now China.

While anti-piracy operations and other security concerns are understandable in the Horn of Africa region and the broader Red Sea corridor, the already emerging great power rivalry is clearly evident in both policy terms and geopolitical realities having such a heavy military presence in the region. The entry into Djibouti and the region by China could tilt and re align security partnerships that have underpinned global order since 1945 (The Sun, 22nd August, 2016). The growing strategic rivalry between the United States and China is driven by shifting power dynamics and competing visions of the future of the international order in which China's Belt and Road initiative is a leading indicator of the country's global ambitions (Brookings report, 2019). It has become China's flagship economic and geopolitical project involving more than 150 countries across the globe.

⁴⁶ The Coming Wars-Bruno Macaes- Politico (2018) <https://www.politico.eu/blogs/the-coming-wars/2018/01/the-most-valuable-military-real-estate-in-the-world/>



Source: Li, 2015

East Africa is the main focus of the BRI initiative on the continent, with Egypt and Djibouti receiving official BRI funds. Located at the entrance to the Red Sea, Djibouti is of utmost importance to the maritime dimension of the BRI and to China's economic interests. According to recent accounts, the country is home to BRI projects worth an estimated US\$9.8 billion.⁴⁷ Countries in the Horn have also received Chinese funding for construction of cross border infrastructure to facilitate trade flow.

For instance, Djibouti and Ethiopia became linked by a railway from Addis Ababa to the newly built port of Doraleh and share a pipeline between Ogaden (Ethiopia) and the port of Djibouti. The concretization of infrastructure projects throughout the Horn is symptomatic of a shift in China's approach to the region. Initially driven by geo-economic factors, China is seeking to establish deeper relations that will allow for adjustment of its priorities in the region.

⁴⁷Mwatela, R.Z. and Zhao, C. 2016. 'Africa in China's 'One Belt, One Road' initiative: a critical analysis', IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science 21(12), 13.

The Chinese Railways in the Horn of Africa

In East Africa, Chinese built, operated, financed transport infrastructure projects are fundamentally changing economic landscapes and connectivity in the region. Under the Belt and Road initiative (BRI), Beijing has financed more than 3,000 strategic infrastructure projects in Africa and provided tens of billions of dollars more in the form of loans.⁴⁸ China's most significant railway projects in East Africa are the diesel-powered Mombasa-Nairobi Standard Gauge Railway built in Kenya, and the Addis Ababa-Djibouti Railway, which is the first electrified railway of its kind in Africa (ibid). Here it is important to note that infrastructure, transportations, and logistics are essential parts of Africa's regional integration vision. The project of intra-Africa free trade, free movement of people and free market schemes are some the most important continental and regional flagship projects. And regional integration is one the weakest in the Horn of Africa. This infrastructure projects play a very important role with careful planning for the long-term economic development in the Horn of Africa.

The Addis Ababa–Djibouti railway

As China moves up the global supply chain, it is shifting some of its labor-intensive industries, such as textiles, to countries such as Ethiopia. To facilitate this, China is building the logistical infrastructure necessary for Ethiopia to succeed as a manufacturing hub. More than 90 percent of landlocked Ethiopia's trade runs through Djibouti. The two countries are connected by a poor road network and it can take up to two or three days for trucks to make a single trip between the two capital cities. The newly built Addis Ababa-Djibouti Railway is meant to cut the time between the two cities down to ten hours. The 750km electrified railway was built between 2011 and 2016 by two Chinese state-owned companies – the China Railway Group and the China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation – while 70 percent of the US\$3.4 billion funding for the Ethiopian section came from China's Exim Bank.

The railway has been crippled by electricity shortages, lower than expected shortages, the signing of the Ethio-Eritrea peace deal, loan issues and Chinese president Xi Jinping has

⁴⁸ Muller, Nicholas. (January 25, 2019). "The Chinese Railways Remolding East Africa" The Diplomat. <https://thediplomat.com/2019/01/the-chinese-railways-remolding-east-africa>

criticized those infrastructure projects as “vanity projects” (The Financial Times, 2018).⁴⁹ Despite the huge significance of the railway, the financing and debt issues associated with the project have become very problematic recently. Generally speaking, it is true that Chinese financing and investment play a critical role in addressing infrastructure gap in the Horn of Africa, where regional economic integration is weak and undeveloped. However, there are increasing concerns that China is following “debt-trap diplomacy” in the 21st century opaque, untransparent, unaccountable and corrupt dealings and agreements.

The New Debt-trap Diplomacy?

The narrative that Chinese government is engaging in problematic debt trap diplomacy has taken off since 2018. Coined the preceding year by an Indian pundit, the term implies that Beijing is purposely striking unsustainable debt for-infrastructure deals with developing countries along the routes of its ubiquitous Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) (Ferchen, Matt & Perera, Anarkalee, 2019). China holds about a third of Africa’s sovereign debt. Demand for Chinese-backed capital to build everything from highways to hydroelectric dams to railways has left countries heavily indebted, leading to concerns about a debt trap and even a loss of sovereignty (The New York Times, 2020).⁵⁰ In 2015, the China-Africa Research Initiative (CARI) at John Hopkins University identified 17 Africa countries with risky debt exposure to China, potentially unable to repay their loans in which Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya face serious vulnerabilities (BBC News, 2018).⁵¹

Many international medias, western research centers and think tanks and with the coming of the new American administration under President Trump, criticisms of Chinese economic activities,

⁴⁹ Feng, Emily & Pilling, David (December 5, 2018). “Chinese investments in Africa go off the rails” The Financial Times. Retrieved from: <https://www.ft.com/content/82e77d8ae716>

⁵⁰ The New York Times. (April 29, 2020). “China Silent Amid Global Calls to Give Africa Debt Relief” By The Associated Press. Retrieved from: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/29/business/bc-af-virus-outbreak-africa-china-china.html>

⁵¹ BBC News. (5 November, 2018). Reality Check: Is China burdening Africa with debt? By BBC Reality Check Team. Retrieved from: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-45916060>

investment and infrastructure developments have got louder and solid. So far, two US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and Mike Pompeo have given warnings. Director of the Office of Trade and Manufacturing Policy Peter Navarro lambasted China's "debt-trap financing to developing countries," and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, like his predecessor Rex Tillerson, warned African and Latin American countries of the risks of Chinese "predatory economic activity" and influence. Former US secretary of State, under the current Trump Administration, Rex Tillerson accused Beijing of "encouraging dependency using opaque contracts, predatory loan practices, and corrupt deals that mire nations in debt and undercut their sovereignty, denying them their long-term, self-sustaining growth and leading to mounting debt"⁵².

However, Africa in general and the Horn of Africa in particular needs a strategic balancing in its engagement with China and other foreign powers. Policy makers need to develop a foreign and diplomacy with a circumspect response to what is at stake. Countries in the Horn can manage and address the severe infrastructure gap visible in the region with necessarily increasing dependency, debt vulnerability, corruption. Institutions in the region must be strengthened with more transparency, accountability, democracy, debt-management and setting terms of engagement collectively with African partners.

4.4. The USA in the Horn of Africa

In the post-cold war period, the involvement of US in the Horn of Africa has largely been driven by the post- 9/11 foreign policy shift in Washington and around the world. In other parts of the paper, I have already explained, the US security involvement vis-à-vis the global "war on terror" in the Horn of Africa. In this part of the paper, I will rather focus on what is "the new great power competition" in the Horn of Africa.

4.4.1. Under Trump Administration

On December 13, 2018, ex-U.S. National Security Adviser to the Trump administration and former US Ambassador to the UN, John Bolton gave a speech in the conservative Heritage

⁵² Fernholz, Tim. (March 7, 2019). "Eight Countries in danger of falling into China's "debt trap" Quartz. Retrieved from: <https://qz.com/1223768/china-debt-trap-these-eight-countries-are-in-danger-of-debt-overloads-from-china-belt-and-road-plans/>

Foundation about the Trump administration's new "Africa strategy," based on Trump's 'America First' foreign policy doctrine. The administration echoed a cold-war foreign policy rhetoric asserting "great power competitors, namely China and Russia, are expanding their financial and political influence across Africa. They are deliberately and aggressively targeting their investments in the region to gain a competitive advantage over the United States"⁵³ Specifically, Boston accused Russia and China of "predatory practices" in Africa. Since the mid-2010s, Washington has accused China of "neocolonialism" in Africa.

The 'America First' Africa strategy purports to address three core U.S. interests in Africa: First, advancing U.S. trade and commercial ties with nations across the region to the benefit of both the United States and Africa... Second, countering the threat from Radical Islamic Terrorism and violent conflict... And third, we will ensure that U.S. taxpayer dollars for aid are used efficiently and effectively (Ibid). Ambassador John Bolton set the tone for the administration in the speech where he challenged African governments to choose the United States over China and Russia for their commercial, security, and political relationships (Schneidman & Signe, 2018). This throwback to great power rivalry runs counter to the most significant current trend in Africa's external relationships, which have most diversity than at any time since the end of the cold war.

4.4.2 The New US Strategy and its Implications for the Horn of Africa

The Trump administration's "America First" foreign policy in its Africa Strategy focuses on countering China's commercial, security, and political influence in Africa officially ushering a geopolitical and strategic rivalry in the region. Russia was specified as another country that is rapidly expanding its financial and political influence across Africa, although appears to be more reflective than anything else. Given its "America First" approach to foreign policy, domestic political turmoil and its strategic priorities, issues of democracy and human rights were hardly integrated into the Trump Africa strategy. Although this is barely surprising given Trump's transactional diplomacy and foreign policy in its international engagement, its abandonment from the new African Strategy represented the clear foreign policy shift to the new great power rivalry with China and Russia in the Horn of Africa.

⁵³ Remarks by National Security Advisor Ambassador John R. Bolton on the Trump Administration's New Africa Strategy Issued on: December 13, 2018. National Security Council. Retrieved from: <https://whitehouse.gov/briefings/>

In terms of security in the Horn of Africa, the visit by the US secretary of state articulated peace and security in the Horn of Africa as one of America's interest. In the post-cold war period, the US has been investing and giving much on the global "war on terror" in Somalia and piracy off the Somali coasts. Now with the emerging global superpower rivalry, the broader region is becoming a geopolitical playground among global powers.

However, the US Counter-terrorism operations have dramatically increased in Somalia under President Trump. The first two years of the Trump administration have been marked by an even greater surge in kinetic engagement across the continent, especially in Somalia, where US security forces conducted forty-seven airstrikes against Al-Shabaab in 2018 (a 200% increase from 2016 (Gass, 2019)).⁵⁴ In February 2019, In his first trip to Africa, US secretary of State Mike Pompeo visit to Ethiopia in the backdrop of the launch of Trump's Africa Policy program emphasizing as well as the launch of the US International Development Finance Corporation (IDFC) with a \$60 billion budget to partner mora strategically and financially in trade and business across the continent (Adegoke, & Kazeem, 2020).⁵⁵

The State Secretary appreciated and encouraged Ethiopia's privatization and business opening up schemes under the new Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Abiy Ahmed that follows a West oriented foreign policy including towards Multilateral Financial Institutions. This has favorably attracted Western interest in Ethiopia given its strategic significance in the Horn of Africa region. And the other very essential policy element is that global superpower competition is not good for Africans and the Horn of Africa in particular. The great power rivalry will not benefit the region. The region and countries in the Horn must develop their own independent foreign policy with taking narrow sides that will introduce long term prosperity for countries, not short-term power calculations.

⁵⁴ Gass, Jonathan. (February, 2019). "Trump's Surprise for Africa" The Atlantic Council.

⁵⁵ Adegoke, Yinka & Kazeem, Yomi. (February 19, 2020). "Amid mixed messages and inconsistency China is the only constant of Trump's US-Africa policy. Quartz Africa.

4.5. Russia's comeback in the Horn of Africa

Russia's Africa's comeback to Africa after the fall of the Soviet Union and the end of the cold war has been widely getting international and regional attention in recent years. There are still some unknown and unclear questions how Russia's Africa policy play out in the Horn of Africa and its significance vis-à-vis the emerging great power competition in the region. Africa was an important front in the Cold War contest for global influence between the USA and the USSR. Many African countries were drawn to the Soviet Union's Marxist-Leninist and anti-imperialist ideology. At various stages, Ethiopia, Somalia, Mozambique, Angola, Egypt and Libya were key Soviet allies. Particularly, the Horn of Africa was a major geopolitical arena among the two then superpowers.

Although Russia's superpower status disappeared with the Soviet Union, there is a remarkable consensus in Russia has been, is and will remain a great power on the global arena because of its geopolitical status, rich energy resources, armed forces with nuclear capabilities and its permanent member of the UN Security Council (Oldberg, 2007). Perhaps the most significant testimony to Russia's transformation from a "regional" to a "great" power, striving to reassert its influence globally, is in the United States' 2017 National Security Strategy and 2018 National Defense Strategy in which the documents acknowledged the return of strategic competition among nations, according to Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.⁵⁶

Russia's Africa Strategy.

Russia's foreign policy priorities are set out in its 2016 Foreign Policy Concept. The document distinguishes between North Africa, seen together with the Middle East as a potential source of instability and terrorism, and the rest of the continent. Sub-Saharan Africa comes last in the Concept's list of regions, with only a brief paragraph calling for Russia to 'expand multidimensional interaction with African States ... by improving political dialogue and promoting mutually beneficial trade and economic ties, stepping up comprehensive cooperation that serves common interests'. However, despite this only brief mention, the expansion of economic, military and political cooperation detailed in this briefing suggests that Russia's

⁵⁶ Stronski, Paul. (October 16, 2019). "Late the Party: Russia's Return to Africa. "Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

interest in Africa, including sub-Saharan countries, has grown considerably in recent years. In a recent report, by Arnaud Kalika (2019), titled “Russia’s “Great Return” to Africa?” argued, the Kremlin’s revival of its Africa Policy after 2014 can be explained by the interaction by the interaction between three factors: sanctions imposed on Russia by the West after the annexation of Crimea, the creation of the Eurasian Economic Union, and the beginning of Russian airstrikes in Syria on 30 September 2015. The First Russia-Africa Summit held on 23-24 October in 2019 in Sochi was a symbolic representation of the resurgence of Russia in Africa in which more than 43 heads of state and government participated. The Summit was also a symbolic gesture of the new geopolitical competition in Africa and the Horn in particular where Vladimir Putin’s Russia seeks to rebuild ties with Africa countries amid tense geopolitical environment with the West.

In the Sochi Summit, Russia’s President Vladimir Putin articulated that “it had opened up a new page in the history of Russia’s relations with African countries.” The Summit is a clear demonstration of the growing increase in economic, security, and political-diplomatic engagements to foster Russia-Africa Summit. Losing the influence of the Cold War era to the United States and China, Moscow will likely concentrate on political cooperation, arms sales, and investment into natural resources with the Horn of Africa for the near term (Giles 2013). According to the report by the Financial Times (2019), in the Russia-Africa Summit, Moscow aim is to use military and trade ties to reinsert itself as a geopolitical powerbroker on the continent. For example, it hosted talks between the leaders of Ethiopia and Egypt who have clashed over a GERD dam on the River Nile.⁵⁷

Russia’s Economic Pragmatism

With the end of the cold war and a massive Russian disengagement from the international and domestic affairs of Africa became the status quo in the post-cold war period. However, since 2000s, there has been a noticeable re-awakening of Russia’s interest in Africa. Indeed, between 2005 and 2015, Africa’s trade with Russia grew by 185%, and Russia has several reasons engage Africa more intensely.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Foy, Henry. (October 24, 2019). “Russia turns on the Charm at first Africa Summit”. ‘The Financial Times. Retrieve from: <http://www.ft.com/content/>

⁵⁸ Adibe, Jidefor. (November 24, 2019). “W hat does Russia really want from Africa?” Brookings: Africa in Focus.

The renewed Russia-Africa relationship is going to be centered around pragmatic economic cooperation, military-technical partnerships, and Russia's quite soft-power push in the backdrop of the superpower competition among China, Russia, the U.S. and the European Union (Signe, 2019).⁵⁹ Energy has become the main sector for Russian investments and the concept of energy diplomacy has emerged with investments made in gas, oil, and nuclear power. The Ethiopia-Russia talks are also underway to establish a nuclear technology center and Russia announced its will to build an African Center of Excellence and nuclear power in Ethiopia (Signe, 2019).

In addition to a political importance attached to the continent, the growing economic importance of Africa is another major significant contributing factor in Russia's great comeback in the second decade of the 21st century. According to J. Peter Pham, the director of the Atlantic Council's Africa Center, "while it still represents a very modest proportion of Russian-African trade increased more than tenfold between 2000 and 2012 in Russian companies invested in billions in Africa in project ranging from energy production and mining to infrastructure and fisheries"⁶⁰ It's clear Moscow sees its presence in Africa in very broad terms, building on ties from Soviet times. The reemergence of Russia in Africa under the Putin administrations is an important political development with consequential geo-political implications for the region. Unlike many new actors in the Horn of Africa, Russia largely takes advantage of relations established decades ago by the USSR provided to many African anti-colonial leaders and governments they eventually headed.

Projecting Power globally

The 54 states of the African continent constitute the largest geographic bloc in any international organization in which they participate and represent a considerable potential political vote of Africa for Russian foreign policy in international organizations like the United Nations. African votes at the United Nations General Assembly can matter a lot in importance where the Russian Federation chooses to follow a divergent foreign policy path, like the Crimean annexation of 2014. This strategy has become more visible in 2018 when ex-US National Security Adviser John Bolton under the Trump administration accused Russia of selling arms to Africa countries

⁵⁹ Signe, Landry. (October 22, 2019). "Vladimir Putin is resetting Russia's Africa Agenda to counter the US and China.

⁶⁰ Pham, Peter. (2014). "Russia's Africa Return". The Atlantic Council.

in exchange for votes at the United Nations. In critical reference to the “votes-for-arms deals” in the United Nations, in which the Ambassador stated that such strategies “keep strong men in power, undermine peace and security and run counter to the best interests of the African people.” President Vladimir Putin has said Africa is one of Russia’s foreign policy priorities and has spoken about offering: political and diplomatic support, defense and security help, economic assistance, disease-control advice, humanitarian-relief assistance, educational and vocational training (BBC News, 2020) At the recent Russia-Africa Summit in Sochi, Vladimir Putin announced the writing off of \$20 billion in debt owed by African countries and unveiled plans to double trade with African countries to \$40 billion per annum (Adibe, 2019).

Bases and Ports

The politics of military bases and ports have become an integral part of the Horn of Africa’s new geopolitics with huge economic significance and clear geopolitical implications. So far, Moscow has come closest to this goal in Eritrea, where in September 2018 it signed a preliminary agreement to establish a logistics base with the aim of establishing military base (Ani, 2019). The new facility, once built, will make Russia one of several countries – including the US, China, Saudi Arabia and Turkey – with bases in this strategically located region, close to the entrance to the Red Sea. Seaports and air bases in the region help Russia project international military power.

In January 28, 2020 The New York Times reported that the Russian Government is taking initial steps towards building a military port in the Horn of Africa that could become Russia’s first permanent military base on the continent. The report claimed “Russian officials are eyeing the port of Berbera as a location for their base on the coast of Somaliland, a self-declared state within Somalia on the Gulf of Aden, according to Defense Department officials”.⁶¹ With the coming of Russia in the Horn, the geopolitical rivalry between the superpowers in the Horn of Africa is no more a theoretical discussion. Researchers and scholars of International Relations and the Horn of Africa have begun emphasize the so-called new cold war in Africa.

⁶¹ Gibbons-Neff & Schmitt, Eric. (January 28, 2020). Russia Exerts Growing Influence in Africa, Worrying Many in the West.” The New York Times. Retrieved from: <https://nytimes.com/2020/01/28/world/africa/russia-africa-troops.html>.

It has become a geo-political reality with huge implications for the short term and long-term development and regional politics for the Horn of Africa. It has already created a difficult foreign policy choice for Some Africa governments that face huge legitimacy and democratic deficit at home. And foreign policy becomes a tool for regime survival and short political calculus. The domestic vulnerability of regimes in the Horn of Africa may create further crisis and chaos in the region that has enough of its own.

Chapter Five

Ethiopia's Foreign Policy and the New Geopolitics in the Horn of Africa

5.1. Introduction

Foreign policy is a fundamentally important aspect of diplomacy and international relations. The diplomatic machinery of modern state needs foreign policy to conduct its foreign affairs. Its an integral aspect the expression and survival of the “westphalian” state. A brief definition of foreign policy is important as a starting point for both theoretical and practical purposes. One understanding is that foreign policy is a key essence of state’s foreign affairs in the arena of international relations with state and non-state actors. The foreign policy of states is directed towards external actors abroad beyond the national territorial jurisdiction. In the backdrop of changing international context, the politics of foreign policy are perpetually changing, depending on the country or the region, often unpredictably (Hill, 2016). This is why the importance of case and country studies are so immense.

“Foreign Policy Analysis enquires into the motives and other sources of the behavior of international actors, particularly states by giving a good deal of attention to decision-making, initially so as to probe behind the formal self-descriptions (and fictions) of government and public administration.” (Hill, 2016:12).

Beyond official expression of statements and speeches, the nature and process of foreign policy decision making is important to understand the intricacies and delicacies of the matter. States formulate foreign policy for various reasons including to attain their domestic policy objectives and national interests abroad.

The Modern state of Ethiopia is one of the first few states in Africa to have developed long standing foreign relations and diplomacy with many countries. In its modern history a centralized foreign relation introduced during Emperor Menelik II. The victory of Adwa against Italy in 1896 was particularly a key monumental achievement in shaping Ethiopia’s diplomatic relations with the outside world.

The victory of Adwa was not a military victory for Ethiopia's independence and sovereignty, but a diplomatic victory too. The Adwa victory introduced a 'revolution' in Ethiopia's diplomacy and foreign relations. In the post-Adwa period, Ethiopia's relations dramatically increased in number and substance, the country's status and prestige increased, embassies and diplomatic missions increased. Ethiopia also established its first modern foreign ministry to deal with foreign affairs and commerce. Some of the most important milestones in Ethiopia's diplomacy in the 20th century include: its subsequent relations with great powers of the time, the joining of the League of Nations and its foundation for Ethiopia's diplomacy, the emergence of the USA in Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa, the participation of Ethiopia in the formation of the OAU/AU and becoming the headquarter and diplomatic capital of Africa and its participation in international peace keeping.

In the post-1991 period and with the coming of the ERPDP to power and the secession of Eritrea, Ethiopia's domestic setting and external geopolitical landscape has been experiencing so many twists and turns of huge implications. Some of them include: the Ethio-Eritrea war, the war in Somalia and Ethiopia's subsequent military intervention, the global "war on terror", the independence of South Sudan and the country's later civil war. Ethiopia's regional landscape can be characterized by its many geopolitical upheavals with implications of shaping its intrastate relations in the Horn Africa and its foreign policy.

The post-1991 foreign policy and its foreign relations with countries near and afar, and the country's foreign policy and diplomacy can best be characterized as a process of change and continuity in which various determinants are involved (Solomon, 2017). The FDRE Constitution clearly stipulates Ethiopia's principles for external relations as: "to promote policies of foreign relations based on the protection of national interests and respect for the sovereignty of the country." The current working foreign policy whitepaper of Ethiopia, namely "The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and Strategy" (henceforth FANSPS), was introduced in the backdrop of domestic political instabilities and regional political developments including the Ethio-Eritrea war in 2002.⁶²

⁶² The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and Strategy. Ministry of Information: Press & Audiovisual Department. November 2002. Addis Ababa

The 2002 Foreign Policy and National Security whitepaper indicates that the Foundation of Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy of Ethiopia is the development and the building of a democratic system, national pride and prestige and globalization.

5.2. Ethiopia's Foreign Policy: Change and Continuity.

Consideration of change and continuity can be a very important analytical framework to study trend, milestones, turning points and political developments over time in Ethiopia's foreign policy. One develops circumspection and perspicacity by looking at those dimensions which remain stable while other change course and examining the varying dynamism, directions, and nature of those alterations. With the understanding of foreign policy developments as complex set of continuities and discontinuities, one takes into account

This section of the paper makes the case for greater analytical precision and historical reflection about the balance between change and continuity in the development of Ethiopia's foreign policy. One of the most important continuities is the evolution of multilateralism in Ethiopia's foreign policy. The most pertinent changes fall under two headings: Economic diplomacy as a pillar of Ethiopia's foreign policy and the global war on terror and Ethiopia's foreign policy in the 1991 period under the EPRDF regime. The other important foreign policy determinant that can be considered both as a change and continuity in the historical evolution of the modern empire-state of Ethiopia is the perennial question of access to ports. The present geopolitical fate of Ethiopia as: one of the few largest landlocked countries in the world still impacts its development, security and international relations.

The Evolution of Multilateralism in Ethiopia's Foreign Policy

One of the most important continuities in Ethiopia's history of foreign policy in the modern time has been multilateralism, i.e. a foreign policy framework based on cooperation and coordination among many states through the development of norms, institutions and regimes. It has been an indispensable part of Ethiopia's foreign and security policies since in 1923 with the League of Nations membership. Since then multilateralism has become a pillar of Ethiopia's foreign policy.

Since its membership in the United Nations System including the International Financial Institutions like the World Bank, the IMF.

Ethiopia's contribution to different pan-African movements, the foreign policy of Emperor Haile Selassie and the victory of Adwa made the country one of the key founding states of the OAU/AU. The decision to make Addis Ababa the headquarter of the organization has made the city the undisputed diplomatic capital increasing Ethiopia's strategic significance. Its role in the Non-Aligned Movement during the cold-war international system is also part of a multilateral policy framework that continued during the Derg period despite being Soviets client state.

With the coming of the ERPDF government to power, Ethiopia has provided leadership within IGAD and various AU organs chairing IGAD, NEPAD and the AU Committee on Climate Change, and was a member of the AU's Peace and Security Council on several occasions (Mehari, 2017). Ethiopia has been effectively utilizing multilateral diplomatic frameworks for its national, regional, continental, and global interest with what seems to be foreign policy activism on peace and security, development, climate change, diplomacy, and other human security issues including health, education, and etc.

The 2002 foreign policy whitepaper argues that:

“The UN and its specialized agencies, and institutions like the World Bank provide important assistance to Ethiopia's development. That is why Ethiopia should strengthen its cooperation with these institutions, to speed up development, protect national security, and work for peace and respect for international law. The presence in Ethiopia of the U.N Economic Commission for Africa as well as other U.N. institutions facilitates interaction; our policy of cooperation should take this into account.” (2002:88).

The other important feature of the policy is that strengthening and revitalizing IGAD in the Horn of Africa to ease problems as a basic tenet in guiding Ethiopia's regional policy. Ethiopia's historical multilateral diplomacy has also extended to the Nile waters in the post-1991 period as one the foundation of its foreign policy and water policy on its transboundary water resources.

The Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) and the Cooperative Framework Agreement on the Nile waters is one the most profound achievements.

Ethiopia played an important role in the NBI and CFA through its approach of multilateralism, rule-bound diplomacy and empathy with all riparian populations, as well as its support for the principle of fair and equitable water sharing rallying the upper riparian countries of the Nile to stand together against the unfair share allotted to Egypt, which also led to the signing of the CFA by many riparian countries (Mehari, 2017).

Thus, it can surely be said that multilateralism is the most important constant in the historical development of Ethiopia's foreign policy and diplomacy during subsequent regimes including the current administration of Abiy. Ethiopia has been taking on a solid multilateral orientation in its security and foreign policy since 1923 as a milestone.

Landlocked Ethiopia: Must Not be Policy-Locked

The post-1991 fate of Ethiopia as one of the few largest and biggest landlocked countries is a key determinant of Ethiopia's foreign policy decision making. The landlocked location of Ethiopia has significantly constrained its foreign policy options and helping its shape foreign policy orientations. Ethiopia continues to face structural challenges to accessing world markets. The country's dependence on transit neighbours is also important in shaping its domestic policy of trade, commerce, logistics, and the broader economic development. The government is pursuing the strategy of diversifying its port service to reduce the strategic vulnerability that arises from over-dependence on Djibouti. It has begun projects in Berbera, Sudan, Eritrea and Kenya as part of avoiding the reality of being policy-locked. The emerging geo-strategic competition in the Horn of Africa over ports and bases in the new geopolitics of the Horn will have strategic implications for Ethiopia. The government is pursuing the strategy of diversifying its port service to reduce the strategic vulnerability that arises from over-dependence on Djibouti. It has begun projects in Berbera, Sudan, Eritrea and Kenya as part of avoiding the reality of being policy-locked.

And also in terms of national security, the lack of access to the sea for Ethiopia is taking place in the backdrop of the ever increasing militarization and proliferation of foreign military bases in

the Horn of Africa region. The involvement of external security actors in the Horn of Africa and the adjacent Red Sea region and the formation of exclusive formation of alliances poses a dangerous challenge to Ethiopia. Ethiopia should come up with a comprehensive policy and strategy that fully take into consideration the foreign policy, national security, domestic demands and future development issues.

Economic Diplomacy as a Pillar of Ethiopia's Foreign Policy

Economic diplomacy has become more important with increased international economic interdependence or globalization and the greater need to find negotiated solutions to challenges, such as stable financial systems, open trade and investment, or climate change, in order to achieve domestic policy objectives (Woolcock and Bayne, 2013). The principal reason why economic diplomacy has become more important is that international economic relations have themselves become more important relative to political/ security relations, as globalization replaced more arms-length interdependence (ibid).

In considering globalization as a basis for its foreign affairs and national security policy, the 2002 Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and Strategy (FANSPS) established economic diplomacy as a foundation for Ethiopia's foreign policy. Economic development became a matter of national security as stipulated in the policy document. The emergence of economic diplomacy as the cornerstone of Ethiopia's foreign policy in the policy is principally a fundamental foreign policy shift in the backdrop of past foreign policies that focused on external security threats. While the foreign policies of previous Ethiopian regimes were based on a 'siege mentality' and were exclusively focused on external threats to the detriment of domestic ones, the EPRDF, by contrast, identified 'poverty and undemocratic rule' as the greatest threats to Ethiopia's national security (FDRE 2002).

Despite, the significant democratic deficit and the authoritarian political system of the EPRDF in Ethiopia, the consideration of lack of economic development and poverty as a national security threat providing an in-ward looking examination of Ethiopia's predicament was profound. The policy maker(s) envisioned the identification of markets, attraction of investment, soliciting of grants, loans and technical support and the making of maximum utilization of all possibilities making economic diplomatic activities as the center of Ethiopia's foreign policy. With this

important political development in the policy making of the government, making Ethiopia a geo-economic power in Africa became Ethiopia's developmental and geo-political goal.

Geo-economics has become one of the predominant concepts in the policy analysis of the government as economic development, prosperity, commerce and international trade are increasingly attached to and considered as national security and foreign policy arena. This is a monumental shift in the foreign policy history of Ethiopia that previously emphasized hard-politics and traditional security threats as Ethiopia's gravest existential threat. With the combination of geopolitics with geo-economics in the national security landscape of Ethiopia geo-economics means have become an integral part of Ethiopia's foreign policy arsenal.

A rough sketch of the trajectory of Ethiopia's economic diplomacy, with a particular focus on the post-post-2002 period shows that Ethiopia's foreign policy showed a significant shift. In the subsequent years, economic diplomacy gained sway as a concept in Ethiopia's government circles, not least the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In the *Oxford Handbook of the Ethiopian Economy*, Fantu Cheru and Zinabu Samaro (2019) argued that since the policy adoption: "the political contexts have changed dramatically in which Ethiopia is now seen as an attractive destination for labor-intensive manufacturing and the government continues to invest in mega infrastructure and power generation projects to drive its industrial ambition."

In terms of its foreign policy, the EPRDF-led government gave primacy to 'economic diplomacy' aimed at attracting foreign direct investment and external aid inflows to realize its radical economic transformation agenda (FDRE 2002; Tewelde and Prasad 2015) Indeed, Ethiopia since 2001 has emerged as one of the 'super-powers' of Africa—playing (p. 114) an important role in global and regional affairs and positioning itself as the best investment destination in Africa (Verhoeven 2015). The EPRDF has presided over an economy that has displayed double-digit GDP growth rates for more than a decade in which the economic growth has largely been pro-poor, lifting millions of people out of poverty (Fantu & Zinabu, 2015). The number of households with improved living standards as measured by electricity, piped water, and infrastructure doubled from 2000 to 2011 (MoFED 2013).

However, we need to be careful and cautious. The numerical and quantitative economic growth of being of the faster than any other African country in the past 10 years faces big structural

macroeconomic bottlenecks including high unemployment, unfair distribution of resources and wealth, foreign exchange shortage, looming debt crisis, trade deficit and the likes. One must not be carried away by the numbers.

Ethiopia's Foreign Policy and the Global war on terror.

The “war on terrorism” emerged as a response to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 under the Bush administration with the foreign policy of American global counterterrorism campaign. In its scope, expenditure, and impact on terrorism was comparable to the cold war; it was intended to represent a new phase in global political relations and has had important consequences for security, human rights, international law, cooperation, and governance (Jackson, 2015)⁶³ It brought a paradigm shift of foreign policy of states in many countries across the world in the post-cold war period in which defense policy, intelligence, resources, diplomacy, and military activities were shifted toward the global “war on terror.”

For over a decade, the United States has considered the Horn of Africa—Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia, Eritrea, and Sudan—a major source of terrorism in which following the 9-11 attacks against the United States, the Horn has come under increased scrutiny as a strategic focal point in the war against terrorism.⁶⁴ The post-9/11 period, Ethiopia emerged as an important partner to the United States given its dominant regional role and strategic significance in the Horn of Africa in the global “war on terrorism”. The foreign policy of the government of Ethiopia made combatting terrorism one of the national security priorities of Ethiopia towards the Horn of Africa region, particularly Somalia. And the policy of counter-terrorism emerged as the most important factor in the US-Ethiopia relations in the aftermath of the 9/11 involving foreign aid, economic support, the sharing of intelligence, training of Ethiopian security personnel, and cooperation in counter-terrorism programs.

⁶³ Jackson, Richard (2015). “War on Terrorism: United States History” Britannica. Retrieved from: <https://www.britannica.com/>

⁶⁴ The United States Institute of Peace. (January 2004) ‘Terrorism in the Horn of Africa’ : Special Report 113: 1200 17th Street NW • Washington, DC 20036 • 202.457.1700 This report presents the views shared by six regional experts at a U.S. Institute of Peace workshop, “Assessing Terrorism in the Horn of Africa: Threats and Responses,” held on May 28.

The government of the late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi saw a huge political opportunity in the wake of US campaign by extending the foreign policy apparatus and the diplomatic machinery of the state for its narrowly driven domestic and regional geopolitical maneuvers. Probably the biggest foreign policy blunder of Meles's tenure was on Somalia in which Ethiopia acted unilaterally, invading Somalia in 2006 with the intention of eliminating a security threat, consisting of Eritrean military advisors embedded within the security structures of the Islamic Courts (Dee Waal, 2019). The foreign policy of the "war on terrorism" and counterterrorism operations of the United States has continued unabated in Somalia given the continuing threat of the Al-Shabab terrorism forces pose to peace and stability to the Horn of Africa and US interests. And thus, Ethio-US relations are still shaped and influenced by this factor in which Ethiopia's defense forces continue to fight the militant under the auspices of the AMISIM mission in Somalia.

However, one important development with the emergence of the global "war on terrorism" in the domestic arena was the instrumentalization of the global geopolitical reality for domestic political purposes by the Ethiopia government. Despite Ethiopia's history of Red Terror and White Terror during the Derg regime, the government of Ethiopia used the opportunity to carry out a major crackdown on political dissent and opposition with the introduction of Anti-Terrorism law in 2009. With the securitization of the Ethiopian state, the law was employed as a tool of repression to stifle dissent. International human rights institutions including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have vastly documented how the law and the counterterrorism framework was misused, abused and deployed for politically motivated purposes: grave human rights violation and authoritarianism and the attack on democracy. It is also important to note that the Horn of Africa, US foreign policy has been guided more by the pragmatic concern of security and stability than by the normatively appealing goal of liberal democracy.

5.3. Ethiopia's Horn of Africa Foreign Policy

Ethiopia's Foreign Policy and National Security Strategy towards the Horn of African countries as pointed in the policy document argued that:

“Ethiopia has had a history of both friendship and hostility with these countries in the Horn, and there is a risk of being guided by emotion in assessing the value of our neighbors. There could be the tendency to exaggerate or minimize their influence of our neighbors in our effort to develop and democratize. It is important to be free of emotions in analyzing the situation” (2002:36).

The close reading of the document vi-a-vis the Horn of Africa regional policy is that it sacrificed strategic long-term analysis for short-term political analysis partly as a response to the domestic audience.

The attention and policy focus given to the immense strategic significance of the Horn of Africa is minimal at best. The document says: “our neighbours cannot be considered sources of investment and development finance” limiting the value of the Horn of Africa to port-service. This narrowly-understood analysis and reading of the Horn of Africa lacks both in-depth knowledge and the necessary strategic vision any foreign policy and national security strategy must consider to serve as a guiding framework. In its characterization of neighboring countries' significance as ‘little and limited’ substituted circumspection and strategic vision with the politics of the moment.

The FANSPS prioritization of internal security over external threats and vulnerabilities; and domestic considerations over foreign policy can be considered a misplaced analysis of the regional security environment of the Horn detrimentally affects Ethiopia. The Horn's security environment has been largely affecting Ethiopia in the post-2002 period. Some of the most importance instances are that Ethiopia's military “intervention” in Somalia in 2005 and subsequent involvement of Ethiopia's peacekeepers in that country. And also, the continuing threat of terrorism to Ethiopia's national security is an important example.

The other important one is the independence of South Sudan in 2011 and the civil war the country entered into two years later has significantly impacted Ethiopia's foreign policy and national security. However, the current working policy has expired in failing to update itself to the constantly changing dynamics of the Horn of Africa's geopolitics. Alex de Waal (2019), a prominent Horn of Africa analyst in his recent report titled *Pax Africana or Middle East Security Alliance* argued that the 2002 Foreign Affairs and National Security white paper is more an analysis of Ethiopia's predicament and a statement of doctrine, than a policy paper as such written by Meles Zenawi in the immediate aftermath of the war with Eritrea, partly as a rebuff to internal critics who argued that Ethiopia should have pursued its war with Eritrea to the point of total victory, regardless of cost. However, the 2002 foreign policy paper is essentially important in recognizing the special attention the Middle Eastern region deserves in our foreign relations and national security policy directly or indirectly in influencing our economic development in a substantial way. In a very general way, the policy paper articulates that:

“the policy we pursue toward the Middle East must be based on knowledge and must be supported by appropriate research and study. By no means should we be guided by feelings or whims. Our policy should aim at reducing the negative effects of the problems that hinder the development of our relationship. Ours has to be a policy of considerable detail, which takes into account the particular conditions of each country in the Middle East.”

This is absolutely true that Ethiopia's relations with the Middle East states must transcend the politics of the moment and emotionally and culturally driven policy. Ethiopia must adopt a strategic thinking and long-term development in our foreign policy towards this equally strategically significant part of the world. We cannot choose who our regional neighbours are. We can only choose long-term strategic policy over short-term foreign policy calculation in learning from past mistakes and historical assets we have with the region. It is also important to stress that the current foreign policy of regime of Ethiopia lacks strong institutionalism and foreign policy dynamisms critically needed to adapt to rapidly changing and unpredictable external environment.

A clear indication is the currently working Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and Strategy (FANSPS) whitepaper document remaining unrevised in spite of significant national and international changes since its articulation and documentation in 2002 (Yohannes, 2017).⁶⁵ However, the foreign policy document has not been revised until now (May 2020). However, reports have emerged that the new Abiy administration is in the process of a new foreign policy. In attempting to explore Ethiopia's foreign policy dynamism towards on its intra-Horn relations, I will be highlighting Ethiopia foreign policy towards core Horn States, namely: Somalia, Eritrea and Djibouti.

5.3.1. Ethiopia's Foreign Policy Towards Somalia

Ethiopia and Somalia share a long and problematic border in the Horn of Africa. Beyond geography, the two countries share cultural, social and historical relations. Despite the arbitrarily drawn borders between the two countries, Somali people of people and Somalia have strong historical bonds and cultural relations. The legacy of the Ogaden War of the 1977/78 is still prevalent among policy makers and the general populace. Ethiopia's also played a significant role in the Somalia Peace process including the Addis Ababa, Sodere, Cairo, and Arta Conferences. However, the foreign policy of peaceful conflict resolution faced many challenges including regional rivalry between Ethiopia, Egypt and Djibouti leading one side supporting different parties in the conflict.

In the previous parts, I have already discussed how the collapse of the central government in Somalia and the subsequent civil war have shaped Ethiopia foreign policy towards Somalia. Especially, with regard to the so-called global "war on terrorism". The recent the surge in development activities at ports in the Horn of Africa has a created a geopolitical condition where Ethiopia's policy of diversifying its port access put the country at loggerheads with Somalia over the issue of Berbera port of Somaliland. Landlocked Ethiopia's strategic drive to reduce its dependency on Djibouti's port for imports and exports through the refurbishment, development and use of other, regional ports: Port Sudan in Sudan, Berbera in the Somaliland region of Somalia, and Mombasa in Kenya.

⁶⁵ Yohannes, Gebeyehu. (2017). "Ethiopia's Foreign Policy Dynamism." Retrieved From: <https://addisfortune.net/columns/ethiopias-foreign-policy-dynamism/>

A new Tripartite deal between the UAE, Ethiopia, and Somaliland over Berbera port in which Ethiopia acquired 19%, Somaliland 30%, and the UAE owned 51% created a regional tension between the Somalia Federal Government and Somaliland.⁶⁶ The tripartite deal created regional tension between the Somali Federal Government and Somaliland where the latter accused the violation of Somalia's territorial integrity and sovereignty further endangering the already fragile political settlement in the country and the Horn region. And also, the deal is part of the wider geopolitics taking place in the Horn of Africa where the Gulf-crisis was exported to the region forcing countries to take sides.

The refusal of President Farmajo of Somalia to side with the UAE in its dispute with Qatar led a diplomatic tension between the two. The Abu Dhabi government closed hospitals, schools and other development projects in Somalia indicating how Gulf humanitarian diplomacy can be weaponized and is part of the ongoing geopolitics. With regard to Somalia the current working Foreign Policy doctrine of Ethiopia emphasizes that:

The question could be raised regarding the recognition of Somaliland as an independent state. Taking this initiative is not preferable to Ethiopia because it would create negative feelings on the part of Somalis living in the rest of Somalia and others would be suspicious of our intent. Therefore, our cooperation with these regions should not include recognizing the regional administrations as independent states. But we should continue to assist these regions in maintaining peace and stability, as it is to our advantage and the benefit of the peoples living in the area.

In addition to this regional and national political quagmire, there were also commentaries that Ethiopia's Somaliland Port deal may further entrench the defacto balkanization (Cannon, & Rossiter). Ethiopia's relations with Somaliland- a de-facto independent state, but internationally unrecognized since 1991 is a big challenge from a diplomatic, international law, and regional diplomacy points of view. Ethiopia's Somaliland policy may make sense from a strategic

⁶⁶ Relief Web (18 May 2018).” UAE Port Deal with Somaliland stirs up trouble in the Horn”. Retrieved from: <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia-uae-port-deal-somaliland-stirs-trouble-horn>

perspective. However, in the long-term caution is highly needed given its role in Africa and will establish future precedent in the Horn region.

5.3.2. Ethiopia's Foreign Policy Towards Eritrea

One of the most important developments in the History of Horn of Africa is the secession of Eritrea from Ethiopia in 1991 after three 30 years of war fundamentally changing the geopolitical landscape of the region. However, the Ethio-Eritrean war of the 1998-2000 became the bloodiest and most devastating war in the history of post-colonial Africa leading the deaths of more than 100, 000 people from both sides. After the war the Ethiopia government's policy of diplomatically isolating Eritrea led UN sanctions against the regime in Asmera.

It also introduced a new era of proxy war between Addis Ababa and Asmera inn the Horn of Africa where the two governments supporting different opposition forces with the policy of complete regime change in the era of "no peace no war". In what seems undiplomatic at best and personally and party driven document, the 2002 FANSPS makes political statement on Ethiopia's foreign policy toward Eritrea:

The fact that the ruling elite is blinded by chauvinism and is prone to adventurism and essentially undemocratic could be said to be one cause for Eritrea's aggression. As a regime lacking in transparency and accountability, it has managed to organize itself as government cum-criminal gang and to expand its parasitic and rent-seeking activities and related networks. Its anti-democratic character and adventuristic tendencies have given it the feeling that it is the police of the region and has led to the militarization of the entire Eritrean society.

Ethiopia's Foreign Policy and National Security doctrine is partly to be blamed for the continued two-decades era pf 'siege mentality' and state of war in the Horn given its politically dogmatic approach and diplomatically closed orientation by resorting to the policy of "regime change", propaganda, proxy war and isolationism. However, this is not to deny the contribution of the Eritrean government to the diplomatic deadlock and the military standoff. However, in a dramatic and surprising political development in the Horn of Africa region in July 2018 Eritrea and Ethiopia that were previously proclaimed "allergic to persuasion" started a sudden and unanticipated new rapprochement. I have already discussed the new diplomacy. So, there is no

need for repetition. However, one very important development in the post-rapprochement period should be taken into account.

Martin Plaut, a prominent scholar and analyst of the Horn of Africa, argues that structural, institutional and policy issues remain unresolved between the two countries due to Ethiopia's complex and challenging domestic politics and the nature of the Eritrean regime in Asmera.⁶⁷ Despite this challenge, the issue of port access remains a critical policy dilemma for Ethiopia. The Ethio-Eritrea agreement signed in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia states that: "The two countries will promote comprehensive cooperation in the political, security, economic, trade, investment, cultural, and social fields on the basis of complementarity and synergy"⁶⁸ In the future, if the peace is sustained and institutionalized, the issue of port Massawa and Assab will be parts of alternative to Djibouti and joint economic regional integration schemes.

5.3.3. Ethiopia's Foreign Policy Towards Djibouti

The bilateral relations between Djibouti is one of the strongest in the Horn Africa involving fairly good political, economic, cultural, diplomatic and people-to-people relations. However, the 1998 Ethio-Eritrea war established a major turning point in the cooperation between the counties, especially with regard to port and logistics issues for nearly 95% of its external trade. Ethiopia's heavy dependence on Djibouti's port for its international business transactions, following the war, has motivated the two countries linkages in other areas including; port use, transport, communications, trade and investment, security issues, electric power and potable water (Urgessa, 2014). From the angle of regional integration schemes in the subregion, the Ethio-Djibouti relationships reveals the weakness of the regional institutions such as IGAD and COMESA in coordinating activities of member states to foster regional integration (ibid).

The governments of Ethiopia and Djibouti have agreed to expand the horizon fuel terminal at the Port of Djibouti and upgrade the Ethiopia-Djibouti corridor road.⁶⁹ Beyond, logistics,

⁶⁷ Plaut, Martin. (June 9, 2019). "The Glow of the historic accord between Ethiopia and Eritrea has faded". Quartz Africa. Retrieved from: <https://qz.com/africa/1662277/the-ethiopia-eritrea-abiy-isaiah-peace-accord-glow-is-fading/>

⁶⁸ Agreement On Peace, Friendship And Comprehensive Cooperation Between The Federal Democratic Republic Of Ethiopia And The State of Eritrea. Retrieved From: addisstandard.com/full-text-of-the-ethio-eritrea-agreement-signed-in-jeddah/.

⁶⁹ Kaleyesus Bekele, (2017). "Ethiopia, Djibouti agree to expand fuel port, upgrade road", The Reporter,

infrastructure development and transport connection are increasingly becoming pillars of the countries policy of regional economic integration. The Chinese built Addis-Ababa Djibouti railway has become a practical and symbolic representation of that regional vision. The ever-increasing foreign military presence in Djibouti poses a national security challenge to Ethiopia in which the militarization of the region with many regional fault lines may lead to more conflict, violence and tension. This has already been visible in Somalia and Djibouti where questions of sovereignty and territorial integrity have been significantly challenged in the country becoming a geopolitical playing field for many external security actors

Thambisa Fakude (2017), in his report titled, “Understanding Ethiopia’s foreign policy towards the Gulf countries” stated that:

“Ethiopia has become more concerned about their future relationship as Djibouti’s strategic geopolitical influence grows; an empowered Djibouti might untangle itself from Ethiopia’s influence in future. These concerns became more pronounced when Saudi Arabia and the UAE forced Djibouti and Eritrea to take a negative stance against Qatar after the Gulf Crisis ensued notwithstanding the positive role Qatar played in bringing peace between those countries.”

In other parts, I have extensively discussed the issues of foreign military presence and competition over ports in Djibouti with regard to its foreign policy implications.

5.4. Ethiopia’s New Foreign Policy Challenges: The New Geopolitics

Ethiopia is undergoing a new change both in its domestic and foreign policy environment with the new Abiy administration introducing economic and political reforms at home and receiving a fresh international acclaim for that. It is no doubt that the external setting of a country plays a paramount role in the formulation of foreign policy, in addition to the domestic setting. Despite the fact the external environment constitutes the international, the regional, the bilateral and

multilateral level interactions, it's unrealistic to make a clear-cut boundary between those elements, since both superpowers play a significant role in each.

Its location in a strategically important part of the world has always affected its foreign policy, notably its relations with the major powers of the day. Although unable to play more than a marginal role in the international system, the strategic location of Ethiopia, the structure and distribution of power, and the alignment of forces in the international environment, have always given it some leeway in its diplomatic maneuvers (Amare, 1989). Recent domestic, regional and international developments have presented posed serious challenges and opportunities to Ethiopia's foreign policy diplomacy towards the Horn of Africa. Several geopolitical dynamics of immense national, regional and international significance has been taking making the region a playing field for foreign powers.

The most important political developments in the Horn of Africa (as a have extensively discussed in chapter 3 & 4) are the global superpower power competition and the Middle Eastern countries rivalry in the Horn of Africa including the geo-politics of foreign military presence, port developments, resources, food security, maritime security, energy security, the global "war on terror" and other strategically important determinants. At a domestic level, after years authoritarianism and political violence, the Horn of Africa underwent an important transformation in the past two years. The coming of the new reformist leadership under, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in Ethiopia reforming the pollical landscape, the macroeconomy, the foreign policy arena including regional diplomacy has been one of the most consequential development in the post-Meles Ethiopia.

Nevertheless, the reform agenda proved a very complex and herculean task in the backdrop of violent ethnic-tensions, domestic insecurity, competing ethnic-nationalism, internal displacement of peoples, and deep-seated political culture of mistrust, violence and authoritarian legacy. The domestic setting has overshadowed the foreign affairs arena creating uncertainty and unpredictability, by effect a weakness and strategic vulnerability. In his inaugural speech, PM Abiy emphasized the complex history of the Horn of Africa region. In his foreign policy articulation, he said: "the Horn of Africa is gripped by lots of crisis, where many forces with interests and objectives are scrambling and where there are many complex entanglements."

After three months of taking office, Ethiopia's foreign policy took a herculean geo-political task after many failures of international and regional mediation efforts describing the two regimes as "allergic to peace".

The new rapprochement between Eritrea and Ethiopia after the bloody war of 1998/2000 and terminating the hostilities between Ethiopia and Eritrea and ending the 20 years era of 'no war no peace' was a major diplomatic breakthrough in Africa and the world. After receiving the Nobel Peace Prize "for his efforts to achieve peace and international cooperation, in particular for his decisive initiative to resolve the border conflict with neighboring Eritrea", PM Abiy, in his Nobel Lecture delivered on 10 December 2019 at the Oslo City Hall, Norway titled: "Forging A Durable Peace in the Horn of Africa" said:

*"The Horn of Africa today is a region of strategic significance. The global military superpowers are expanding their military presence in the area. Terrorist and extremist groups also seek to establish a foothold. We do not want the Horn to be a battleground for superpowers nor a hideout for the merchants of terror and brokers of despair and misery. We want the Horn to become a treasury of peace and progress."*⁷⁰

However, despite the achievements and successes, significant issues of peace between Ethiopia and Eritrea that led to the war: including the Badme Border, the Algiers agreement, the Ethio-Eritrea border commission decision, the regional tensions between the Eritrean government and the Tigrayan Liberation Front, the ruling group in Tigray region and other important issues remain unresolved. It is imperative that the peace agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea be based on institutional framework not personal diplomacy, strategic partnerships not short-term calculations, and most importantly respect for state sovereignty, territorial integrity and international law.

In the regional context of the Ethiopia- Eritrea rapprochement, peace in the fragile and conflict-stricken Horn of Africa region can only be sustainable based on peaceful

⁷⁰ ⁷⁰ Abiy Ahmed Ali-Facts-2019. NobelPrize.org. Nobel Media AB 2020. Wed. 13. May 2020. Retrieved from: <https://www.nobelprize.org.prizes/peace/2029/abiy/facts/>>

coexistence, mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity, good-neighborly relations, non-interference in domestic affairs and non-aggression with practical political commitment from government. Peace treaties, joint declarations of peace and friendship, celebrations, media attentions and good photo moments hardly sustain peace and security in international relations and complex geopolitical regions like the Horn of Africa. Resolving fundamental issues of conflict, war and mistrust is fundamentally important with clear long-term foreign policy strategy and cooperation. Creating favorable economic conditions and opportunities for regional economic integration for improvement of the prosperity level of the citizens and development.

5.5. The regional geopolitical dynamics and its implications for Ethiopia's Foreign Policy

Middle Eastern countries have long-standing historical, commercial, economic, trade, cultural, political, and religious, military and geopolitical relations with countries of the Horn of Africa and have played a significant role in the history of the sub-region. And in particular the foreign policy of Ethiopia has always been profoundly affected by the prevailing conditions in the Horn of Africa, and by its traditional perception of, and psychological disposition towards, neighboring countries on both sides of the Red Sea (Amare, 1989). I have already explored the regional geo-political context in the Horn of Africa among Middle Eastern powers: Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, and Turkey. In this part of the research, I will explore the implications of Middle Eastern countries' competition and involvement in the Horn of Africa from the opportunities and risks associated with it.

Risks and Opportunities.

One of the most important implications of the Gulf involvement in the Horn of Africa has been essentially evident in the hydro-politics of the Nile. The role of Gulf countries in the current dispute between Egypt and Ethiopia over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) may exacerbate instability and tension within the Nile Basin region. Egypt has been using the Arab League as a foreign vehicle to advance its hydro-hegemony in the Horn region. At the end of its 153 session, the Arab League Council issued a resolution in which it rejected any form of

“infringement of Egypt’s historical rights to the waters of the river Nile”⁷¹ The 2002 Foreign Policy doctrine of Ethiopia rightly predicts the possible adverse role the Middle Eastern countries play with regard to the Nile waters in taking the position of Egypt of the colonial hydro-hegemony. The hostile foreign policy positions of those countries in unequivocally supporting Egyptian demands has been evident until recently.

Alex de Waal, argues that:

*“If the worsening tensions in the Horn of Africa erupt into military conflict, as seems increasingly possible, it would not just be a disaster for the region-it could also be a catastrophe for the global economy. Almost all of the maritime trade between Europe and Asia, about \$700 billion each year passes through the Bab-al-Mandab, the narrow straits on the southern entrance to the Red Sea, en route the Suez Canal.”*⁷²

From the broader geopolitical perspective, Ethiopia should not indulge itself in the intractable geopolitical rivalries among cash-rich and militarized Middle Eastern and Gulf powers. From the hydro-political perspective of the Nile, Ethiopia should resist the pressures from individual middle eastern countries and the Arab league must be resisted and opposed given its historically biased, undiplomatic and problematic foreign policy stance. However, for the long term strategic mutual-interests, Ethiopia should and must revitalize its relations with the Arab world given the emerging transregional issues and challenges the two regions face and the geo-strategic significance of the region to Ethiopia’s national security.

The members of the League and Ethiopia’s nearest neighbours including Djibouti and Somalia supported the Egyptian resolution in the Arab League on the Nile waters which aims to maintain the colonial water allocation regime against the fundamental and existential rights of the upstream countries. This clearly shows how the Horn of Africa is embroiled in the hydro-political

⁷¹ Addis Standard News, “Ethiopia Condemns Arab League’s “Blind Support” to Egypt, Commends Sudan’s “Principled Position”. Retrieved from: addisstandard.com/news/Ethiopia-condemns-arab-leagues-blind-support-egypt-commends-sudans-principled-position/

⁷² De Waal, A. 2016. ‘Africa’s \$700 Billion Problem: Waiting to Happen’, Foreign Policy, 17 March <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/03/17/africas-700-billion-problem-waiting-to-happen-ethiopia-horn-of-africa/> (accessed 2 May 2020).

dynamics involving the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. Zach Vertin, A visiting Fellow at Brookings Doha Center and a prolific Foreign Policy analyst with regard to the Horn-Gulf nexus and Red sea geopolitics in his report titled, “Red Sea geopolitics: Six plotlines to watch” argued that:

“Gulf states and Middle Eastern rivals—embroiled in rancorous struggles for regional supremacy—have jockeyed for access, clients and influence...Dueling powers rushed to lock up friends, loyalty pledges and real estate—including a mad dash for commercial ports and military posts on Africa’s Red Sea coast. While the rush of foreign interest (and cash) demonstrated huge potential for economic development in the Horn, it also revealed how dangerously vulnerable the region was to external shocks.”

The economic vulnerability, the political instability, the geo-economic importance and the geopolitical significance of Ethiopia has made a complex a trans-regional with significant implications on the country and the region. The political transition in Ethiopia has clearly demonstrated the difficult quagmire the country find itself in. In April 2018 the UAE provided a critically needed \$3 billion economic support and investment package at a time the new administration of Abiy Ahmed and Ethiopia was facing acute foreign currency crisis. However, some sections of the domestic public opinion were expressing concern over undue “Arab influence” in the internal affairs of Ethiopia.

However, this domestic narrative is not a particular phenomenon. It had long been a state-led ideology and self-definition of the Ethiopian state. The perception of Ethiopia as “an island of Christianity in a sea of Islam” continues to prevail in some parts of the country.⁷³ During the imperial times, the Emperors have perpetuated this narrative for both domestic purposes and to get external support from Western governments perceived as Christians. Ethiopian foreign policy has historically been influenced from a siege mentality referencing the threat of Islamic encirclement. The “siege mentality” perception has been influencing domestic policy making, foreign policy orientation towards the Horn and the Middle East and the broader world, domestic public opinion.

⁷³ Loimeier, Roman. (2013). *Muslim Societies in Africa: Ahistorical Anthropology*. Bloomington, Indianapolis, Indiana University Press.

Broadly speaking, the country has been defining and redefining itself as a unique “civilizational identity” of its own where strongly centralized imperial rules, rulers, cultures and institutions contributed to the perpetuation of this self-perception and narrative that continues to impact its domestic public opinion and foreign policy decision making. This has also been integrated in to the Ethiopian state and its state building project for many years. Ethiopia’s foreign policy was redefined in 2002 in which the it sought to move away from the encirclement conception, but largely maintained the idea of external forays and interventions as a function of internal imperatives.⁷⁴ Following the redefinition of backwardness and poverty as the number one enemy to be fought in the inside-approach of the new foreign policy, Ethiopia’s were reframed to incorporate “the key role these countries can play in our economic development, and focus on seeking development, finance, investment, and markets for our products”. However, From the very beginning the attempt to define the Ethiopian state along a single religious or ethnic line is unrealistic and self-destructive. It has been one of the most lasting consequences in both the domestic and foreign policy arena leading to more failure. The pursuit of the strategic foreign policy interests and the domestic political stability and continuity of the Ethiopian state should be based secular, democratic, constitutional, principled and strategic foreign policy calculations not on medieval, short-termist, dogmatic, and imperial ambitions. The current fundamental reality of the state is that Ethiopia is de jure and de facto multiethnic, multi-religious and multi-cultural. So should be the foreign policy of the state and its domestic policy orientation.

However, this is should not be a replacement for transactionalist short-termist foreign policy calculation. Nor should it be a substitute for a foreign policy of regime survival and security. The Abiy administration has been trying to gear its foreign policy towards a great balancing act with active relations and official visits to Qatar, Israel, UAE, Saudi Arabia. However, striking such a delicate balancing act has proved tricky, especially in the backdrop of intensive UAE-Saudi engagement in the new geopolitics of the Horn of Africa including the recent reconciliation between Eritrea and Ethiopia and their quick and direct financial support to cash-stripped

⁷⁴ Riyal Politik, “The Political economy of gulf investment in the Horn of Africa”

countries of the Horn. And also, Ethiopia has been Turkey's favorite investments destination for the past several years, attracting nearly half of Turkey's \$6 billion investment in Africa.⁷⁵

The Economist reported with that Ethiopia's foreign policy orientation towards the Middle East's rivalry in the Horn of Africa now looks as if siding with Saudi Arabia and the UAE losing control of the balance.⁷⁶ Beyond the foreign policy analysis of the moment, Ethiopia should craft anew foreign policy and strategy towards the Gulf and Middle East region with multilateralism, a framework for strategic collaboration and cooperation, institutionalism and systems of transparency and accountability at the center that mitigate the risks associated with the involvement of the other side of the red sea in the Horn. The relations between Ethiopia and the Gulf countries should be based not a clientele, personality-based, and trans-ational diplomacy, but should be oriented towards maintaining policy sovereignty and independence, neutrality, and sensitive to the regional fault lines in the Horn of Africa and the domestic political landscape of Ethiopia. What happened in Somalia, Eritrea, and Djibouti with their forced decision to side with the Saudi-led Gulf crisis in which they sacrificed their foreign policy independence and sovereignty, should not be repeated in Addis Ababa. Lessons from those countries offer a cautionary tale for Ethiopia the cost of losing policy-sovereignty and its dangerous implications.

Zach Vertin further argues that:

“with proper management on both sides of the Red Sea, Gulf and Africa countries can benefit from new engagement. African states, in particular, can use the investment and assistance to develop infrastructure, create jobs, access global markets as they attempt to modernize their economies. Some regional diplomats have even called for a Red Sea forum-a collective that would work to

⁷⁵ Awol, Allo. (August 13, 2018). “Ethiopia: Exploiting the Gulf's scramble for the Horn of Africa” African Arguments. Retrieved from: <https://africanarguments.org/2018/08/13ethiopia-exploiting-gul-scramble-horn-africa/>

⁷⁶ The Economist (2019). “Why are Gulf countries so interested in the Horn of Africa?” Retrieved from: <https://www.economist.com/the-economist-explains/2019/2019/01/16/why-are-gulf-countries-so-interested-in-the-horn-africa>.

secure the region's waterways, regulate migrations, achieve food security, fight extremism, and manage conflict and displacement”

The focus on economic growth, the infrastructure gap and the developmental and human security aspects of foreign policy will shift from the traditional national security perspective of states of both region to a new realm of mutual cooperation which will highly contribute to the initiatives of regional integration in the Horn region. I also believe that there is a need to integrate the principle of complementarity to the foreign policy arena of the two regions and Ethiopia in particular. Ethiopia's strategic advantage in terms of huge youth demography, resource, fertile land, good climatic condition will complement with the rich and small gulf states with the strategic vision of food security and economic diversification. Thus, increasing the complementarity and interdependence is critically essential for Ethiopia and Middle Eastern powers in the long-term.

For example, in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, the departments of African affairs, department of neighboring affairs (Horn Affairs) and Middle Eastern affairs must not be seen as a completely different portfolio. Despite the need for specialty and particularity that can effectively work on specific region, in the new geopolitical dynamics in the Horn of Africa and adjacent red sea regions finding interdependence and complementarity is essential. This can be important in areas of complementarity in the arena of policy making, communication, information exchange, and better understanding of the emerging transregional realities. Thus, there is a dire need to set the agenda for trans-regional cooperation through multilateral organizations like the IGAD and the AU to withstand the destabilizing effects of such rivalry in the region with a plenty of its own. The two African institutions can play a critical role in advancing the mutual interests of their member states given their important international role they play.

And also, economically and socially speaking, the Gulf states are a key destination for labour migration from Ethiopia and the remittances from the Gulf region is a source of resilience for millions of households, an important part of Ethiopia economy, and contributes to the foreign exchange reserves of the country. Ethiopia should develop a policy framework on how to protect workers and migrant rights in Gulf countries including through bilateral diplomacy and

also multilateral frameworks including the International Labour Organizations (ILO) and other UN agencies that work on migrant rights and human rights issues. This policy should also include the challenge of resolving human trafficking and irregular migrations to the region.

And the migration of Ethiopian domestic workers in those countries is an important aspect of Ethiopia's foreign policy towards the Gulf and the Middle East. That's why striking the right balance in dealing with the new geopolitics in the Horn is essential more than ever. The recent establishment of the Red Sea Cooperation Council – an alliance between Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Djibouti, Somalia, Eritrea, Egypt, Yemen and Jordan – in 2019 to advance their exclusive economic, sovereign territories and geo-political interests is another important geo-strategic development in the Horn of Africa region with direct national security implications on landlocked Ethiopia. The exclusion of non-littoral Ethiopia with significant economic, security and geo-strategic interests in the red sea region will have huge repercussions on the country. Ethiopia's dependence on coastal states for its international trade, will be affected by such collective endeavors.

The Egyptian government has also been extending its influence in the Horn of Africa through the emerging Red Sea geopolitics where Cairo considers Eritrea and Somalia as important allies to secure its interests and realize its geopolitical ambition in the Red Sea littoral. Ethiopia has shown it will resist what it views as Egyptian encroachment near its borders. From 2001 to 2004, for instance, Ethiopia and Egypt backed rival factions in Somalia, which prolonged that country's destructive war.⁷⁷ The Middle Eastern states have already exported their regional competition and rivalry in to the Horn and the Red Sea region to direct implications on the peace and security and dangerous implication for the Horn of Africa region (Vertin, 2019). Ethiopia will be particularly affected with the Horn's politics getting more complex, conflictual, dangerous, competitive, fragile and vulnerable.

The other important aspect is the significance of institutional framework than can manage Gulf-Horn relations for long-term strategic cooperation. Horn countries should consider how to set institutional boundaries on competition, such that the Horn can resist the most destructive

⁷⁷ De Waal, A. 2016. 'Africa's \$700 Billion Problem: Waiting to Happen', Foreign Policy, 17 March <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/03/17/africas-700-billion-problem-waiting-to-happen-ethiopia-horn-of-africa/> (accessed 2 May 2020).

external rivalries, penalize behavior that undermines local institutions and oppose unfair stipulations in commercial contracts (Crisis Group, 2019). There are ongoing initiatives and actions to institute regional forums at which the Gulf-Horn states can get the regional platform for dialogue and conversations under the IGAD, AU, Saudi and Egyptian initiatives. However, addressing the question of building consensus, membership, inclusion, and other conflict resolution issues will be detrimental.

The Militarization of the Horn of Africa and its implications for Ethiopia

The militarization of Red Sea and the proliferation of foreign military presence in the Horn of Africa holds seeds of confrontation and conflict that could eventually impact peace, and security of the region including the economic development. For security analysts and geopolitical scholars of the region, there is a very understanding that key security legacies from earlier external military engagements in the Horn have implicated on proxy wars, military confrontations, erosion of state sovereignty and territorial independence, more conflict, poverty, famine and despair in the region.

The current geopolitical dynamics in the Horn of Africa sub-region and the Red Sea environment is of a particular concern to Ethiopia. The ongoing competition and rivalry in the region will have significant security, military, economic, and geopolitical implications for Ethiopia. The Abiy administration and some high-ranking government officials at times have expressed concern about the geopolitical development in the region. The strategic competition and the increasing militarization of the region has become one the major foreign policy challenges facing land locked Ethiopia after losing its access to the Red Sea with the independence of Eritrea. According to the state-affiliated news media, Fana Broadcasting Corporation (FBC), The Prime Minister of Ethiopia Abiy Ahmed disclosed during a meeting with senior military officials on Friday that, “We should build our naval force capacity in the future”⁷⁸

In March 2019, French President Emmanuel Macron undertook a visit to the Horn of Africa, including to Djibouti, in order to reassert France’s position in the face of rising Chinese regional

⁷⁸ BBC News, Olewe, Dickens. (14 2018). “Why Landlocked Ethiopia wants to launch a navy”. Retrieved from: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-44369382>.

influence.⁷⁹ As a new security relationship between Paris and Addis Ababa, the two countries agreed their first military cooperation accord, a deal that includes helping the landlocked nation build a navy also providing for air cooperation, joint operations and opportunities for training and equipment purchases.⁸⁰ Ethiopia's plan to build a new navy in the Horn of Africa region is partly part of military reforms at home, but also it is taking place in the backdrop of the new geopolitics in the Red Sea region, and its growing dispute with Egypt over the Grand Renaissance dam.

The increasing militarization of the Horn of Africa will have huge implications in the Horn of Africa in terms of further destabilizing the region. The delicate peace and security environment in the region will be in a dangerous situation with more fragmentation, instability, external security intervention, and militarization to the region. And with the emerging superpower competition in the Horn of Africa, its implications for Ethiopia's policy orientation towards those powers will be shaped by their involvement, policies, actions, and moves in the region and Ethiopia's strategic interests towards them. According Dr. Mehari Taddele:

“the escalating tensions between the United States and China could also end up threatening the continent...while a direct confrontation between US and Chinese forces in Africa unlikely, their growing [military] presence is becoming an increasingly destabilizing factor”⁸¹

This is most visible in the Horn where the legacy of external military competition and military interventions are lingering in the regional political setting and the domestic politics. The rivalry constitutes a security threat if continued unabated in the region. However, Ethiopia can exploit the opportunity for the better in the long term by maintaining balance and neutrality and diversifying its alliance. The “new cold war” can bring more Chinese, American, European, and Russian, Indian, Brazilian and the involvement of other in the economic development of the

⁷⁹ Irish, J, ‘Macron warns of Chinese risk to African sovereignty’, Reuters, 12 Mar. 2019.

⁸⁰ Irish, J. “Ethiopia, France sign military, navy deal, turn ‘new page’ in ties’ Reuters, 12 March, 2019.

⁸¹ Mehari Taddele (1 Jul 2019) “A new cold war in Africa” Al-Jazeera English. Retrieved from: <https://www.aljazeera.com/in-depth/opinion/cold-war-africa-1906301-2044847.html>

Horn with significant caution: without sacrificing sovereignty and policy independence. In March 5, 2020, The Financial Times reported that:

“The US is ready to invest \$ 5billion in Ethiopia through its newly created International Development Finance Corporation in an effort to support private - sector reform and counter China’s influence in one of Africa’s fastest growing economies... to help Washington’s foreign policy aims, including countering the influence of China and Russia- in Africa.”⁸²

5.6. The Geopolitics of Hydropolitics in the Horn of Africa

It is increasingly becoming clear that hydro-politics has become an issue of immense significance in the 21st century geopolitics and beyond. Without any doubt, water-politics will continue to have monumental geopolitical implications in relation to foreign policy, political-economy, conflict-cooperation dynamics, and beyond.

According to the BBC Future (2017) article, articulated powerfully that ‘hydro-politics’ will shape the 21st century becoming one of the grandest challenges of the next few decades with the potential to influence geopolitics, diplomacy and even conflict based on some important reasons: 1).If there is no access to water, there would be no world peace. 2). Fresh water supplies are drying up with the rise of climate change, explosive population growth.⁸³ The Nile river basin is the world's longest river flowing 6,700 kilometers through eleven countries in northeastern Africa: Rwanda, Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Eritrea, South Sudan, Sudan and Egypt. With a combined population of 437 million, the basin is becoming one of the regional and global fault lines given its immense significance for food, water, energy security.

The Nile river is an integral part of the Horn of Africa: in terms of geo-political, geo-economical, and geo-strategic significance of the Horn of Africa. The age-old Nile rivalry has been attracting imperial and colonial global powers with ambitions to control the sources of the river. Military

⁸² Pilling, David. (March 5, 2020). ‘US ready to back Ethiopian reform with \$5Bn investment’ The Financial Times. Retrieved from: <https://www.ft.com/content/b0c2963c-5e1ea-8033-fa40a0d65a95>

⁸³ Lufkin, Bryan (6th June 2017) ‘Why ‘hydropolitics’ will shape the 21st century’ BBC Future. Retrieved from: <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20170615-why-hydro-politcs-will-shape-the-21-st-century>.

expansions, diplomatic maneuvers, alliance building, treaty making tactics, and other foreign policy strategies and tactics have extensively used to establish the hydro-hegemony of Egypt and the colonial masters in the Nile Basin region. Ethiopia contributes close to 85% of the Nile river flow. The Nile basin is entering into a new era of challenges and opportunities primarily driven by population explosion, food and water shortage, increase in water demand and water use, climate change, and complicated water right issues (Wosenu & Shimelis, 2019).

However, the long history of hydropolitics in the Nile Basin is dominated by the hydro-supremacy of the colonial masters of the region and the subsequent Egypt-Sudan alliance in the distribution and sharing of the river. Egypt has enjoyed uncontested hegemony over use of all the river's water for many centuries. Subsequent governments in Ethiopia have long been rejecting the Egyptian attempts to establish hydropolitical and geopolitical supremacy in the Nile Basin region for many years. With the combination of sheer military power, geo-strategic location, diplomatic powers and the politics of treaty making, the balance of power in the Nile Basin region has long been dominated by the major downstream countries, namely Egypt and Sudan. Historically, the Nile River has had a major impact on the regional politics and intra-state relations through the years affecting economic development and poverty, geopolitical dynamics, balance of power, alliance building, external intervention and geo-strategic power contestations.

Treaty making had been one the most widely used colonial strategy to establish the hydro-supremacy of the upper -riparian countries. The 1891 Anglo-Italian protocol which was signed between Britain (representing Egypt and Sudan) and Italy (representing Eritrea) was a diplomatic strategy to control the water of the Nile. The 1902 agreement between Emperor Menelik II of Ethiopia and Britain on the behalf of its colonies also intended to the benefit of Egypt by downgrading the interest and very right of Ethiopia.

The 1906 Tripartite treaty signed by the three colonial powers also manifested to partition Ethiopia and to control the source of Blue Nile, Abbay. The 1925 Anglo-Italian agreement also not different from other treaties signed between colonial powers. The 1929 Anglo-Egyptian Agreement was also aimed at securing Egypt's interest. The 1959 agreement between Sudan and Egypt also aimed at securing the interest of the signatory countries. One of the important realities

is that the legacies of the colonial era agreements still linger on inter-state relation, cooperation-conflict dynamics, hydro-diplomacy, and hydropolitics of the Nile basin.

The Nile Cooperative Framework

However, in the post-colonial and post-cold war period, frameworks of collaboration and cooperation have emerged in the Nile Basin region. The establishment of the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) in 1999. The New Nile Treaty i.e. the Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA) is a landmark achievement that continues to shape the legal landscape, the geopolitical dynamics and the future water utilization agreements in the region. The NBI was launched in February 1999 by the water ministers of the countries that share the river-Ethiopia, Egypt, Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Burundi, Rwanda, the DRC, and Eritrea (as an observer). The Initiative “seeks to develop the river in a cooperative manner, share substantial socio-economic benefits, and promote regional peace and security” to provide an institutional mechanism, a shared vision, and a set of agreed policy guidelines to provide a basin wide framework for cooperative action.”

Yakor Arsano, a prominent political scientist on the regional hydropolitics of the Nile and a close policy advisor to the government is one the few providing extensive analysis and knowledge on the issues of hydropolitics and hydro-diplomacy in Africa. His book, **Ethiopia and the Nile Dilemmas of National and Regional Hydropolitics** is a magnum opus. In the book he argued that:

“Due to the geopolitical hurdles, the numerous water issues of the Nile basin in general and those of the Eastern Nile in particular have yet to be addressed and properly resolved. Notwithstanding the upstream downstream consensus on items of “Shared Vision” and “Strategic Action Program” prescribed within the framework of the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI), the riparian nations have yet to resolve the divisive issues with regard to legal and institutional questions.”

A regional institutional set-up to regulate a longer-term cooperation is a sine qua non for sustainable development (2007:22). A goal of the NBI has been to establish “a cooperative framework agreement” (CFA) to replace earlier bilateral treaties and to “formalize the transformation of the Nile Basin Initiative into a permanent Nile River Basin Commission.”.

Despite rejection from Egypt and Sudan, the document opened a new chapter in the history of the Nile river in terms of: water cooperation frameworks.

5.7. Ethiopia's Project of the Century: The GERD

Ethiopia's surprise announcement, on 30 March 2011, that it planned to construct a large multibillion-dollar dam, the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) (initially called the Millennium Dam) on the Blue Nile.⁸⁴ The mega hydroelectric dam is Meles' signature project, in which the late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi laid a cornerstone for the new dam in a vision to make the country a major power hub in Africa capable of exporting electric power to neighboring countries. The GERD is the biggest ever developmental hydro-project in the modern history of Ethiopia: historically magnificent, politically flagship, economically monumental and geo-politically game changer for the country and the Nile basin. Domestically, it has become a symbol of national unity and consensus in a largely divided and polarized country. Few foreign policy, diplomacy and international issues receive significant domestic attention like the hydro-politics associated with the dam.

The prime minister's office directly coordinated preparation for what was then known as Project X, carrying it out in extreme secrecy handing the leading role in the dam's construction to the Italian firm Salini Impregilo.⁸⁵ Against the backdrop of Cairo pressuring international financial institutions not to finance hydro-power dams in Ethiopia, the government proposed a domestic financing projects of its own through bonds at home and abroad. The Beginning of the construction of the GERD brought a fundamental shift in the hydro-political status quo in the Nile Basin region. Ethiopia's 'Project X' increasingly established a geopolitical fait accompli in the Horn of Africa in the backdrop of intense diplomatic tensions. The finalization of the GERD will change the hydro-political landscape of the Nile forever.

Diplomacy on transboundary natural resource utilization such as in the Nile River has become a new foreign pillar of Ethiopia over the last two decades. However, Ethiopia's diplomacy faces enormous challenges despite its limited success. In Ethiopia, the project has been fundamentally linked to the fight against poverty, economic development, lack of electricity, industrialization

⁸⁴ "Ethiopia moves forward with massive Nile dam project", National Geographic, 14 July 2011.

⁸⁵ International Crisis Group, "Bridging the Gap in the Nile Waters Dispute Africa" Report N°271 | 20 March 2019

and manufacturing, fishing, tourism, regional economic integration, regulated water movement and beyond. The GERD project has also successfully been made part a “multinational” project symbolizing ‘national’ unity and consensus. It effectively utilized it can also be made part of state building project.

The Grand hydro-electric dam has become the elephant in the room in the new geo-political dynamics in the Horn of Africa and wider Nile basin continuing to become a source of disputes, tensions, controversies and with a potential to induce a major water war in the region. More than any other factor, crucial geopolitical and geo-economic developments have caused, accelerated or triggered the current tensions in the Nile Basin.⁸⁶ The major sticking points include water security associated with the volume stored and stages of impounding the dam; dam safety; and water quality in which the recent dispute over the definition of ‘drought’ and ‘severe drought’ is related to the filling and management of the dam and its implications for water security.⁸⁷

The current hydropolitics on a grand scale in the Nile basin over the grand dam has been through different stages. The initial stage after the announcement of the start of the construction GERD has been a period of intense opposition, rejection, threats and counter-threats. Egypt and Sudan both initially resisted the project, but each was embroiled in domestic turmoil (Crisis group, 2019). Egypt opposed the dam from the very beginning it was announced as part of its so-called “historic rights” to maintain its age-old dominion over the Nile river. Egyptian politicians were inadvertently heard on live tv proposing military action a meeting called by President Mohammed Morsi in which their suggestions centered around military intervention as a decisive response to what one of them called a “declaration of war”⁸⁸

Speaking in a televised speech the late president of Egypt Mohammed Morsi warned Ethiopia that “all options are open” in dealing with its construction of the dam in which he added, “If it loses one drop, our blood is the alternative,” to a raucous crowd of largely Islamist supporters

⁸⁶ Mehari Taddele Maru. (03/05/2020). ‘The Emergence of Another African Conflict: Egypt, Ethiopia and Geopolitics of the Renaissance Dam’ Aljazeera Center for Studies.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Maher, Ahmed. (4 June 2013). ‘Egyptian politicians caught in on-air Ethiopia dam gaffe’ BBC News. Retrieved from: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-22771563>

that erupted into a standing ovation.⁸⁹ Here it is important to note that the history of modern Egypt in relation to its use of the river is one of confrontation, threat and intimidation in pursuing the foreign policy of ‘by any means necessary.’

The employment of overly nationalist rhetoric has become one of the dominant characteristics in the dispute between Egypt and Ethiopia since the beginning of the dam. The dominant nationalistic narrative and military threats are both aimed at the foreign audience as much as it was for the domestic. The government linked the aggressive speech as a part to gain as many domestic supports as possible. A spokesman for ex-Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn responded to the speech of Morsi as “irresponsible and the project would proceed as planned, nothing is going to stop the Renaissance Dam. Not a threat will stop it.”⁹⁰ The Ethiopian government has also been vocally opposing the Egyptian position over the dam as something of colonial-era often employing nationalist discourse.

The government of Ethiopia has also used the domestic audience to rally behind the dam in opposing the proposals of Cairo. The projects have been viewed as a matter of national survival by the government and the wider domestic public. The death of Meles Zenawi in August 2012 was, however, unexpected for many creating uncertainty and tension over the power vacuum and the future of the country in the post-Meles period after he dominated the domestic political scene and international relations of Ethiopia for many years. His replacement was Hailemariam Desalegn, a Prime Minister with a technical background on hydro-engineering. The June 30, Military coup d’état led by the Egyptian General Abdeel Fattah-El-Sisi against the first-democratically elected president Mohammed Morsi was another important moment shaping the current tension and dispute between the two countries.

The second stage has been a period of tripartite negotiation among the three powers: Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan. The initiatives of technical studies and the declarations of principles represent some of the limited progresses made during the tripartite talks consisting of ministerial level talks of water, irrigation, energy and Foreign affairs. In a major diplomatic breakthrough and

⁸⁹ Aljazeera English (11 Jun 2013) ‘Egypt warns Ethiopia over Nile dam’ Retrieved from: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2013/06/201361144413214749.html>.

⁹⁰ Kingsley, Patrick. (11 June 2013) ‘Ethiopia rejects Egyptian protests over Nile dam’ The Guardian International. Retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jun/11/ethiopia-rejects-egyptian-protests-nile-dam>.

confidence building measure the signing of the Declarations of Principle constituting 10 articles that included a provision that none of signatories would harm the interests of the others was signed.

The decision by the tripartite powers to conduct a technical studies of the dam's potential impact on downstream countries in December 2015 with French companies that include the managing of water and hydroelectric resources as well as an assessment of the cross-border environmental, social, and economic impact of the mega project was announced.⁹¹ The third stage in this geopolitical dispute is the reaching of a technical and political deadlock after some years of intensive hydro-diplomacy. The coming of a new Prime Minister after the resignation of Hailemariam Desalegn has also introduced a new chapter in this increasingly tense dispute over the dam. Abiy signalled the dam's ongoing importance when he toured the construction site just weeks after taking office in the company of Simegnaw Bekele, the lead engineer.⁹² The government announced that the Military Conglomerate, METEC, has involved in a grand corruption scandal involving the mega dam leading to further delay of the construction project. However, the dispute between Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan over the dam has recently become more complicated, difficult and dangerous with the involvement of external actors further problematizing the tripartite talks. The Egyptian government's policy of internationalizing the Nile dam issue by inviting the World Bank and The United States to the negotiation table has added a new global dimension to the dispute attracting the attention of international media and the-so-called international community. The current US administration which has led over four months of negotiation over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) has warned Ethiopia that "final testing and filling [of the dam] should not take place without an agreement" with Egypt and Sudan.⁹³

⁹¹ Saifeldin Yousif Saeed, Ethiopia's Renaissance Dam and its impact on Sudanese water security, Sudan Tribune, January 7, 2018.

⁹² "Ethiopia PM visits GERD site, heads to Sudan on official visit", Africa News, 1 May 2018.

⁹³ Department of Treasury, Statement by the Secretary of Treasury on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, February 28, 2020 available from <https://home.treasury.gov/news/secretary-statements-remarks/statement-by-the-secretary-of-the-treasury-on-the-grand-ethiopian-renaissance-dam> (https://home.treasury.gov/news/secretary-statements-remarks/statement-bythe-secretary-of-the-treasury-on-the-grand-ethiopian-renaissance-dam)

The American intervention in the Nile dam dispute after the Egyptian invitation implied the readiness of the Trump administration to play a geopolitical maneuver in the Horn of Africa in his narrowly driven “America First” foreign policy in using its diplomatic power including its treasury department and the World Bank to pressure Ethiopia to agree to some of Egypt's demands. After the Ethiopian delegation refused to participate in the US led “mediation” in Washington, the dispute has further exacerbated to a new level of tension. The US proposed draft agreement for three countries that favoured the Egyptian positions and concerns, despite being an “observer” as per the agreement.

US Treasury of Secretary Steven Mnuchin, who has been acting as President Trump’s point man on the negotiations, issued a statement in which he imposed three demands on Ethiopia: that it signs the draft agreement after finalizing consultations, that it does not test or fill the dam before signing the agreement and that it recognizes the need “implement all necessary dam safety measures in accordance with international standards before filling begins”.⁹⁴

In the Russia-Africa Summit in Sochi in which Russia’s President Vladimir Putin asked for mediation. And as this research is being conducted, Egypt has submitted a letter to the United Nations Security Council asking Ethiopia to halt the filling of the GERD after the tripartite mediation was stalled. This has shown how the Egyptian government is making the mega hydro-electric meant for power generation a matter of international peace and security. The consideration of the negotiation as a zero-sum game in the environment of mistrust, suspicion and threats has led to the diplomatic gridlock, technical deadlock and the tense political situation between Egypt and Ethiopia in the region with huge repercussion on peace and security. Without careful management of the Nile waters dispute, Ethiopia and Egypt, Africa’s second -and third-most populous country, risk moving further towards confrontations in the face major geopolitical tension in the Horn of Africa.

⁹⁴ Mehari, Taddele. (26April 2020), ‘Can Trump resolve the Egypt-Ethiopia Nile Dam Dispute’ Aljazeera Opinion. Retrieved from: <https://Aljazeera.com/indepth/trump-resolve-egypt-ethiopia-nile-dam-dispute-2004231833640.html>.

Conclusions

In the study of International Relations, the area study constituting the Horn of Africa is a fascinating field of study involving a complex set of issues including: state formations, peace and security, national and human security dynamics, external security intervention, foreign policy and geopolitical dynamics and another broader international relations framework. Many of the trends in the Horn of Africa involve: conflict, violence, state formations and decay, natural and man-made disasters and traditional and non-traditional security threats continue to make the sub-region one of the most volatile and unpredictable in the world.

A large majority of the Horn remain in a deeply structurally constructed world and vicious cycle of political fragmentation and decay, armed conflicts, authoritarianism, terrorism and fragile transitions with long history of democratic deficit. Hence, the Horn of Africa is often understood as Africa's lasting terrain of conflict and security complex, thereby generating a multitude of threats to state security, human security with enduring consequences on regional peace and security, development and democracy, global security and beyond. The new geopolitical dynamics in the Horn of Africa and the neighboring areas is growingly becoming a major theoretical and practical fault line in international relations and foreign policy of the region. It is increasingly attracting academicians, researchers, policy makers and observers of the region with its immense significance and implications for the region, the continent and the wider world.

This research provided a new landscape of knowledge and analysis on the new geo-political dynamics in the horn of Africa involving two geo-strategic levels: the regional and global geopolitical contestations and with its particular attention to its implications for Ethiopia's foreign policy. From the outset of the study, the paper emphasized the objectives of: understanding the new relationships and interactions of regional powerhouses in the Horn of Africa (HoA), the strategic competition between global superpowers in the HoA in the new 'scramble for Africa', the new geopolitics of foreign military presence and ports development in the region, and most importantly the new challenges facing Ethiopia's foreign policy and international relations in the face of growing geo-strategic cooperation and competition in the Horn of Africa. With the aim of properly exploring the new geopolitics and its nexus with Ethiopia's foreign policy orientation, qualitative research methodology and data analysis employing different sources of reliable data including books, published and unpublished

materials, organization reports and news reports other internet sources were extensively used. The study identified the new regional geopolitical dynamics in the Horn of Africa in which Middle Eastern states are shaping internal political economy, foreign policy orientation, alliance building, international relations and geopolitical balance of power in the region with short-term and long-term consequences. The new trans-regional relationship between the Horn of Africa and the Middle East is of paramount importance given the ever-increasing role of the Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar and Turkey in their rivalry shaping the new geopolitics for resources, power, influences, allies, and physical presence.

The emerging Gulf-Horn relations is characterized as largely asymmetrical, dynamic, complex, and consequential with potential risks and opportunities for the Horn, the Middle East and the world. For geo-political, geo-economic, strategic and ideological rationales, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Qatar and Turkey are asserting and expanding their links, power and influence in the new scramble for the Horn of Africa with repercussion beyond short-term deals including the balance of power, peace and security, multilateralism, development and democracy, state continuity and fragmentation, regional integration and possible opportunities for regional interdependence.

The study also provided analytical framework to the two most important determining factors that influence the new geopolitics in the Horn of Africa: the new geopolitics of foreign military presence and ports development including infrastructure as shaping new power relations and engagements between two historically close sub-regions. It identified several factors that created the geopolitical conditions for the emergence of the new transregional engagement between the Horn and the Gulf including the post-Arab Spring politics and regional power vacuum, Yemeni Civil war, the Saudi-Iran rivalry, The Qatar Crisis, and other important long-term strategic factors including the desire for regional hegemony.

This study also argued that the new rapprochement between Ethiopia and Eritrea is not a geopolitical accident that happened in 2018, but part of a broader geo-strategic contestation taking place in the Horn of Africa shaping reconciliation and mediation between states with back-channel diplomacy and huge economic support from cash-rich gulf countries. That's why detailed research is needed beyond new reports and news analysis that often fails to give

attention to the wider-geopolitical framework in the region. The study also provided analysis to the new global superpower competition in the Horn of Africa after the end of the cold war involving the USA, China, Russia and possibly the EU in a politically fragile environment of the Horn where the geopolitics of militarization, securitization, the politics of infrastructure and other dimensions are the dominant features playing out in the Horn and the geographically proximate areas of the Red sea and the broader Indian ocean given its strategic significance.

The research also identified the analysis of Ethiopian foreign policy in the post-1991 from a change and continuity framework to have a better understanding of the historical forces shaping the foreign policy of Ethiopia and the new dynamics in the Horn of Africa impacting on the country significantly. The 2002 foreign policy and national security whitepaper of Ethiopia currently functioning is largely obsolete and does not recognize the emerging geopolitical developments taking place in the Horn of Africa and adjacent regions with assertive regional and global powers.

The paper also discussed the new Hydropolitics in the Nile Basin, particularly involving the GERD from geopolitical and foreign policy perspectives that have created new sources of cooperation framework and conflict in the Horn of Africa. The GERD represents a major geopolitical shift and foreign policy after long years of colonial and imperial hegemony in the Nile Basin. However, strengthening and revitalizing institutions of collaboration has become more than necessary to resolve problems of hydro-diplomacy in the region. In the long term, transboundary water resources will continue to shape and determine foreign policy, diplomacy, alliance building and cooperation-conflict dynamics in the Horn of Africa.

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