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COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE
CENTER FOR AFRICAN STUDIES AND ORIENTAL STUDIES

**The Current Qatar-Saudi Dispute and its Implication on the Horn of Africa; the
case of Ethiopia**

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**A Thesis Submitted to
The Center for African Studies and Oriental Studies**

**Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Masters of
Arts in Middle Eastern Studies**

**Addis Ababa University
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
May, 2018**

Certification

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Kidane Gebre Egziabher entitle: “*The Current Qatar-Saudi Dispute and its Implication on the Horn of Africa; the case of Ethiopia*” submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Masters of Arts (Geopolitics in the Middle East) complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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Acknowledgment

The unlimited and continuous support, critical comments and guidance from the inception to the success of the research by my advisor Getachew Kassa (PhD) was highly appreciated. His encouragement, advice, and supervision were really amazing.

The kindhearted supports, constructive advice, and very friendly approach of all members of the Center for African Studies and Oriental Studies were critical assistance for the researcher's work. Thank you very much all students of the Center for African Studies and Oriental Studies who have contributed in one way or another for the success of the whole study program and the thesis work in particular.

Finally I would like to thank my beloved wife Abebech Zegeye for her encouragement and sharing all the burdens of my study. Her understanding of the intensity of the work and her moral supports were unforgettable.

Abstract

The main purpose of this study is to explore the types and forms of Economic, Security, and Diplomatic challenges that encounter Ethiopia as a result of the current rift within the Gulf countries with which Ethiopia has longstanding historical, cultural, and economic relations for centuries. Hence, this study employed the qualitative research approach with the thematic method of analysis. In this study, purposive sampling technique was used. The samples were comprised of diplomats, scholars, and experts in the area. The study data are collected through interview and document reviews. Data from Ethiopia Investment Commission and Ministry of Trade were used to analyze the level of economic interdependence between Ethiopia and the currently disputing Gulf States. Analysis of qualitative data gathered through interviews and document reading and reviewing were discussed based on their relation to the factors, actors, and implications of the crisis. The findings of the study revealed that there are critical, and multidimensional actual and potential security, economic, and diplomatic challenges and problems for Ethiopia and the Horn of African countries emanating from the ongoing rift within the GCC States. In order to reduce the negative impacts of the rift within the GCC, Ethiopia should insist on its neutral position along with hard working to improve the internal political and economic problems. The only possible alternative to tackle external impositions and the negative impacts at regional level is integration and cooperation among the Horn countries. Integrations and cooperation are also the best alternatives to bring the sustainable regional security and stability.

Key words: Security, Diplomacy, Implication, Dispute, Integration

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List of Abbreviations

AAU	: Addis Ababa University
ADB	: African Development Bank
ADLI	: Agricultural Development Leading Industrialization
AMISOM	: African Mission in Somalia
AU	: African Union
CFA	: Cooperative Framework Agreement
CDRC	: Center for Dialogue, Research, and Cooperation
DRC	: Democratic Republic of Congo
EFRSSI	: Ethiopia Foreign Relations Strategic Studies Institute
EIC	: Ethiopia Investment Commission
ELF	: Eritrean Liberation Front
ENN	: Ethiopia News Network
EPLF	: Eritrean People’s Liberation Front
EPRDF	: Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front
EU	: European Union
FANASPS	: Foreign Affairs and National Security Strategy
FDI	: Foreign Direct Investment
FDRE	: Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
GAFTA	: Great Arab Free Trade Area
GC	: Gorgonian Calendar

GCC	: Gulf Cooperation Council
GERD	: Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam
HOA	: Horn of Africa
ICC	: International Criminal court
IGAD	: Inter-governmental Authority on Development
IGADD	: Inter-governmental Authority on Drought and Development
IPSS	: Institute for Peace and Security Studies
IR	: International Relations
IS	: Islamic State
ME	: Middle East
MFA	: Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOI	: Ministry of Information
NBI	: Nile Basin Initiative
NGO	: Non-governmental Organizations
OAU	: Organization of African Union
OIC	: Organization of Islamic Cooperation
OPEC	: Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
PKO	: Peacekeeping Operation
PSIR	: Political Science and International Relations
PSO	: Peace Support Operation
SPLM	: Sudan People Liberation Movement

TFG : Transitional Federal Government
UAE : United Arab Emirates
UIC : United Islamic Court
UN : United Nations
UNSC : United Nations Security Council
USA : United States of America
USSR : Union of Soviet Socialist Republic

CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Since time immemorial, the littoral States of both sides of the Red Sea Basin namely, Egypt, Yemen, Israel, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states have long-standing cultural, economic, political, and religious, trade and military relationships with countries of the Horn of Africa and have played a significant role in the history of the sub-region. Therefore, due to the geographical proximity of the two sub-regions, and their strategic geopolitical location, the impact of developments and changes in one of the two affects the other. Moreover, because of their integral part of the strategically important Red Sea/Persian Gulf/ and Indian Ocean, Middle East, and Horn Africa are areas of superpower competitions (G.Marcus, 1989, p. 75). These two sub-regions, the Horn of Africa and the Middle East, have closer links with lands overseas. According to (Chittick, 1971, pp. 16-17), historically, the exchange of culture, language, religion, and science between these two areas were so fast because of the fact that the sea is a road to travel by ship, not a barrier for them. These facts caused the impact of any socio-political, events of Middle East (ME) on the Horn of Africa (HOA) in general and Ethiopia, in particular, have been more prominent than that of any other countries in the world.

However, the historical events, religious facts, the Arab-Israeli conflict, geographic feature, and resource, (mainly the issue of Nile), and above all, ignorance of both sides on the significance of mutual relations, caused the Middle East countries to have an irregular influence on Ethiopia (FDRE, MOI. 2002). Besides to the superpower rivalries; the issue of Arab –Israel conflict, the issue of Nile, the issue of expansion of various versions of Islam, have been persuaded the ME/GCC countries to use HOA countries including; Ethiopia, Somalia, and Eritrea as a battleground for proxy wars to achieve their goals. One of the most currently important drivers of these actions is the extremist interpretation of Muslim Ideology.

This time there are many severe threats like the control of Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and Al Shabaab in the Bab el Mandab along with the high number of migration are shaking the already fragile security order of the HoA (Waal d. , 2017, p. 22).

According to (David, 2017, pp. 25-26) since countries in the two sub-regions of the Red Sea Basin are reflecting their individual national interests, there is always a conflict of interests. Therefore, unless the policy weaknesses on both sides are corrected through mutually benefiting principles, the consequence of diplomatic and overall relations of the two sub-regions will be dominated by negative outcomes by increasing instability and insecurity threats. Attentive follow up for each and every sociopolitical crisis in the ME and response with the sound diplomatic decision has to be a prior task of HOA States governments. Leave alone significant incidents (i.e. just like the current dispute within the GCC), even a minor development within the Middle East is an issue that should deserve special attention by political experts and political decision makers of HoA States in designing their foreign relation and national security policies.

Throughout the modern world political history, the geopolitics of the Horn Africa has been under strong surveillance of the superpowers. However, since the discovery of a large quantity of oil in the 1920s and gas and its extraction began in the 1970s in the Middle East Saudi Arabia, and the Gulf States together with the opening of Suez Canal as a link between Europe and Asia made the attention of world higher than before. Increased strategic importance of the Bab el Mandab straight and with the increase of intervention of rival Super powers in the HoA-Red Sea Basin, the competition between the USA and USSR (West and East Blocs), to influence and control this region, during and after the Cold War era, has made the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea Basin field of proxy war (Waal d. , 2017, pp. 22-24). The war between Ethiopia and Somalia and the role of the two superpowers at that time is a good evidence for this. Realizing all the regional and international imperatives, the rift within the GCC, therefore, is an incident which has a direct and significant influence on the HoA states. This, in turn, demands strict and scientific analysis in order to design effective policy measures.

1.2.Statement of the problem

The Horn Africa Region was and still is highly strategic subject of various forms of global competition including; religion competition, an extension of colonialism, western world and Chinese rivalry, the Arab Israel conflict, and the Iranian and Saudi-led GCC crisis. The Middle East States have been and still uses the Horn of Africa as a battlefield for proxy wars and both the GCC and the Horn Africa have become victims of terrorism and violent extremism (Waal d. , 2017, pp. 22-24). Although the Gulf States and the HOA states have more that unites them than divides them, the difference between the sub-regions and among states of both sub-regions is considerable (H.Shinn, 2017, pp. 25-35). This implies that neither sub-region functions are in a unified way (David, 2017, pp. 25-26). As a result of strategic geopolitical values, the combat and battle for the resource of the strategic area along the street of Bab El-Mandab have been and is the serious task of the superpower rivalries.

The great ethnic, religious, linguistic, cultural values, social, economic, political and ideological differences within and between the states the countries of the Horn Africa States have generated deep-rooted anatogization, distrust, and ill-will and lack of cooperation among the governments (G.Marcus, 1989). Added to the poor interstate relations, the region is still affected by internal conflicts for example in Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan and Sudan. Moreover, the issue of River Nile and the special interest of Egypt on the Horn of Africa is an urgent and critical problem for Ethiopia. Hence, due to these structural and unstructured factors countries of the region are considered as weak and potentially vulnerable to different forms of external pressures and impositions.

Another important feature of HOA region is its vulnerability and frequent suffering from natural disaster events such as drought and famine situation which exposes the states to become dependent on aid to feed their people. Furthermore, the sub-region is the home of Muslims Christians and traditional African population communities. In some HoA countries, Muslims make up the overwhelming majority of the country population, for example, Somalia, North Sudan, Djibouti and in some other significant minority.

All these factors create a conducive situation to be manipulated by any external interested groups who want to establish influence, for example, the oil-rich Gulf countries, and other regional or global powers. The persistent imposition of Saudi led camp on Somalia and Puntland since the inception of the dispute, to gain support for their different factions by the Horn of Africa countries is one illustrative example.

Due to their enormous diversity background; economic, interest, problems and goals the GCC states are not united on how to deal with various critical regional developments (David, 2017, p. 34). The position among the GCC countries about the Shia Houthis in Yemen, in Libya, and Egypt in the aftermath of the Arab uprising in 2010-12 are among others, which show the opposition political scenario among GCC countries governments (Ibid. p.34). Qatar for example, is a state alleged repeatedly by the other Gulf countries as a sponsor for terrorism, whereas Saudi Arabia is not a subject to the similar accusation. As most of the GCC states are ruled by absolute monarchy and Emirates under the Sharia law, they do not need to accept any democratic movement in ME as well as in HOA states. The different religious sect mainly Sunni and Shiia within the GCC and its influence on the HOA states is an important factor in the relationship. The external influence on the Red Sea Basin has been and still is critical. In the whole era of Post Second World War, USA is always found in the problems of Middle East (Kinfe, Abraham, 2004, P. 43). Currently, the different relationship of GCC states with the USA and the volatile and unpredictable foreign policy of the current American president (Trump) make the situation more complicated.

Moreover, historical evidence shows that there is no conflict away from the involvement of latent actors. Thus, like in other conflicts, the dispute between Qatar and the Saudi-led block of states include external actors inside and outside the region as well. The involvement of other regional powers such as Iran and Turkey on the side of Qatar is one illustrative example of and this has led to increasing the degree of complexity and sensitivity of the ongoing Qatar-Saudi conflict. Because of their ideological difference with Saudi, Iran and Turkey support Qatar.

Ethiopia, as the seat of the AU head office, has become the center of international diplomacy. Ethiopia's fast-growing economy and its huge market (100 million populations), can attract to provide foreign investment. So it is clear that the Middle East states in general and the rich GCC countries, in particular, have great interest to establish or strengthen their diplomatic relationship for economic, political, and security reasons with Ethiopia (David, 2017, p. 25). Hence, both disputing parties would pay special attention to gain the economic and other forms of support from Ethiopia. In doing so, one can imagine that the rich GCC member countries would attempt to impose their interest and political positions on Ethiopia by using petrol dollar grants as an instrument.

One of the main questions of this study was how Ethiopia and the other HOA states handle a dispute which is very complicated and interrelated to various factors? The researcher assumes that any failure of HoA countries in the proper handling of this and as well as other similar incidents will cause fatal economic, political, and security outcomes to the whole sub-region. Delay or being reluctant in making sound diplomatic decisions by the HOA states towards the critical event in the ME would reduce benefits and increase their risk of instability and insecurity to Ethiopia and the whole sub-region. Hence, at least maintain a neutral stance of the HoA countries is very important. The separate or unilateral response by the HoA States to the current Gulf dispute and the absence of coordinated and joint measures could have a negative impact on maintaining security and stability of the HOA states (Waal d. , 2017, p. 24). HOA countries, therefore, have to be concerned about paying proper and balanced attention to a collective and unilateral security response measures so as to maximize the opportunities and reduce the threats of current Gulf dispute.

The involvement of several different interest groups with various economic powers in the Qatar-GCC dispute is one important factor that could exacerbate the situation in this complex Red Sea Basin. Hence, this condition should be considered as an important factor in designing sound diplomatic policy to the disputing parties.

This study would argue that Ethiopia and other HoA countries response to current Qatar vs Saudi conflict should be based on well-designed individual and collective diplomatic policy that leads to peaceful resolution among them. Therefore, for Ethiopia, the Gulf dispute is more urgent and critical issue than other conflicts in any other region. Hence, identifying the root causes of the Qatar-GCC dispute, its forms of economic, political, and security implications on HOA countries in general on Ethiopia in particular, are the major concern of this study.

1.3. Research Objectives

1.3.1. General Objective

The main objective of this study is to examine the root causes of the current Qatar-GCC dispute and to investigate and establish the major security, economic and diplomatic implications of this crisis on Ethiopia and the other HoA countries in general.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. Find out the root factors for the current rift within the GCC countries
2. Investigate and establish the security, political, economic and diplomatic consequences of the dispute between the Saudi block GCC states and Qatar on the State of Ethiopia
3. Identify what alternative strategic diplomatic response Ethiopia should take so as to reduce the consequences of negative impact of the conflict on Ethiopia in particular and the other HoA States in general.

1.4. Research Questions

The study set out to find evidence-based answers to the following research questions:

1. What are the root factors and actors behind the current rift between Qatar vs Saudi-led GCC countries?
2. What are the expected and unexpected forms of security, political, economic and diplomatic negative effects of the current Qatar-Saudi led GCC dispute for Ethiopia and its neighboring HoA countries?

3. What should be the best possible diplomatic policy response by Ethiopia to the current Qatar-Saudi conflict so as to reduce the negative consequences on Ethiopia and HoA?

1.5.The Scope of the Study

The study mainly focused on the nature of the causes of the current conflict between Qatar and Saudi-led GCC countries and Non-GCC backer countries and its political, economic, security and diplomatic implications on the state of Ethiopia and other HOA countries. States who were and may involve and affected by the dispute including; Ethiopia, Somalia, Djibouti, Eritrea, Sudan and South Sudan were parts of the study. Yet the study mainly focused on Ethiopia. Although this study has attempted mainly to assess various political, diplomatic, economic, and security concerns, it also tried to look at some theories of Security as well.

Though it might have a limitation on time to finish this study, the study was concerned on the current Qatar-GCC crisis with assessing some historical backgrounds related to its consequence for Ethiopia and HoA countries stability, security, and development events. Thus, it covered the period from the inception of the current Qatar-GCC conflict until the researcher finalized the research.

1.6.Significant of the Study

The study will make some practical insightful contributions in terms of providing a sense that it may share some view on the root causes of Qatar-GCC dispute. It also includes the potential-and actual diplomatic, economic, and security impacts and consequences of this crisis on the security, stability, and economic stability on HOA mainly Ethiopia. This, in turn, may help for policymakers, to identify what sort of plausible and timely strategic response selected policy measures that could be designed so as to significantly reduce negative effects and to maximize the positive opportunities and benefits for the country and the region if any. Besides the above stated it is hoped that the findings of this study will fill the knowledge gap on the nature of Qatar-GCC conflict and its root causes by providing valuable information on the issue.

Moreover, it is hoped that this study will invite and motivate other interested scholars in the region and on the topic for further assessment.

1.7. Research method

According to (Kothari, 1995) research method determines how relevance evidence can be collected with reasonable expense; time, money and other resources. It also decides the type and nature of the research and elements of research plan including; participants of the research, their level of involvement and means of gathering data (Yalew Endaweke, 2006).

1.7.1. Research Design

According to (W.Creswell, 2009, p. 36), research design is a sketch and system for a study that covers the decisions from broad assumptions to in-depth methods of data collection and systematic analysis and interpretation of field data. This study was aimed at gathering primary data at portraying or describing of the states of affairs on a specific event of the current Gulf crisis with the help of knowledgeable professionals and experts on the topic. Qualitative research method with thematic analysis and interpretation of data was used in this study. It focuses on a qualitative research related to foreign policies, and their security impacts on a country based on a specific phenomenon on specific sub-regions by taking a sample of well-skilled, knowledgeable, and experienced participants in the current study issue.

1.7.2. Sampling Design

Given the nature of the current study topic, purposive sampling technique was used for this study. The criterion for selection of the research participants (key informants) was based on the research objective and some criteria including; knowledge, skills, occupation, and experience of the candidates on the research topic in the research area. Therefore, ten key informants were selected from six governmental and non-governmental institutions. Accordingly, two of these key informants were diplomats (i.e. one was an Ethiopian diplomat in the Middle East and the second was a Middle East diplomat based in Ethiopia). Two were regional security experts working as security officers at the IGAD Organization. One informant was foreign policy analyst working in Ethiopia Foreign Policy Strategic Study Institute (EFPSSI).

Three of the key informants were professionals in the Department of Political Science and International Relations (PSIR) at the AAU. One informant was selected from School of Journalism and Communication at AAU, and one informant was an expert based at the Institute for Peace and Security (IPSS), at AAU.

1.7.3. Data Source and Collection Instruments

In this research, both primary and secondary data were utilized. Primary data were collected using the structural interview method in both Amharic and English languages. Secondary data included both published and unpublished policy elements, Books, Journals, Articles, Newspapers, and Magazines related to the research topic and theories and concept materials containing historical and contemporary related issues were used.

1.7.3.1. Interview

According to (Crocker, 2009), interview or purposeful conversation or professional conversation has been described as the ‘Golden standard of qualitative research’. Therefore, carefully prepared unstructured interviews were the main tool for gathering primary data. Hence, since this study was intended to explore in detail, unstructured interview method for professionals was very essential. For the purpose of this study the researcher, thus, conducted interview sessions with the selected key informants professionals and experts currently involved in regional and international affairs especially focusing on Ethiopia and its relations with the ME/GCC and HoA countries. Each interview session lasted between 40 and 60 minutes on average.

1.7.3.2. Document Analysis

Based on the providers, documents can be categorized as public and private (individual and organizational). For this study, the researcher reviewed and analyzed various documents sources to obtain full of meaning and understanding. The document also used to establish the strengths and weaknesses and integrated them into the monograph so as to enforce discussions on the study findings. Therefore, the researcher used document analysis before, during and after the interview.

In this regard, data have been collected from various published and unpublished sources including public documents, agreements, newspapers, journals, articles, and books. Audiovisual materials such as; television-interview scripts, organizational and institutional reports, were also used as supporting data source. All these were supporting to triangulate the information extracted from both the informants and other various sources.

1.7.4. Data Processing and Analysis

The researcher authentically looked for data as detailed as possible. Principal data were obtained from in-depth interviews. The researcher has selected the research participants purposively and has interviewed ten key informants using the interview guide. The researcher prepared to correspond the idea to the three research questions. Therefore, the first step in the data analyzing was recording the interview. Then the recorded data were transcribed and written down in the English language. After the data were transcribed and written, themes were organized into similar topics and the thematically organized data were given coded. The researcher coded similar idea and suggestions expressed by the interviewees based on its importance. Secondary data from hard and soft written materials were also coded accordingly. Then, the researcher developed a descriptive category and listed a theme and sub-theme based on the coded phrases in an understandable way related to the three research questions structured in independent sections. Finally, the data has been interpreted and developed the research analysis while incorporating both primary and secondary data.

1.8.Limitations of the study

One of the major limitations of the present study is time constraints. To carry out this type of research, obviously, time is the most invaluable input. Besides the above, the current political crisis in Ethiopia as well as in the region was a critical obstacle. The condition caused reluctance of public agents and diplomats to respond to the interview and it was a critical problem in gathering data. As a result, there was too much go and fro to the offices, during the time of data gathering. Above all, since the current Gulf crisis is a new phenomenon, there was a limitation of research papers on the study area.

1.9. Organization of the Study

The whole study monograph is divided into six chapters and each chapter divided again into sub-chapters. Chapter one provides a general introduction to the research problem background to the study, Statement of the Problem, Research Objectives, and research questions, significance of the study, the scope of the study, research methods, and limitations of the study.

Chapter two reviews the existing relevant literature on the theoretical foundations of Security, and related concepts which are found relevant to the current study topic. Description of ME and HOA including their historical relationships, factors affecting the relationships between the two sub groups, the internal and external diplomatic challenges for Ethiopia and the other Horn African countries were included in this chapter. Since the incident is new, no deep research has done so far. However, this part includes the strength and constraints of written materials on the issue of current dispute between Qatar and other Gulf countries. Although there is no research on the topic, the review has identified the gaps of knowledge in some written materials on the current GCC dispute, its causes, and consequences on Ethiopia and other Horn of African States.

Chapter three focuses on the historical background, root factors, and actors of the current rift within the GCC. The fourth chapter deals with the presentation of the data regarding the types and forms of security, economic, and diplomatic implications of the current GCC crisis on the HoA countries with more emphasis on Ethiopia. The Fifth chapter discusses suggested solutions to the problems. The sixth chapter provides desiccation and recommendations based on the research findings. Finally, lists of references that have been used for the development of this research and indexes are included.

CHAPTER TWO

2. Literature Review

2.1. Conceptualization of the notion of Security

As there is a variation in people's idea, culture, and perception of reality, there is no global agreement on the definition of the concept of 'security'. The growing of various security concepts; 'National Security', 'Common Security', 'Collective Security', 'Shared Security', 'Human Security', Cooperative Security, and recently Sustainable Security are some facts that support the above explanation (Lasarte, 2011). Despite the existence of different terms and definitions, there is a general consensus that security implies freedom from threats to core values of individuals and groups. The disagreement relies on whether the major concern of investigation should be on 'individual', 'national', or 'international' security (Baylis, 1999, p. 194). Hence, due to the difference in idea, culture, and perception, the term security is so controversial.

Traditionally, 'security' was highly connected to the Nation-state internal capability and responsibility to protect its citizens from foreign interference (Lasarte, 2011). Based on the traditional understanding of security, the achievement of security concerns was inspected in the context of 'State Security', which was limited only on the protection of the country its boundaries, people, institutions and values from external attack (Ogata, 2001). In the Realist paradigm, the concept of security is concerned with military power as a guarantee for achievement in the struggle for power (Lasarte, 2011).

Therefore, according to the above explanation, traditionally, security problems were assumed to come from the external source. Contrary to that above, the current understanding of 'security' has become broader and attempted to include describing in a holistic way in relation to all key elements of human development (Karim Hussein, 2004, p. 13). Redefining the concept of 'security' is more concerned with the policy agenda of a country with giving high priority to; weapon smuggle, the drug traffic, crime, epidemic, social injustice, etc. than the border security itself (Waeber, 2011).

Now the term security is developed to comprise multidimensional concepts and various disciplines including but not limited to; Economics, Law, Military Science, Political Science, International Relations and Diplomacy, and Sociology.

The evolution of security from the narrower State-centric Security' to broader and multifaceted dimension definition i.e. 'Human Security' is considered as a conceptual transition to the understanding of security. Human Security which is concerned on the protection of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and ranging from the short-term saving people from severe to sustainable stability and security that integrates political, social, environmental, economic, military, and cultural systems (Owen, 2006, pp. 37-38). From liberalist point of view, Human Security is a system and systemic practice which sustain the integration of individuals with the state, society, and regions (Ibid. P.40).

2.1.1. Regional security

According to (Roba Sharamo, 2011), the term 'regionalism' describes as a subsystem of security relations exist among a group of states whose fate have been locked to their geographical proximity with one another. 'Regionalism' requires not only geographical closeness and economic interdependence among States but also history, culture, social and ethnic traditions, ideological and political affiliation (Baylis, 1999, p. 420). The notion 'Regional architecture' is defined as a form of a constant process whereby the countries in the region build up norms and mechanisms to support in managing their relations (JONES, 2012, p. 3). Thus, the quality of regional architecture is the critical factor for the development of regional cooperation, integration, and unity.

The pre-1990 and post-1990 (Cold War) era, intra-state and inter-state conflicts along with overall instabilities were common features of the Horn African Region countries. The major contributing factors to the longstanding unresolved security problems are rooted in both man-made political and economic problems, and natural disaster climate (environmental hazards), and multiple external interventions (SamsonS.Wasara, 2002).

According to (Redie Bereketeab, 2013), the geopolitical importance of the countries of the Horn of Africa region and its proximity to the oil-rich Gulf and Arabian Peninsula (ME) has always attracted external powers. Therefore, the relevant method of analysis for this complicated and multidimensional regional problem is relational analysis (Ibid. p.41).

Regardless of the diplomatic initiatives and peace processes as persuaded by various regional and international actors, no region or zone in the world has experienced the violent conflict which resulted in high level of loss of human life as the destruction of resources as the Horn of Africa (Roba Sharamo, 2011). In the case of the Horn Africa States, due to their much closeness to each other, it is difficult for a single country to achieve sustainable peace and security without ensuring regional security. Since issues that connect the Horn African States are multidimensional, any crisis that occurs in one country in the region affects all others in the region within a short period of time and resulting instability. There are many examples that can justify the above statement. Sometimes government officials and international analysts label Ethiopia as a stable country within an unstable Region of the Horn of Africa. However, the use of this label for Ethiopia seems very exaggerated and misleading. The main reason for this assumption is the poor undermining of the relative nature of the notion of security and stability. Of course, Ethiopia is a relative peace country as compared to some of its neighboring countries. However, the currently existing peace and stability situation in Ethiopia is less guaranteed unless the security and stability of its neighbors are insured. The same is true for all Horn African countries. Therefore, for the Horn African States, the issue of regional security and integration is not an option but a matter of survival, sustainable peace, and independence.

2.2. The Horn of Africa and the Gulf States

Horn Africa and the Gulf States are two geographically intertwined sub-regions with a lot of similarities and differences between and within each other. Both the commonalities and differences are the main factors of influence on each other in any social, political, economic and security matters.

According to (Mehari Tadele, 2017), the Horn is entangled to the Gulf States in many ways including but not limited to; historical religious similarity, trade and migration, proximity to the Red Sea, historical and cultural ties, and security matters. Hence, it is difficult to analyze issues of the two sub-reigns separately.



Figure i Map of the Gulf and Horn Countries

Source; Adopted from (Abdiwassa, Abdulahi, Ab2018)

According to (David, 2017, p. 26), “When generalizing about both the Gulf States and those in the HoA, it is important to understand that neither sub-region functions in a unified way.” The increase of oil price in the 1970s at the Gulf region caused to be the major creditor of the other side to the extent of a make-or-break pattern of regimes and rebel movements in the Horn (Verhoeven, 2017, p. 4).

For the purpose of this paper, the working definition for the and HoA and the Gulf States includes Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, and Sudan, on one side and Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and UAE on the other. The Red Sea as a connector and divider is an important part of the sub-regions. The Nile River along with the Red Sea has been playing a critical role in the Horn of African countries and the Gulf States. In connection to the above, the diplomatic relation between the Middle East and the Horn Africa was and still is characterized by reciprocal distrust and hostility specifically in religion and security matters (Mehari Tadele, 2017).

As we all know, mainly after the discovery of oil and gas, the Gulf States are taking an increasing interest in the HOA for both political and economic reasons. When the oil price increases sharply, the Gulf States developed the capacity to invest overseas (C.Diller, 1990, p. 205).Major factors of the relation between the two sub-regions include; religion, diplomacy, migration and remittance, trade, investment, aid, human and arms trafficking, piracy, and terrorism. Three of the HoA countries; Djibouti, Somalia, and Sudan are members of the Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). This condition is considered as a fertile ground for the Gulf States to involve in the political, social, and economic events of HoA countries. The Gulf States are trying to diversify their economy so as to be able to provide a high standard of life after oil reserves are depleted and Qatar is the most active in developing alternative industries.

Since all the Gulf States are dependent in varying degree on Saudi Arabia policy guidance and security, they are determined to avoid the Saudi domination (Ibid.). However, because of the regional and global geopolitical dynamics sometimes there is a possibility of the opposite. Below is a discussion of the definition, significance, and forms of influence of the two sub-regions. While relations among nations in the HoA and the Gulf States are complicated and interconnected, all the Gulf States, with the variation of their interests, have experienced difficulties in navigating politics of the HoA (David, 2017, p. 26)

2.2.1. Definition and Significance of the Horn of Africa

Various scholars, based on their interests and political reasons, define the Horn Africa in different ways by including and excluding different countries of the Horn and East Africa regions countries. According to (Schlee, 2003, p. 344), the Horn Africa is a supra-state region always defined by enumeration of entire states and the term is a political concept and not geographical concept. Most of the time, the narrower definition of the Horn Africa composed of Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, and Sudan (Schlee, 2003). The Horn of Africa we learned is formed a unit of Ethiopian Highlands and surrounding low lands; with no limit where the surrounding lowlands end (Ibid, p.345). Nevertheless, the working definition of HoA in this paper, because of their proximity to the Middle East, only the following six countries; South Sudan, Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, and Somalia are considered as Horn African countries. Geographically, the Horn of Africa is the nearest to the Middle East sub-region. The historical, civilizational, religious, cultural, political, social, and economic interdependence between the Middle East and the Horn of Africa have been and is still high and significant.



Figure ii Political Map of the Horn Africa

Adopted from (Encarta, 2009)

The Horn of Africa (HOA) is known as one of the most unstable regions in the world. The region has experienced more than 200 inter and intrastate conflicts from 1990 to 2011 alone (Williams, 2011). It is true that even since 2011 until now; different forms of conflicts including intrastate ethnic dispute, interstate conflicts, and religious radicalism are attracting the attention of the world including the powerful states. There are also resource-based conflicts mainly on the Red Sea, Indian Ocean, and River Nile. After the start of the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) such as, tension and anxiety among the three computing countries; Ethiopia, Sudan, and Egypt became high.

Political Parties who struggle for power in the Horn of Africa, after they took the power, they became either dictatorial or against good governance which causes multifaceted dispute within the societies (Mekonen Mengistu, 2015). As a result, the Horn of Africa remains one of the least developed and the highest level of food insecurity and poverty in the world. Despite the struggle to improve democratization and human right in the region, extreme poverty combined with military regimes as well as international intervention has unfortunately married the instability of the Horn (Mekonnen Tesfagiorgis, 2013).

There are some basic recommended solutions for long-lasting peace in the Horn of Africa including; intervention of international and regional organizations such as IGAD, EU, and AU, designing common foreign relation by the states, building strong law and order, promoting traditional way of resolving conflicts, and creating clear demarcation of borders of the states (Mekonen Mengistu, 2015). However, according to the researchers' view, because of various factors, all these mechanisms are less likely to be practical. The single regional organization in the Horn of Africa is IGAD, which is very poor and ineffective in its mission and with little effects is one example (Ibid.).

The international organizations including UN are also instruments of some powerful western states mainly the US and its allies. All the powerful states are more concerned about their national interest rather than the peace in the HOA. In addition to the above, international organizations have limitations in managing conflicts; they are more concerned about humanitarian aids rather than solving conflicts (Wasara, 2002).

When we come to the Horn African states, they are not ready and incapable of coordinating their economic and political activities. Thus, let alone to design common international policies, their integration in all sectors is so poor and at its lowest level. In this regard, the current Ethio-Djibouti and Ethio-Sudan cooperation could be taken as an encouraging and optimistic condition.

Clear demarcation of borders between the states demands just governments in the respective states. Unfortunately, in the case of Horn Africa, states are not ready to be fair on their border demarcation. “Thanks to the colonial legacy” all the values and cultures of African countries including the Horn African States are dominated by their colonizers. The political domination and cultural subjugation of British, Italy and France influence to disregard their traditional way of conflict resolving mechanisms not only for border demarcation but also for other disputes in the Horn Africa.

Currently, the Horn Africa is attracting the international powers by three important agendas; maritime security, the issue of violent extremism, and the issue of migration (Waal d. , 2017, pp. 22-24). Transportation of hundreds of billions worth commercial items, the regional and global impact of the emergence of the Somalia militant group, and the feeling of many Eritreans, Somalis, and Ethiopian people support the above idea. Because of its geopolitical factors, the Horn has become a point of intersection for Europe and Asia including the Gulf States.

Many countries have been and still are in search of military bases in the Horn region. China has built its overseas military base in Djibouti, Saudi Arabia constructed Red Sea fleet, Turkey has built a big military base in Somalia, Iran and Russia are also interested. Hence, according to (IRIS, 2017), the volatility of Horn of Africa is not likely to be changed in the coming few years of the greater multipolarity international arena.

All the above factors are responsible to make the region as an area of strife in the absence of a permanent solution to the basic problems, which divided the states of the region as well as the people within the states of the region (G.Marcus, 1989). Since the early 1990s, various changes have been taken. The secession of Eritrea and South Sudan, the fragmentation of the Somalia Republic into mini clan states, the Darfur condition, and the ethnic conflicts within the States support Marcus's idea. The external peacemaking effort which has been the tendency to impose arbitrary solutions, often tied to financing the armed groups and this in turn, makes the populations in the region to try to develop an alternative system of governance out of the formal government structure in their country (Williams, 2011). The current condition in Somalia illustrates the above.

The question of why the Horn Africa region remains unstable could be answered by raising two major reasons; internal and external. Though both the internal and external factors have an impact on the sub-regions' instability, the former is found to be the most important one. As explained in the introductory part of this paper, the internal sources of instability in the sub-region were and still are poverty, recurrent droughts, and famine, rapid population growth, rapid urbanization, lack of diversity accommodation between and within the States, absence of good governance, and lack of viable policies in all sectors.

The short-sighted and ignorance among the leaders of the Horn of African Region States about the importance of regional cooperation and socioeconomic integration forces them to react unilaterally for any international political or security matters. Moreover, though it hasn't any benefit, the mentality of "the enemy of my enemy is my friend" has become deeply embedded in the mind of leaders and politicians of the Horn of African states. To understand the nature of the Horn of Africa, it would be better to observe the condition of each country of the sub-region as follows.

2.2.2. Summary of the Horn Africa States

As stated in the introduction, the Horn African States and their citizens have many similarities as well as differences. To some extent, these differences could show the capacity difference of the states to tackle the unfair external intervention, pressure, and imposition on their respective country. Below is an attempt to show the overall condition of the five Horn African countries; Somalia, Eritrea, Djibouti, Sudan, and South Sudan in a very brief way.

Somalia

The Republic of Somalia was created after the north and south Somalia merged, in 1960. However, after 1991, Somalia became unable to form central administration until 2012. This chaotic and anarchic state of affairs made Somalia a fertile ground for different internal civil wars and violent Islamist terrorist groups including Al-Shabab with the objective of creating highly centralized Islamic State in the sub-region.

Starting from this time the tension between Somalia and its neighbors mainly Ethiopia and Kenya became critical. Because of the weak political and diplomatic attitude in the Horn states, Eritrea attempted to apply the logic of “the enemy of my enemy is my friend” and offer the diplomatic and military support for Al-Shabab. This, in turn, made Somalia as a field of the proxy war between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

In spite of the fact that there is no international recognition, with feeling frustrated on their standard of living, people of northwestern Somalia, created the Republic of Somali land at North West region of Somalia. In 1998, Puntland became another autonomous region in Somalia. Although these two autonomous administrations are the relatively stable political atmosphere, there have been disagreements between each other.

Following the increase of criticality of the Somali’s instability to the whole region, the African Union (AU) has created an initiative of Peace Support Operation (PSO) called African Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) with the objective of creating conditions for the conduct of Humanitarian affairs take over by the UN.

However, the frustrating turmoil in Somalia alongside with the Al-Shabab acts of violence causes the failure of the international intervention in supporting Somalia (Mekonnen Tesfagiorgis, 2013). Furthermore, the instability in Somalia causes piracy in the shores of the country with robbery and ransom of crew members and ships. Though Somalia has created Provisional Government after May 2011, Somalia's political and military violence is not yet solved.

Realizing the instability in Somalia, its vicinity, and the Muslim domination in the country, the conservative Arab states have been and still are trying to exploit the condition to encourage Somalia's tendency to be closer to the Arab world (Yodfat, 1980, p. 40). Currently Somalia suffers from several conflicts with political dynamics and different actors principally; the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), regional administrations such as Somaliland and Punt land, different armed factions, clans and religious leaders, diaspora groups, and secular leaders and the conflict has the power to spillover to the region primarily to neighboring Kenya, Ethiopia, and Djibouti (Williams, 2011).

Somalia is becoming a place of competition for different powers with implicit and explicit reasons. The competition between Turkey and UAE to control and influence Somalia for the unknown reason is an example which could impact the sub-regions' security directly or indirectly with the unknown consequence (IRIS, 2017). Though Somali has made concrete achievements in terms of decentralization and governance at the local level, government institutions remain fragile and the relations between the administrations need to be enhanced further, beyond the politics of alliance and counter-alliance. Somalia's efforts to create a stable federal arrangement continue to face changes (Ibid.).

This coupled with the recurrent drought, the rampant corruption, and security challenges posed by Al-Shabaab and put the government in a tight position. The central power demarcation between the national federal systems in Somalia erodes the political commitment from the leaders and coordination of financial and organizational support at both levels (CDRC, 2017). Another serious challenge to the realization of the National Security is the lack of fast moving implementation and the possibility that of more opposition from those it sidelines. The alternative comes at the cost of additional suffering and continued tensions in the sub-region.

Between 2005 and 2012, the Somalis confirmed how geostrategically crucial was in worldwide when maritime robbery boomed and undermined the world's shipping line. Since 2015, the Somali Coast has gotten to be the source of diverse sort of worldwide conspiracy (IRIS, 2017). At its height, Somali piracy brought the worldwide economy anywhere from several million USD in ransoms to billions in misplaced time, additional fuel, expanded protection rates, and insurance rates.

Like South Sudan, Somalia's civil war has displayed openings for territorial control projection and argument. As part of resolving the problem, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, and Burundi all have troops in the nation's PKO. However, the trouble zones have demonstrated for sugar, charcoal and drug, smuggling operations (IRIS, 2017). With recent elections, Somalia may, at last, be stabilizing much appreciated to a government framework that appears to attract particular states with particular national interests (ibid.). Currently, Somalia has embassies in all Gulf States except for Bahrain, but, except Yemen and Qatar, other Gulf States haven't an embassy in Somalia (David, 2017, p. 26).

Eritrea

In the case of Eritrea, the 1998 'border conflict' with Ethiopia left the country in greater need of foreign aid. The '**No-War-No-peace condition**' with neighboring Ethiopia undermined the political and economic 'transformation' of the country. The reports from different International Organizations, such as; the UN, Human Rights Watch, and Amnesty International, indicated that the Eritrean government suppresses basic 'human rights' of citizens.

As a result, majority of the Eritrean youth who feel hopeless and frustrated in their rulers have fled to neighboring countries Ethiopia, Sudan, Middle East', and other countries as refugees. Thus, Eritrea is currently becoming one of the most refugee producing countries in the HoA and the world.

According to (Mekonnen Tesfagiorgis, 2013), the international imposition, which was “targeted sanctions” twice against Eritrea for its destabilizing the region and sponsoring “terrorist groups” have no major impact on the regime The Eritrean government has been found as less committed to regional peace and stability and peaceful cooperation. It has failed to cooperate with the regional organizations, instead continued to look for short-term potential benefits.

Eritrea suspended its membership of IGAD in April 2007 and of the AU in April 2009 in protest against the organizations calls for sanction against Eritrea. In mid-January 2011 returned to the AU and in late-July 2011 to IGAD. Again in late August of the same year, the Eritrean government refused permission to attend an IGAD meeting on Somalia (Williams, 2011).

To the contrary, Eritrea is an observer member of Arab League. Above all, Eritrean foreign policy is dependent on the hymn that the international communities are part of an Ethiopian-inspired plan to hamper the country’s economy (Heintz, 2010). The Eritrean regime points out the American presence in Djibouti and its support for Ethiopia’s 2007 attack on Somalia as the evidence to cast the USA as against Eritrean (Ibid. p.4). Due to all the above factors, Eritrea is highly vulnerable to any external political and diplomatic influence, pressure, and imposition. With no doubt, the short-sighted Eritrean government is open and ready to make short-term and tactical decisions. What matters is the amount of support that will be offered from the imposing country.

To sum up, the incumbent Eritrean government leaders Isayas Afwerk's regime has been accused of being an authoritarian military one-party dictatorship with little attention to the needs of its people. Since its cessation, there hasn't any political reform or election in Eritrea. The "militant" government of Eritrea keeps the productive human resource of the country under the endless militarizing called "National Service". With the different forms of undemocratic actions of the government such as political and religious suppression, lack of social freedoms, and arbitrary imprisonment in the country, Eritrea, by some international media referred as "the North Korea of Africa" (Mekonnen Tesfagiorgis, 2013).

All these worst political, economic, security and diplomatic affairs in Eritrea have been and are still forcing the government to follow the 'old-fashioned diplomacy'. Thus, the government has become easily surrendered to any rich supporter irrespective of its nature and long-term consequences. Hence, the Eritrean government is open to being an instrument of the Middle East countries interest mainly Egypt and the Gulf states. Currently, Eritrea has embassies for Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Yemen and unlike the other countries, only Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen have embassies in Eritrea (David, 2017, p. 26).

Djibouti

One of the strategically important countries in the HoA is Djibouti. In spite of the fact that Djibouti is comparatively a steady State among the Horn African nations, there have been detailed episodes of human rights infringement. Abuse of political rights, censorship, arbitrary arrests and killings, rampant corruption, and inadequate security provision for displaced people are among others. Djibouti has border conflict with Eritrea. However, both Eritrea and Djibouti had closer links with some Gulf countries. Djibouti served as the main outlet and port for Ethiopia. Djibouti acts as a hub for various international actors including Europe, USA, China, and the Gulf States.

Due to the current state of relative peace and security in Djibouti, the country has become a safe haven for refugees coming from the Horn of Africa Region countries and Yemen (Mekonnen Tesfagiorgis, 2013). Except for the Oman and Bahrain, Djibouti has not established formal diplomatic ties with Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Yemen. Qatar, Yemen, and Saudi Arabia are the only GCC countries which had their, embassy while others did not (David, 2017, p. 26).

Sudan

Sudan as one of the large countries in Africa, well endowed with petroleum and nourished by the Nile water, it could have been one of the most prosperous and successful nations in Africa. However, due to its internal political problems and the South-North conflicts and high level of external interventions, the country has found the opposite (Costantinos, 2014, p. 218). The military dictatorship government of Sudan has been accused by Human Rights Agencies as of being highly repressive authoritarian Muslim dominant and discriminating towards its non-Arabic/non-Muslim minorities.

In the 1970s as Sudan's arable land was serving for mechanized agriculture to the Gulf, and it was a loyal friend of the West and the Gulf States, which in turn provided with military assistance (Verhoeven, 2017, p. 7). In any case, the country's internal strife and war have caused the closing down of the export of oil trade and a misfortune of universal exchange accomplices. The overall "Insecurity" inside the country, as well as the ongoing military conflict with South Sudan and the mishandling of the local conflict over the Abiye in Darfur, has made troublesome for Sudan to procure the benefits of such a financial advantage (Mekonnen Tesfagiorgis, 2013). Vital components for understanding inside strife over northern Sudan are; center-periphery imbalance, intra-elite competition, the clash of personalities, strife over the asset, and other criminality (Williams, 2011)

Currently, the North Sudan's Government is in a dilemma of choosing between retaining prioritizing its national interests and fulfilling the Arab League countries interests. This can be clearly seen in the case of Sudan's' position on the Cooperative Framework of Agreement (CFA) on the issue of Nile. Other challenges include the resource-based competition with newly independent South Sudan.

Therefore, for Sudan, to get rid of these difficulties is not easy. On the contrary, there is a possibility for the Sudan government to become easily influenced by the oil-rich Gulf Sheikdom States. Both Qatar and the Saudi-led group Gulf States will strive to gain support from Sudan in exchange for economic and diplomatic support. Unlike the other Horn of African States, the Sudan has embassies in all seven Gulf States and only Bahrain did not have an embassy in Sudan (David, 2017, p. 26).

The “modern diplomatic relations” between Ethiopia and Sudan has been characterized by the political behavior and acts of the three Ethiopian Governments; the Imperial, the Revolutionary Socialist Derg Dictator Regime, and EPRDF. There were some historical milestones that attest to the complementary of the two countries. However, the relationship between Ethiopia and the Sudanese States was soured after the 1959 colonial bilateral agreement between Egypt and Sudan on the sharing of the Nile water to the exclusion of the Ethiopian State (Kinfu Abraham, 2004, pp.115-6).

The relationship between Ethiopia and Sudan during the Derg regime (1974-1991) was dominated by the logic of tit-for-tat. This has been exhibited by Sudan’s support along with the Arab States to the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) and Eritrean People’s Liberation Front (EPLF) who were fighting the state for an independent state on the one hand and the Derg regime’s response in assisting rebels such as the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM) which were fighting the regime for an independent South Sudan (Ibid. p.117).

In spite of some setbacks after the assassination attempt on the life of the Ex-Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak by Muslim Brotherhood murderers in Addis Ababa, in 1995, Ethiopia continues to exert efforts in making stronger diplomatic relations through various agreements including; petroleum trade, mining and energy, trade and industry, investment, customs, port usage, road infrastructure, road transportation, air transportation, telecommunication and others (Ibid.117-138).

Another development that resulted in a changed diplomatic relationship between Ethiopia and Sudan is the current dynamics on the issue of rights of use over Nile water i.e. Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) and the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). This could be also considered as an event that radically changed Sudan's attitude towards Ethiopian state and its later act to consolidate the relationship between the two states. However, since Sudan is under different internal and external pressures, it is impossible to conclude that relationship between Ethiopia and Sudan will become smoother for long period of time. The conflict with South Sudan, its current relationship with Egypt and the Darfur conflict are some basic problems for Sudan.

South Sudan

South Sudan is one of the new sovereign states which succeeded its independent from Sudan in July 2011. The political tension in South Sudan couldn't be solved even after the signed Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the North Sudan and South Sudan. The Abyei region which is found at the north of South Sudan, and rich in oil, is still threatening diplomatic relations between the two neighbors.

Like in North Sudan, there have been many allegations poised against the incumbent regime of Salva Kiir by HRs of human rights infringement such as; torture, murdering and rape due to the incidents of armed clashes between the government forces and the armed opposition and civilian groups. Despite its independence, South Sudan is still found in serious challenges and has been one of the serious concerns for the region. Majority of the country's people did not have access to basic human needs such as health, education, water, shelter; etc. Inner strife and human right infringement are actual dangers of national and territorial security in South Sudan. South Sudan is wealth in oil asset but the need for stability has made it impossible for the nation to advantage from such resource and to equitably disseminate the wealth throughout the nation (Mekonnen Tesfagiorgis, 2013).

The essential inner issue in South Sudan such as; its corrupted administration, the new state's need of capacity and framework, its high degree of militarization, and its stressing level of underdevelopment influence its growth and improvement (Williams, 2011).

Due to its failure in maintaining security and stability, the incumbent South Sudan government is easily manipulated by the world superpowers including the Westerns and China as well as by the Gulf States. It is open for any type of support and aid irrespective of the hidden agenda that affect the regional stability in the long run. The intervention of Egypt, Ethiopia, Uganda, and others in South Sudan's internal political affairs is basically to ensure their respective national interests and not the interest of the people of South Sudan. Since the government of South Sudan is too weak to reject or bargain on any imposition, it will be forced to search for any power to balance its weakness. Thus, there is a high probability for the current disputant states of the Gulf to intervene in South Sudan's internal affairs.

2.2.3. Definition and Significance of the Gulf States

The Middle East is not precisely defined and its area does not consist of universally agreeable definition and demarcation. According to (C.Diller, 1990, p. 3), the main factor to identify the Middle East is neither religion nor Arabism. If these two factors are taken as criteria to identify the Middle East, it will lose the nearby states or include many far away countries from the region (Ibid.). The term Middle East which is first coined in 1902 by a US naval officer, is a geographic and cultural sub-region referred to some Asian countries including; Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Yemen, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and UAE (Ibid.p.3). Below is the map of the Gulf States (GCC member countries)



Figure iii Map of the Gulf States Adopted from (Abdiwassa, Abdullahi, 2018)

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is a regional organization found in 1981 by the six oil-rich of the Middle East countries; Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, UAE, and Oman. Their geographical proximity, relatively similar political systems, the Arabic Language, culture, religion, shared common security objectives in response to the Iran-Iraq War were motivating factors that led to the establishment of the GCC. The organizations' main purpose and goals as it stated in the GCC Charter is to enhance regional security and prosperity of member states through the greater military, political and economic cooperation and coordination and ensure of common foreign policy responsibility among member states (C.Diller, 1990).

Member states economic enhancement was to be supported by establishing trade organization called Greater Arab Free Trade Area (GAFTA) to cooperate with other Arab countries. According to (Mehari Tadele, 2017), currently, the fear of Iranian politics and religious sectarianism, the GCC's status of absolute monarchies, and the need for their individual and collective security which is encouraged by the support of the US president Trump's unpredictable foreign policy are the three issues that bonded most of the GCC states.

Although the total number of GCC member consists six countries, the researcher has only focused on the following five states; Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirate along with the African country Egypt for the purpose of this present study. Because of some geopolitical and socioeconomic factors, the Middle East is the highest sensitive and influential geographical region for the world in general and Horn of Arica in particular. The strategic importance and its enormous cultural significance is one factor. The Middle East is also a mother place of the world's three great religions. Its largest petroleum deposit and its geographical location as a crossroad and merging place of three continents attract the attention of world superpowers (C.Diller, 1990).

That is why any political turmoil in the Middle East region has made it the focal point of world attention for more than half of a century. The impact of any political crisis and instability in the Middle East region is more felt among on the countries of the Horn of Africa than in any other parts of the African continent and the world at large. The reason for this is the geographical proximity and geopolitical importance of the HoA. Generally, throughout history and mainly after the 20th century, the Middle East countries including the Gulf States are known for the volatile political and security conditions.

As compared to many other parts of the world, the Middle East is the place of many small and large scale wars and civilian interstate conflicts and wars including but not limited to the Israel-Arab war, the Iran-Iraq war, the Gulf war, terrorist acts and other violent antagonisms. Unlike other countries of the world, the political economy of the Gulf States which determines the questions who gets what, when, and how remains stagnant for a long period. The entwined condition between religion and politics leads the Middle East countries to kinship male-dominated political power and tribalism for so many years.

Since the main objective of this paper is to examine the political, economic and security impact of the current rift within the GCC on the Horn Africa, it is more concerned on the states of Middle East that are directly or indirectly involving in the dispute including; Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, UAE, Egypt, Iran, and Turkey. Hence it is important to have a general picture of some of the selected states including their similarities and differences.

2.2.3.1. Nature of the Currently Disputing Gulf States

Since the overall situation of the Gulf States is more or less similar, it is better to provide the political, economic, social, and diplomatic condition of the only States that are directly taking part in the Qatar- Saudi-Led group dispute. However, some countries out of the Gulf but involving in the conflict directly or indirectly are also considered in this discussion.

For that reason, the condition of the following five states including Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bahrain, Egypt, and Qatar are discussed below. One point that has to be taken into consideration is that other Gulf countries such as; Kuwait and Oman which are not currently involved in the conflict explicitly couldn't be far from their regional context.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is one of the Arab leading State governments in the Arabian Peninsula. Its influence on the region is clearly observed in its leading in the Yemeni crisis and the current dispute with Qatar. Since the 1970s Saudi Arabian State has emerged as an important state because of its huge petroleum and gas resources. Saudi Arabia is bordered by Jordan, Iraq, and Kuwait on the north, by the Persian Gulf and Qatar on the east, by the United Arab Emirates and Oman on the south-east, by Yemen on the south, and by the Red Sea and Gulf of Aqaba on the west. According to the Saudi's (MoFA, 2017)report, per capita income of Saudi Arabia rose to \$54,000 in 2016.

The report included the 2030 vision of the nation contains 24 particular objectives and 18 commitments which are centered on economic, political, and social improvements. For the reason, that of its giant hard currency reserves and continuous petrodollar revenue, the Horn African countries consider Saudi Arabia as the very benevolent friend (S.Nyang, 1983, p. 3). According to (Mehari Tadele, 2017, p.28), Saudi's domestic and foreign policy relies on three basic factors; the doctrine of Sunni Wahhabism, protection of the holy site of Mecca and Medina, and keeping the best interest of the ruling kingdom. However, Saudis diplomatic policy towards Africa in general and the Horn of Africa, in particular, after the 1970s has been conducted based on flexible motives. Saudi's foreign policy strategies towards Africa have been and still are determined by history, location, oil, Islam and monarchy (S.Nyang, 1983, p. 4).

In any case, like its neighbors, Saudi State is a country of paradoxes; with extraordinary wealth and high inequality. Because of the historical and political system of the country, it is difficult for Saudi to be out of such dilemma. In addition to that, the resource curse problem, the limited nature of oil resources, and its dependency on a single economic factor are basic problems that affect its political condition.

To be the winner in the power competition against Iran and solving security matters in the region is not as such simple task for the Saudi leaders. In fear of the “fundamentalists” and the rival Iran, Saudi Arabia spends more on arms than any other country in the region and gain a huge support from the United States of America. As far as Saudi Arabia is the leading member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), any event happened in this country will have directly or indirectly impact on other countries in the world (Pamer, 2002).

Hence, in the current Gulf dispute, the Saudi-Led group is more likely to be dominant and influential than the opponent Qatar which is supported by Iran and Turkey. Unlike Kuwait, Qatar, and Bahrain, Saudi Arabia has no room for exercising electoral legislation. This condition is one of the most important differences among Saudi Arabia and its neighbors which may one of the reasons for the current rift within the Gulf.

The relation between Ethiopia and Saudi Arabia started to change during the Imperial Era and was based on mutual benefit, non-interference in the internal affairs, commitment to the principle of UN Charter and international law and convections, and strive to world peace, security and stability (Kinfe Abraham, 2004, pp. 78-9). Nevertheless, in the real world, all these principles are only written and for the sack of diplomatic consumption. First and foremost since Saudi Arabia domestically, is one of the most undemocratic countries in the world, it is difficult for it to apply the international democratic principles. Secondly, there are hidden factors such as the issue of religion, which affect Saudi’s relation with the Horn of African countries. In Modern history the Ethio-Saudi relations has been characterized by three eras; Haile Selassie, Derg, and EPRDF.

Since the Ethiopian monarch was Christian and Islamic religion was not treated equally, relations During Haile Selassie were cool. Ethiopia’s relationship with Saudi Arabia during the Derg Regime was hampered by the close relationship with socialist and communist and it’s being unfavorable to all forms of religion. After the establishment of the EPRDF due attention paid to relations with neighboring countries and religious equality in Ethiopia.

This made the relationship between Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia stronger after by using trade, investment, aid, tourism and social and cultural fields as major areas of cooperation between the two (Kinfu Abraham, 2004, pp. 83-91). Thus, currently, Saudi's economic influence on Ethiopia is considerable.

United Arab Emirates

UAE is the only federation of seven small states in the region. Individual tribal sheiks in the seven emirates became merged to avoid the domination of their large neighbors; Saudi Arabia and Iran (C. Diller, 1990, p. 212). UAE is bordered by the Persian Gulf to the north, Saudi Arabia to the south and west, and Oman and the Gulf of Oman to the east. The UAE's important sources are oil and natural gas. Although oil wealth is distributed unevenly among some autonomous states of the UAE Emirates, the smaller Emirates which lack oil were almost unharmed by the states' oil resource problem (Ibid.). All the seven states autonomous of the federation do compete with each other for improvement often at the expense of the national development planning (C. Diller, 1990, p. 213). Most of the populations in the emirates are immigrants and about 80% of employees in the country are foreigners.

About 84 percent of the population is Sunni followed by the Shi'ite sect of Islam (Ibid.). Trade, tourism, countering terrorism, and countering Iranian domination are the four elements that guide UAE's domestic and foreign policy (Mehari Tadele, 2017, p. 28). Unlike the other Gulf States Islam is not a state doctrine that dictates the policies of UAE (Ibid.). UAE's economic relations in the form of trade and investment with the Horn of African countries are remarkable. The types of exchanges between the Horn Africa and UAE extend to livestock trade, charcoal, and other exports to the UAE and large quantities of merchandise export from UAE to the Horn of Africa (Ibid.).

Recently, the UAE sought to invest in port management, manufacturing, and agriculture in the Horn of Africa (Ibid.). UAE's foreign policy in the Horn of Africa is designed based on four mainstays of trade, tourism, counter-terrorism mainly Muslim Brotherhood movements and inspecting Iranian regional power. Emanating from the common objective of the Saudi-led GCC member countries, UAE is antagonistic to any democratic political process in Egypt, Sudan, Somalia, and Eritrea (Mehari Tadele, 2017,pp.37-8).

According to (Mustafa, 2017, p. 6), UAE's strategy in East Africa is based on four significant areas; building security alliance, investment diversification, strategic resource insurance, and soft power promotion. The threefold UAE's trade increase; from \$5.5 Billion to 17.5 billion between 2005 and 2014 (taken from the Economic Commission for Africa) is a justification to show the UAE's dependence on African market (Ibid.p.6). The two UAE's bases in Assab and Berbera would grant strong deployment abilities; Air, Sea, and Land possessions around the strait of Red Sea Basin (Ibid. p.5).

Qatar

Qatar is a small but rich state and wealthy with a population of over two million people foreigners outnumbered local Qataris at about seven to one. The migrant resettles communities are consisted up of Sunni and Shi'ia Muslims, Christians, Hindus and minorities of Buddhists and Baha (Moora, 2016, p. 1). Despite the fact that Iran, Bahrain, Oman, and Emirates are adjacent, Saudi Arabia is the bigger Arab Sunni neighbor and it is continuing to be one of the most politically and economically stable countries in the Gulf. Qatar as a small country with a great diplomatic role in the sub-region focuses more on politics than in investment. Accordingly, Qatar has played the major role in the mediation in Darfur Sudan, Djibouti-Eritrea crisis, and has given direct assistance to states and non-state political actors in the HoA mainly; Somalia, Sudan, Eritrea, and Ethiopia. Qatar reduced its engagement with Eritrea as it boosted its diplomatic and economic engagement with Ethiopia between 2011 and 2015 (Ibid.).

Although the official State religion is Wahhabi, Sunni Islam, Qatari is, found to be strikingly more liberal than its Sunni neighbors such as Saudi Arabia. It is also a home to the satellite news network Al-Jazeera. Qatar is an outsider in all factors that unify the other Gulf countries (Mehari Tadele, 2017).

Unlike Saudi Arabia and UAE, the relation between Iran and Qatar is not fragile and Qatari public space is relatively more open and progressive and allows media outlets such as Al-Jazeera (Ibid.). Calls for radical changes or greater participation in the government is few in Qatar. Foreign workers seem satisfied to obtain the benefits of Qatar's oil economy despite the constraints placed upon them. The ruling family has sufficiently shared the oil wealth with the countries insufficient to avoid popular discontent.

There is little reason to expect a change in political climate as long as national revenue is maintained and ingenious workers remain quiescent. In fear of its strong neighbors, its foreign policy has come about in a highly flexible so that it strikes a balance between competing interests.

For example, since Qatar is one of the strong allies of the USA and other Western State Such as UK, France, etc., it allowed an air force base to the USA named Central Command in a place called Al-Udeid which is located twenty miles from the capital Doha. Since 1996 Eritrea-Yemen conflict over the Hanish islands, among the Gulf States, Qatar has been the most engaged politically as a mediator between some countries, in the HoA region and for the gain of political price (David, 2017, pp. 25-26). Qatar is also an active participant in the mediation strategies of other international conflicts. Its leading role in mediation efforts between groups in Lebanon, Sudan, Yemen, in Palestine, Djibouti, and Eritrea are the few among others. Qatar has also heavily invested in promoting other key areas of education and the arts and sports. At the same time, this new assertiveness has come with some risks to the state. Controversially, Qatar has supported Islamic Militants and Islamist political parties in the post Arab Spring era.

The Muslim Brother Hood movement in the Middle East and mainly in Egypt was supported by Qatar. Qatar was a major supporter of the Al Nahda party in Tunisia, of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, which is a sore spot for neighboring Gulf nations opposed to the Brotherhood, and of the Islamic opposition of Muammar Gaddafi in Libya (Ibid. pp.2-8). Qatar's most pressing problem is the lack of sufficient opportunities for its increasingly educated youth populations.

Inconsistencies in the availability of labor market are likely to cause increasing frustration among Qatar's native population while making it more difficult for the government to reduce the number of foreign workers in the country. As a small state Qatar has interests that are tied closely to the fortunes of the OPEC as well as the regional security provided by GCC. One potential threat to Qatar's future economic prospects is an Iranian claim to a substantial portion of the North Field gas reservoir. While Tehran's claim did not affect the first stage of Qatar's development program scheduled for completion in 1991, the dispute could have developed into major political or even military confrontations (C.Diller, 1990, p. 212). In any case, by 2013, worldwide global attitude towards the Islamic political parties had started to move and the basic eye was thrown on Qatar for its rich monetary support of Islamist regimes. The well all known military coup overthrow Mursi in Egypt soured the relationship between the two countries. Qatar's initiative to the Syrian clash was also criticized by other countries (Ibid. P.9).

Its engagement in the HOA was limited until it tried to mediate between the union of Islamic Courts and the Somali Transnational Federal Government in 2006 and subsequently between different Somalia factions. In 2007 Qatar called for the immediate withdrawal of Ethiopian troops from Somali and facilitated a conference in Eritrea among contending Somali factions. In 2008, when Ethiopia cut its ties with Qatar accusing it of supporting Eritrea and aiding insurgence groups opposed to Ethiopian troops in Somalia, Qatar responded that Ethiopia threatened stability and security in the HOA and Qatari diplomacy in Somalia was a failure (David, 2017, p. 33).

In 2010, Qatar facilitated a truce among Eritrea and Djibouti following border disagreement and deployed more than 200 Qatari officers in the demilitarized zone. The intervention effort did not, however, end the problem.

In 2014, Eritrea humiliated Qatar when it embarrassed Qatar when it detained a Djiboutian officer who was accompanying Qatari officers to the Eritrean side of the neutral territory. In spite of the fact that the incident was settled, it underscores the trouble that Gulf States confront when they take part in HOA political issues (Ibid.). Regarding diplomatic relations, Qatar is the only Gulf State that has an embassy in South Sudan.

Bahrain

Bahrain, meaning “two seas” is a nation lies between Saudi Arabia and Qatar. Oil and gas the only resource of Bahrain are expected to last in a relatively short period of time (C.Diller, 1990, p. 205). During the 1970s, Bahrain as an industrialized country became center for banking and service in the region. In the 1980s, (following the 1979 Iranian revolution), the State of Bahrain faced various political and economic challenges. Bahrain’s Shi’ite majority population was the focal point of Iran to use as a means to expanding the Islamic revolution in the Gulf. This politically challenging couldn’t be solved even in contemporary Bahrain. Bahrain was also suffering from the diminishing oil wealth and became dependent on the support of other Gulf countries (Ibid.).

Egypt

Although Egypt is non-GCC countries its involvement in the Current dispute between Qatar and Saudi-led GCC countries is significant. Unlike the other Arab states, whose State formation is based on colonial unification, Egypt is one of the ancient states in the world. Egypt is the most populous country in the Arab world and has long exerted among its neighbors. According to (Dvorak, 1982, p. 206), Egypt is not only “the Gift of the Nile” but also the Nile determines its topography and the make-up of its terrains. Realizing the above situation, Egyptians always dream to control if not to destabilize Ethiopia to their level best.

As historical facts show, during Emperor Yohans the IV of Ethiopia, the then Egyptian leader Ismail Khedive has attempted to control Ethiopia (Gebru Asrat, 2007,p.12). Egypt's full support to organize and armed the Eritrean fighters was another historical event in 1961(Ibid.p.22). On June 5, 1980, Anwar Sadat ordered the Egyptian Second Army commander to be ready for possible operation in the Ethiopian territory (Dvorak, 1982, p. 214). These are not the only activities that have been taken by Egypt. Many legitimate and illegitimate actions have been and are still taking by Egypt's government.

Beyond its largest population, Egypt owns a very large well-armed dominant army, vibrant media, strongest industrial base and it hosts the Arab League (Pamer, 2002). Although the degree varies from time to time, Egypt is considered as the political center of the Arab world for decades. Since the 1980s, in fear of Iran's influence, most Arab countries need Egypt as a counterbalance to Iran. However, Egypt's peace treaty with Israel and Cairo's cultivation of US friendship incurred Arab displeasure to the extent of considering Egypt as a betrayal (C.Diller, 1990).

Egypt's dominant position within the Arab world is summed up by the Arabic expression "Um-al Arab" "-mother of the Arabs". Understanding this conditions, and to keep the State of Egypt as a stronghold, the west including United States, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and various other donors provided Egypt with more foreign assistance than any other countries of the developing world (Pamer, 2002).

However, since the end of 1980 Egypt's economy suffered from various socioeconomic problems including; high level of population growth and continuous widening the gap between the haves and not haves, shortages of housing, high rate of growth of unemployment and underemployment, and increase rural poverty. Due to its geographical location, since ancient times, the Nile River was real and is steel the source of life for Egypt. For the last many decades Egyptians had to consider Egypt as a country having the strong bond with both Africa and the Middle East. President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi of Egypt in his speech to African Business, states that:

Egypt maintains strong bonds and historical relations with both African and Arab countries. Being part of both regions, it has always been a staunch supporter and defender of Arab and African interests. More over with its strategic location at the cross roads between Africa and Asia, Egypt acts as a hub for trade and business in the Arab world and Africa and as a bridge between them.(Business, 2017, p. 41)

Substantially the issue of water asset is basic for Egypt that makes the nation more concerned on any improvement in the Nile River Basin by the upstream nations primarily Ethiopia. Currently, there are new political developments in the Nile Basin which are considered as basic variables that could drive Egypt's consideration towards the East African States with major concern on Ethiopia. According to (Tesfaye Tafese, 2017), the following four changes within the Nile Basin are the basic elements that Egypt has to take into consideration. The political elements with respect to the utilization of Nile water basically the development of Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), is one of the critical elements.

Secondly, the joint/common position of the upstream states, on the utilization of Nile water is another one historic event. The third important political development in the region is Sudan's unforeseen bolster for GERD which irritates Egypt. Above all, the misfortune of barraging powers of Egypt over global powers (basically post Mubarak). All these factors are critical for the whole riparian states positively and for Egypt negatively (Tesfaye Tafese, 2017).

However, as one Egyptian professor said in her presentation titled "The more things change the more they remain the same", in spite of all the above changes, Egypt's position still emanates from the 1959 agreement which gave the two downstream countries effective control of the Nile water (75% and 25%). Since then Egypt has made repeated statements about its readiness to use military force to protect its share of the river's water and history shows as the diplomatic tensions mainly between Egypt and Ethiopia (Williams, 2011).

Egypt, then, would not hesitate to manipulate any opportunity that would help to ensure its objective. Therefore anyone can imagine that Egypt will lobby the Saudi-Led Gulf states to be at the side of its benefit. It is also possible to predict that Qatar on the other hand, would follow the logic of “the enemy of my enemy is my friend” and may act against Egypt’s interest.

According to (Kinfu Abraham, 2004,pp.141-6), there are some other basic factors that could be seen as major drivers of the relation between Egypt and Ethiopia. The issue of Nile, historical linkage of religion, the geopolitical role of Egypt and Ethiopia in their respective area and other external regional and international factors are among others. The modern relationship between the two countries could be summarized by separating into three governmental systems; during Haile Selassie, the Derg regime, and EPRDF.

During Haile Selassie the relationship had two opposite forms. The positive phase was the good rapport between Haile Selassie and Gamal Abdel Nasser and strategic partnership between Egypt and Ethiopia in various international and regional organizations such as the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The negative side of the relationship was the 1959 agreement between Sudan and Egypt and the overall attitude towards the Nile River (Kinfu Abraham, 2004, pp. 143-9). During the Derg regime, the relations between the two countries have been dominated by the Cold War ideological difference and the issue of Nile. When Ethiopia was sided to the USSR cap while Egypt became close to the USA. Another important issue was because Cairo feared that it could be harmed by the Tana Beles, which was the project of the then Ethiopian government, Egypt is said to have blocked a loan from African Development Bank (ADB) (Kinfu Abraham, 2004, pp. 149-151).

Current Ethiopia's Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and Strategy (FANSPS) states that Egyptian believe that the Nile waters are not sufficient for all (FDRE, 2002, p. 118). Egyptians could understand that Nile water if used properly is more than enough for all riparian. However, the issue of Nile for Egyptian is beyond water and consider themselves as the only owner of the river.

Thus, if other upper stream countries mainly Ethiopia could utilize the Nile water, Egyptians consider this as their sovereignty became in danger. In addition to that, they believe that if Ethiopia develops its economy Egypt's influence in the international and regional affairs would reduce. To sum up, the relation between Egypt and Ethiopia should not only be driven by the issue of Nile but also by many political, economic, social, diplomatic, and security matters. If Egypt and Ethiopia could develop their relations apart from the issue of Nile, there are many sectors that can develop mutual benefit of both countries (Mola Mitiku, 2015, p.30).

2.3.Ethio-Arab Diplomatic Relations and its Dynamics

As an independent country for thousands of years, Ethiopia has rich experience in the history of diplomacy and international relations. Ethiopia's diplomatic history may go back to the time of dynastic Egypt. Ethiopia's diplomacy in antiquity was deployed to advance the economic interests of the country and to protect the country's subjects or allies abroad (Ayele Bekerie, 2017, p.159). The objective of this part is not to narrate Ethiopia's diplomatic history but to discuss the development and dynamics of Ethiopia's diplomatic relations with the Middle East in general and the Gulf States in particular. Additionally, major factors that have been and still affecting the relations and its current status are included.

Ethiopia's early contact with the Arab world could be explained as historic as the relation between the two great religions; Christianity and Islam. Few but influential immigrants from the Arabian Peninsula to northern Ethiopia and other immigrants crossed the Babel-Mandab in the Hadar of Harar was extremely important for the link between the populations of the Horn (Kinfe Abraham, 2004, pp.49-50).

The implementation of Christianity in northern Ethiopia in the fourth century A.D. maintained contacts with the Christian community of the Nile Valley and caused for the special relationship between Ethiopia and Egypt (Kinfu Abraham, 2004, p.49). Prophet Muhammad was highly influenced not only by the Ethiopian Christian community who were lived in Mecca but also by the Ethiopian king granting refuges to the persecuted followers of the prophet (Ibid. p.54).

Historically, the degree of Ethiopia's diplomatic power varies from time to time. During the ancient time of Hatse Ezana in the fourth century and Emperor Caleb in the sixth century, Ethiopia's diplomacy was guided by religious and commercial interests (Ayele Bekerie, 2017). The port known as Adulis in the Red Sea was a great artery of the ancient world in the Aksumite kingdom. The links of Ethiopia with other parts of the world through military campaigns, trading, and the cultural and ideological exchange made Aksum significant in the then international community.

This condition has continued until the downfall of the kingdom. Since then to the recent times, Ethiopia's national security policy efforts were to focus on the outward-looking which undermined the impact of the internal problems and vulnerabilities on its national security and survival (FDRE, 2002, pp. 1-2). The current Ethiopian foreign policy is designed based on the following basic principles including; development and building a democratic system, national pride and prestige, and globalization with clearly stated objectives and strategies. However, the relations and differences of Ethiopia with the other Gulf countries vary from country to country due to three reasons. These are; the influence of Egypt on the Gulf countries, being doubtful of religious equality in Ethiopia, and hostility toward Ethiopia in connection with the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Because of the misinterpretation of the above historical facts and ignorance of both sides, the relation has been discouraging. For decades, Ethiopia's diplomatic strategy towards the Middle East and Neighboring countries has been guided by outward-looking policy. Considering itself as a Christian island had two critical failures.

Firstly the idea was undermining the significant Muslim minorities in Ethiopia and secondly, it made the neighboring countries and the Middle East states to look Ethiopia as against Islam. Recently, Ethiopia's relation with the Arab countries is improving significantly due to two important measures; one is the EPRDF's policy of granting religious equality and granting of independence to Eritrea. These two actions are welcomed by the Middle East and Arab states (Kinfu Abraham, 2004, pp.55-6). Furthermore, to some extent, at least in principle, former Ethiopia's attitude towards the Middle East and neighboring countries have been changed by the contemporary Ethiopian government.

Inward looking, using regional diplomacy as a critical supporter, economic development, stability and democratic governance are considered as a cornerstone of current Ethiopia's foreign policy strategies. Current Ethiopia's foreign policy clearly states that establishment of an integrated, peaceful, and prosperous region is equally necessary for its neighbors and to its internal peace (FDRE, 2002).

This new orientation of Ethiopian foreign policy which focuses on economic growth, democratization, solving internal challenges and reducing vulnerabilities, enables the country to do its homework and identify shortcomings. Ethiopia one of the oldest and independent countries in Africa and the second largest in Horn Africa shares border with all HoA countries. Though Ethiopia is considered one of the poorest countries in the world, it has been recognized for having rapid economic growth over the last two decades. Ethiopia has border conflict with Eritrea since 1998 and ethnic and territorial conflict with Islamic forces from Somalia.

Ethiopia as a home to various ethnic groups and is vulnerable to ethnic clashes. Furthermore, for Ethiopia, the issue of Nile is critical. Unlike the other Horn African countries, Ethiopia and South Sudan are not members of Arab League and are landlocked countries. Because of its central location and other factors, Ethiopia is the hub of regional integration in the IGAD region which demands proactive foreign policy to a shift of focus to economic and trade diplomacy in the region (Mehari Tadele, 2014).

Although Ethiopia is acknowledged for having fast economic growth, there are problems when it comes to the political development including the absence of good governance, mistreatment of oppositions, and increasing corruption. Hence, unless these drawbacks are improved, the country's fragile political atmosphere becomes worse.

Thus, deep research regarding the relations with the Gulf countries, clear explanation to the countries on the issues of Nile, and equality of religion in Ethiopia must be Ethiopia's policy directions towards the Gulf States (FDRE, 2002, pp. 111-131). Out of all Gulf States, only Yemen and Saudi Arabia had longstanding relations with Ethiopia. Currently, Ethiopia has embassies in Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Yemen. Reciprocally, except Bahrain and Oman, all other Gulf States have embassies in Ethiopia (David, 2017, p. 26). The strategies then allow Ethiopia to improve its diplomatic achievements with the neighboring countries. Hence, Ethiopia has signed a comprehensive cooperation agreement with Somalia, Sudan, Djibouti, Kenya, and South Sudan and extraordinary far-reaching bilateral agreements have signed with Somalia that includes common defense and cooperation in counter terrorisms and violent extremism (Mehari Tadele, 2014). Realizing their importance Ethiopia's relation with the Middle East states outlines in the FANSPS as follows.

The Middle East is a region that significantly influences our security. Directly or indirectly it influences our economic development in a substantial way. That is why the Middle East is one of the regions that deserves special attention in our foreign relations and national security policy (FDRE, 2002, p. 116)

Current Ethiopia's diplomatic opportunities and challenges on unilateral and multilateral relations can be analyzed based on the following important reasons. First and foremost, the guidance of Ethiopia's international relations stated as Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and Strategy (FANSPS) have been widely accepted and acted in all its unilateral, regional and international entities.

However, the internal political stability and the strength of democracy are in its infancy and vulnerable to different internal and external challenges. Unlike the Cold War era, current Ethiopia's foreign policy is open for all who are interested to have relations with the country at any level and in any sector. However, because of the country's political and economic policy; revolutionary democracy and developmental state ideology, currently, Ethiopia's relation is tilted more towards some Asian countries (China and the Asian tigers) than other countries in the world.

Fast Ethiopia's economic growth increases its trade relation and attracts Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) regionally as well as internationally. Next, to Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ethiopia is the second potentially endowed with hydroelectric power in the region. Power as one of the most important infrastructures in development and the availability of huge amount of power potential in Ethiopia makes the country as significantly influential in the sub-region as well as in the region. In comparison to the current level of security and stability observed in Sub-Saharan states and the Horn of Africa, one could reasonably argue that the state of Ethiopia is not only relatively a peace and stable country, but also an active participant in international Peacekeeping Operations (PKO).

Currently, Ethiopia is ranked the first troop contributor in the world Peace Support Operations (PSO). Ethiopia is deploying more than 12, 000 troops in different United Nations' (UN) missions in African. In addition to its internal case, Ethiopia is a victim of international terrorism and this makes the country a strong ally of westerns in the combating terrorism in the IGAD region.

With its historical Pan-African and state of not colonized country in Africa, Ethiopia has increased its multilateral platform. From the history of its victimization of invaders, Ethiopia strongly supported collective security and multilateral platforms and institutions. Hence, Ethiopia had taken the initiative starting from the League of Nations in order to pursue its own interests and seek solutions to threats to its sovereignty (Mehari Tadele, 2014).

Ethiopia's inward-looking orientation became disproportionate when it comes to the economic and trade opportunities. The access to the sea and port service, external threats particularly from Eritrea and Somalia and changes in Egypt and their implications for Ethiopia are some examples (Ibid.).

On the other hand, the views of the governments and the ruling elite of the Middle East states and the Muslim dominated neighboring the Horn African States towards Ethiopia were distorted. These states have interpreted both in the past and present on the bases of the Arab-Israeli war (by considering Ethiopia as the supporter of Israel). These wrong assumptions forced them to consider Ethiopia as a country only for Christian, and the issue of Nile with linking to Egypt's interest.

Therefore due to the wrong historical reasons, the relationship of Ethiopia with the Gulf States varies from country to country and the problems are also different (FDRE, 2002, pp. 129-131). With the influence of Egypt over Saudi Arabia for example, it hesitates to develop any meaningful relations with Ethiopia. Because of the Islamic extremism in the Gulf States and the doubtful religious equality in Ethiopia, the relationship between Ethiopia and the Arab world was so weak. Regardless of the availability of Muslim sizable minority in Ethiopia, there is a feeling of the Arab and other Muslim countries considering Ethiopia as being a Christian nation.

In diplomacy, "There is neither eternal friend nor eternal enemy, rather eternal national interest." has been used as the basic policy guidance of countries. Accordingly, there is a possibility of countries being strong friends at one time and strong belligerents at another time. What matters is the impact of dynamics of political, economic, and security matters on each other. Therefore, if we assess the historical diplomatic relations between Ethiopia and the Arab world, in general, was not favorable for Ethiopia.

The existence of some rift among the Arab world, therefore, could divert the attitude of disputing parties toward HoA including Ethiopia. Hence, Ethiopia, if wisely handled the rift within the GCC, it could benefit a lot. Realizing current Ethiopia's geopolitical global importance in the zone as an opportunity, both Qatar and the Saudi-led group countries would try to achieve support from Ethiopia. This, in turn, would allow Ethiopia to build a strong relationship with both parties by being a mediator. Above all, to attain diplomatic achievement, Ethiopia has to strive a lot on the domestic issues such as the internal development and democratization. Contemporary Ethiopia's foreign policy strategy which has served for sixteen years has to be revamped by considering the global and regional dynamics (Goitom Gebreluel, 2017, p.78).

2.4.Review of Empirical studies

The main objective of this part is to perceive the view of other scholars on the issues that are related to the topic. However, since the current Gulf crisis is a new phenomenon, unfortunately, no research or study has done on the topic. Hence, this indicates that there is lack of scientific research-based knowledge on the issue which needs further study. Nonetheless, since the inception of the crisis, various writers and analysts suggested various idea on the historical background, root factors, actors, of the current conflict between Qatar and Saudi-led countries and its implications on the HoA in general and Ethiopia in particular. Most of the writers agree on the idea that the current Qatar-Saudi-led crisis is not an overnight incident. Rather it has been developed over time. According to (Rol, 2017, p. 1) although the dispute was not strong, tensions between Qatar on one side and Saudi Arabia and UAE block on the other side have existed since the 1970s due to their long-standing unresolved dispute between them

According to (CDRC, 2017, p. 18) the animosity between Qatar and the GCC is not new; rather it has been witnessed through time progressively. Al-Jazeera Report of June 9, 2017, supports the above explanation by mentioning the border disputes among the Gulf States, which erupted in 1991 between Qatar and Bahrain over the ownership of Hawar Islands. The report also added the 1992 another border clash took place between Qatar and Saudi Arabia. Thus, according to the Al-Jazeera report, the current rift within the GCC started 27 years ago (Al-Jazeera, 2017).

Political analysts and concerned bodies have written various ideas regarding the root factors of the current crisis between Qatar and Saudi-led Gulf and non-Gulf countries. As we all know, Saudi Arabia led block countries presented a list of thirteen demands to Qatar in June 2017 included to cutting diplomatic and military relations with Iran, and the immediate shut down of the operations of Al-Jazeera media Network by considering as the root causes of the rift (Kantack, 2017). The support of political opposition group movements especially the support to Muslim Brotherhood was also taken as one of the key demands of the Saudi led countries. However, the idea of various political analysts had different opinions and explanations on the above statement.

According to (Tadele, 2017), the principal cause for the ultimate eruption occurrence of the Qatar vs Saudi led block dispute is Qatar's close ties and its alliance with the Iran and Turkey. For the Saudi government and its backers consider these countries as rivals to Saudi Arabia. According to (Verhoeven, 2017, p. 10), the important point that causes the proxy war between Iran and Saudi is the key factor that causes much of the violence in the Middle East and extension of the proxy war in the Horn of Africa. Tehran accuses the Saudi-America alliance along with Israel as the main causes of the instability in the Middle East, which could be tackled only by armed struggle. Riyadh, on the other hand, accuses Tehran is undermining the stability in the Gulf by encircling Saudi Arabia with Shia regimes in Bahrain, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen (Ibid.p.10)

According to (CDRC, 2017, pp. 18-9) the enmity mainly originated from the tendencies of some Gulf States to impose their respective interests that come out from significant financial asset and military capacity. According to (Verhoeven, 2017, pp. 10-11) the growing hostility among the Gulf States themselves is one important factor for growing deep interest in the Horn of Africa. While Saudi Arabia considers itself as the regional hegemony and the main representative of Sunni Islam in the world, Qatar and UAE on the contrary, consider themselves as entitled independent foreign policy in which they follow their own interest and ideological vision in the Arab world (Ibid. p. 11).

According to (Berouk Mesfin, 2016), the monarchs of the Gulf States consider that any democratic distension in the region could threaten the main pillars of their power. However, as there is similarity among the Gulf countries there are also significant differences among them i.e. ideological, political, and ethnic, national interest based differences. The principal factor of the current Gulf crisis is Qatar's foreign policy that draws the anger of its two neighbors (Saudi Arabia and UAE) (Rol, 2017, p. 1).

According to his explanation, Qatar has placed its weight behind different regional actors in particular to the Muslim Brotherhood than Saudi Arabia and UAE since Arab Spring 2010. Qatar's expanded relation with Iran was also unacceptable to the other Gulf States in general and to Saudi Arabia in particular (Ibid.p.2).

The first major diplomatic crisis occurred in 2014, but was resolved after Qatari concessions; the latest embargo follows on directly from that dispute. While the trigger was a speech by the Qatari emir supposedly praising Iran as an "important regional power", there is good reason to believe that the text as reported was manipulated by means of computer hacking. At a deeper level, the embargo is rooted in accusations that Doha had reneged on its promise of 2014 to align its foreign policy more closely with Saudi and Emirati interests" (Rol, 2017, pp. 1-2).

Saudi Arabia and UAE were competing against Qatar's global as well as regional influence mainly its influence among the Horn African countries including Sudan Eritrea, Somalia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, and South Sudan (Mehari Tadele, 2017, p.28). The Qatari influential diplomatic role in the HoA Region countries was mainly in the form of intervention to mediation such as in Darfur, Djibouti, Eritrea and direct support to State and non-State actors. These Qatari interventions in the HoA countries in the past decades were seen by Saudi and the UAE as serious obstacles for their diplomatic influence in the HoA region countries (Ibid.). The competition among the Gulf countries for wide influence in the HoA countries states exhibits in other socioeconomic sectors as well.

The UAE strives to be the hub of manufacturing for agricultural products to supply Africa and the rest of the world, through the processing, packing, and selling products internationally (Ibid.). Qatar's hosting the World football Cup and UAE's aims to become the world's tourism hub is another form of socio-economic competition between the two countries (Ibid.).

According to (Rol, 2017), the main goal of the Saudi Arabia and its ally UAE is to see the overthrow of the current Qatari leadership. Doha has angered by the indirect regime change interest of its neighbors and lastingly shattered the already difficult relationship which makes hard to bring long-lasting resolution. The other factors that contribute to the conflict are the fall of oil price and the Qatari different economic policy.

Various politicians believed that the Yemeni war led by Saudi coalition and the tension between Iran and the Gulf States as vital factors of the dispute. Meanwhile, the fall of fuel price considered as aggravating factor of the Current Gulf tension and all these made the issues more complex and difficult to resolve in short period of time (Leulseged Girma, 2018, pp.1-2). According to (Bereuk Mesfin, 2016), Qatar does not have a wide, overarching diplomatic policy technique that gives the consistency of course. It is guided by the pragmatic and practical geopolitical contemplations.

The reality of an exceptionally little state encompassed by two big and capable neighbors, Saudi and Iran, decide Qatar's foreign policy approach. Qatar's political authority needs to shape its claim foreign policy and it does not need to surrender to either of its neighbors (Bereuk Mesfin, 2016). Furthermore and at the same time, Qatar continues to reach out to Iran with which it offers the world's natural gas field. This approach was obviously fast-tracked after the 2013 agreement between the US and Iran over the latter's atomic program which could possibly have assist destabilize the whole Middle East (Bereuk Mesfin, 2016). The conflict between Saudi Arabia and Iran, which is reflecting the region sharp Sunni-Shiite sectarian is now spreading and influencing other countries in the region (Bereuk Mesfin, 1991).

Qatar's political authorities have taken three mechanisms to accomplish its foreign policy goals. The first action was securing long-term military collusion with the USA and Turkey to the extent of building USA Central Command at Al-Udeid air base as well as additional logistical bases at Sayliyah (Bereuk Mesfin, 2016). Additionally, Qatar has signed military agreements with Turkey including military training, defense industry, intelligence, and protection of potential threats (Ibid). Qatar's political authority wisely embraced the TV channel Al-Jazeera as a second instrument to accomplish its foreign policy objectives. By transmitting electrifying pictures and one-sided reports 24 hours a day and seven days a week and Al-Jazeera became the most critical media network in the Middle East (Bereuk Mesfin, 2016).

Al-Jazeera moreover permits Qatar to advance an exceedingly positive image of the high-level mediation endeavors that it so regularly attempts. In addition, it permits Qatar to straightforwardly impact and decision-makers of other nations in the Middle East. Al-Jazeera serves the people of the region by providing data almost basic political occasions including armed clashes, military coups, invasion, struggles, and elections (Bereuk Mesfin, 2016). Last but not least, Qatar has struggled mediation as the third instrument to accomplish its foreign policy goals.

The Iranian Atomic bargain expanded the actual or perceived defenselessness of the GCC nations to Iranian dominance in the region. This suddenly made power vacuum in the region. To fill this vacuum power struggle developed between regional powers, basically Saudi Arabia (driving the GCC), Iran, and, to an extent, Turkey (Bereuk Mesfin, 2016). According to (Weber, 2017, p. 2), there are numerous root causes of the higher pressure levels and expanded anxiety in the Gulf that can be recognized. However, the Saudi-Led war in Yemen since 2015 and its pressure between the Gulf and Iran, as well as the dive in oil costs in June 2014 are important factors for the regional crisis. According to (Weber, 2017, p. 5) actions and reactions of Sudan and Qatar to the condition of Muslim brother Hood in Egypt is one significant factor in the relation of countries in the region.

Sudan was supportive of President Muhammad Mursi's election in Egypt and facilitated a few individuals of the Muslim Brotherhood who fled after General Abdel Fattah el-sisi took control in Cairo. Numerous of them fled to Qatar. Consequently, numerous intellectuals and individuals of the Islamic movement feel much closer to Qatar and oppose Saudi. On the other hand, besides to strengthen their strive to eliminate jihadist terrorism, the planned hand-over of two Red Sea islands from Egypt to Saudi Arabia suggests further warming relations between Riyadh and Cairo (Rol, 2017, p. 3).

According to (Mehari Tadele, 2017, p.17), there are four major factors of the Qatar-Saudi-led GCC rift. The Qatari democratic elements of leadership such as Al-Jazeera and political Islam elections which threaten the other sheikdoms of the GCC are one important factor of the crisis. The absolute monarchies of the GCC countries do reject and are resistant to any form of democracy in the region as well as in the Horn of Africa (Ibid.).The rivalry for regional dominance between Iran, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and to some extent Egypt is the third reason for the crisis (Ibid.p.17). The fourth external but basic reason for the dispute is the volatile and unpredictable foreign policy decisions of the US which are dependent on the personality of Donald Trump (Ibid. p.28).

Although the issue is complicated, the main source of the rift within the GCC is that the Sunni states think that Qatar is soft on Iran and Muslim Brotherhood on one hand and Qatar haven't really allied with the Sunni nations against Iran and Muslim Brotherhood (MARTIN, 2017). In this regard, Qatar sees the conservative way of the leadership of Saudi as an opportunity for new and progressive Islam leadership style (Ibid.). Unlike in the western world, the separation between government and media is not available in the Middle East. Due to this reason, the old fashion Sunni believers see Al-Jazeera as a mouthpiece of Qatari government (Ibid.)

The involvement of various direct and indirect actors in the current crisis between Qatar and the Saudi-led Gulf States is explained in many ways. The main or direct actors of the current GGC crisis are Qatar at one side and Saudi with its allies; Egypt, Bahrain, and UAE on the other side.

Only two states; Kuwait and Oman, have remained neutral the former stand as a mediator (CDRC, 2017, p. 18). Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirate (UAE), Bahrain, with the strong support of Egypt and Israel and spontaneous support from the US in one side and Qatar with strong support from Turkey and implicit support from Iran on the other side are the two blocks in the current Gulf crisis (Mehari Tadele, 2017). Since the objectives of Turkish foreign policies coincide with those of Qatar, it is reflected in close military cooperation between them. Immediately after the blockade by Saudi and UAE began, Turkey announced an expansion of its military base in Qatar and firmly rejects Saudi and UAE demands to close the base. Iran's support and assistance for Qatar in maintaining a supply are not surprising given its long-standing hegemonic conflict with Saudi (Rol, 2017). The gas reserve in the Persian Gulf is also another important factor for Qatar-Iran relationship. The European influence should not be underestimated because of the following factors. One important thing is that both Qatar and Saudi-led group will benefit less from the conflict.

As there are converging interests among the identifiable camps, they also contain diverging interests within them; Qatar does not need to become dependent on its current allies Turkey and Iran on the one hand and the politically unstable and economically stricken Egypt will be worthless for Saudi Arabia even in the medium term (Rol, 2017, p. 2). This means that the disputing Gulf States wouldn't need to lose their strategic western allies. Secondly, unless the dispute is resolved peacefully, the US and EU member countries would suffer from price rising of oil and gas, disruption of their concern activities, and restricting the fight against religious extremist groups. Therefore, both the US and Europe are pressing for the rapid end to the conflict (Ibid.P.2). The US and other European countries fear and concern on that the tensions will restrict the fight against the so-called Islamic State and harm their economies through rising oil and gas prices or disruption of their business activities in the Gulf (Ibid.). When Saudi Arabia expelled Qatar's military force from the coalition in Yemen, the relation between Qatar and Turkey became stronger than before. As a result, Turkey responded to the crisis by providing food supplies and increases its military presence in Qatar (Kantack, 2017).

The rift within the GCC is increasing its influence in the HoA, Red Sea region and far beyond. Declining US political impact, the rise of China in financial, infrastructural, as well as military things in the region, and the part of middle powers such as Iran and Turkey bring harmful merge to the region. The concerns of Europe in general and Germany in particular, are clear; securing the trade routes through the Red Sea keeping channels of communication open with all partners and engaging with Horn of Africa nations in things of irregular migration(Weber, 2017). Since China and Russia have naval bases in Djibouti and Port Sudan respectively, both have a stake in the peaceful outcome of the Qatar-GCC crisis and could help potentially mediate a solution to the problem (Korybko, 2018, p. 2).

Since the end of Cold War, the role of US and Russia has been changed dramatically after the Arab Spring of 2011. According to (Newsweek, 2017, p. 27), Arab Spring couldn't bring America's expected "democracy" in the Middle East; rather it is caused instability and extremism to flourish in the region. Washington's backing of Syrian rebels caused the rise of ISIS, the two-state solution for the Israel-Palestine conflict seems farther away and Iran's nuclear agreement looks shaky under the new US administration (Ibid.p.27). The situation became an opportunity for Russia to regain influence as a major power in the Middle East as well as in the world.

Regarding the implication of the Qatar-Saudi crisis on the HoA in general and Ethiopia in particular stated in various ways. According to (Kantack, 2017) it is not exaggerated to say that the Horn of Africa is the field of competition of the Gulf States including proxy violent conflicts. Therefore, understanding and identifying the forms and types of real and potential implications of the Gulf crisis on the Horn Africa is very crucial. Since 2008 there is a dramatically increasing rate of the economic, political and military presence of the Gulf States mainly; Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia in the Horn of Africa (Verhoeven, 2017, p. 8). The following paragraph extracted from an article would help to understand the types and levels of the interdependence between the HoA and the Gulf States.

The long-standing cultural, religious and historical ties, economic opportunities, and geographical proximity between the IGAD region and the Middle East make robust cooperation between the two regions natural and desirable. Nevertheless, such ties have done little to foster constructive participation. For the IGAD region, a new and Urgent reading of the imperatives of foreign relations and diplomacy is in order (Mehari Tadele, 2017, p.28).

According to (Mehari Tadele, 2017, p.28), the rift within the GCC is increasing its influence in the HoA, Red Sea region and far beyond. The current rift within the GCC has not only added another layer of distrust and hostility between some of the IGAD and GCC countries but has also added fuel to uncertainty, insecurity, and animosity among some of the countries in the IGAD region. In addition to its competitive nature, the Horn of Africa has become an area of more tensions and at risk of war especially since Ethiopia began constructing the Great Renaissance Dam. As a result of the “Gulf Cold War” (the tension between Saudi and Iran) following the Saudi-led and Egypt’s campaign against Qatar including water wars and proxy wars makes the Horn of Africa so volatile (Korybko, 2018, p. 1). The paragraph below written by Mehari Tadel shows how the GCC crisis influences each Horn African countries.

The GCC rift is suffocating the Horn of Africa. The Saudi-camp is demanding loyalty from the Horn of Africa. In the IGAD region, while Djibouti, Eritrea, Somalia (Somaliland) supported the Saudi-camp, Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia took a neutral stand. Consistent with its previous position in the Yemen conflict, Ethiopia also adopted a neutral stance in the rift within the GCC. Unlike in the Yemeni conflict, Sudan and Somalia (Somaliland unequivocally supports the Saudi-camp) also announced their neutral stance. Obedience to the Saudi camp has characterized Somalia’s position for many years. Attempting to take a neutral stance, the newly formed Federal Government of Somalia has found itself between a rock and a hard place. Somalia’s leadership is acutely aware of its sovereign right to make a foreign policy decision and its dependence for aid on Middle Eastern countries (Mehari Tadele, 2017, p.28).

The rift between the camps of the Gulf sub-region could have consequence in areas where the Gulf States are involved directly or indirectly. The clash of ideologies is one aspect of the GCC rift that has a potential impact on the Horn of Africa. According to (Weber, 2017, p. 5), although the problem will most likely manifest in Somalia and Sudan first, Saudi's aggressive push of Salafism is not looked upon favorably for both the Christian and Muslim majority countries of the Horn of Africa. The clash between the Wahabism doctrine and other forms of political Islam including the branches of Muslim Brotherhood might bring more crisis to the HoA than currently happens (Ibid. p.5). However, although the impact of the GCC rift is critical to all Horn African countries the degree varies from state to state (Mehari Tadele, 2017). Turkey has constructed a big military base in Somalia.

It also has developed a close relationship with Sudan as well (Weber, 2017). Turkey has a good relationship with Iran and becoming closer to Russia. Israel also has an interest in the red sea and it doesn't benefit from the Iranian influence in the region (Ibid.) According to (CDRC, 2017) the impact of the Gulf crisis on the Horn of Africa is still growing in various forms. While Eritrea, Djibouti, the defacto government of Puntland and Somaliland joined the Saudi alliance, Ethiopia, Somalia, and Sudan remain in their neutral stance (Ibid.p.19-20). In addition to its the proximity to the Red Sea, history, culture and religious legacies, trade, remittance, migration, and security close links, each member state of the Gulf Cooperation Council has its own interests in the Horn of Africa. Both the global role of the Red Sea and the Nile River also play a critical role in the relations between the Gulf and the Horn of Africa. However, these ties have done little to promote a constructive relationship between the two sub-regions (Mehari Tadele, 2017, p.49). The Horn of Africa has been and still is the subject of various global competitions including; religious factors, western colonialism, superpower rivalry, the Arab-Israel conflict, and the Iran-Saudi-led Gulf countries enmity. Thus, the interest and role of Gulf States on the Horn of Africa vary from country to country and the GCC have also used the Horn of Africa as a battlefield for proxy wars, the expansion of extremist sect of Islam and economic competitions (Ibid).

The 2017 split among the three leading GCC countries; Saudi Arabia and UAE on the one side and Qatar on the other create a storm in the Horn of Africa by forcing them to take sides and resulting in a fragmenting of the already fragile sub-region (Weber, 2017). The dispute among the states of the GCC doesn't only disturb the Arabian Peninsula but also has a critical effect on the Horn of Africa.

Therefore, as a result of the war in Yemen, the migration of people, wandering of Jihadist make the shore of the Red Sea moving together and closer. After Djibouti's decision of siding with the Saudi-led group and the critic from Eritrea, Qatar took its army from the peacekeeping mission in the border between Djibouti and Eritrea (Ibid. P.2). According to (CDRC, 2017) the current Gulf crisis directly affects the diplomatic stance of the fragile Horn African countries. Right after June 5, 2017, some countries have aligned themselves with the Saudi group and cut relationship with Qatar while others remain neutral. The crisis between Djibouti and Eritrea was triggered because of their position of supporting the Saudi allies (Ibid. p. 16).

According to (Mehari Tadele, 2017, p.17), the rift within the GCC causes a rift in the Horn of Africa. The position of the HoA countries towards the Gulf crisis directly showed division. While the government in Somalia sided with Qatar, the three semi-autonomous and de'facto administrations cut ties with Qatar. Consequently, the split among the Somalia people will influence the political and economic condition inside Somalia as well as in its neighboring countries.

The strategic location of Somalia has attracted the Middle East rival powers to increase their pressure to persuade the nation to abandon its neutral stance. Qatar and Turkey by their substantial humanitarian assistance need to persuade Somali to maintain its neutral stance. In order to achieve these objectives, both Qatar and Turkey attempt to employ various economic, political, diplomatic, and social activities (Kantack, 2017). The Turkish schools of political Islam in Somalia and scholarship programs for Somalia students is another factor to the competition of ideology in the country provided by jihadist of al-Shabaab (Weber, 2017, p. 6).

Saudi on the other hand presses Somalia repeatedly with financial aid to cut relations with Qatar. In January 2017 and in June 2017 Saudi Arabia pledged \$50 million and \$80 million to Somalia to gain support (Weber, 2017, p. 6). According to (Mehari Tadele, 2017, p. 17), in addition to the above, Somaliland parliament approved an agreement with UAE to establish a base in the port of Berbera in February 2017. The base is intended for air support to the war in Yemen. Somalia has allowed GCC military aircraft to use its airspace and Somaliland agreed to rent its port facilities at Barbara to the GCC States.

According to (Weber, 2017, p. 6) both Somaliland and Puntland announced their support for Saudi Arabia and UAE on June 10 and August 16 respectively. However, the Federal Government of Somalia prefer to remain neutral in the conflict and it criticized the de facto states of Galmudug, Puntland, and Hirshabelle for Cutting relations with Qatar. Although the UAE could influence the trade agreements to control Somalia's stance, it is doubtful to hold in a great deal as Farmajo already condemns the agreement with Somaliland and Puntland. Consequently, did not only recall its ambassador to Somalia and deported Somali citizens, but also is more probably to refuse to support for Somalia defense. Additionally, at this time UAE has no official military presence on the base that has opened as a new training center in Mogadishu in 2015 (Ibid.).

Since the inception of the Gulf crisis (June 5, 2017,) various forms of diplomatic dynamics have been taken place between Gulf and the HOA regions. According to (Mustafa, 2017), because of the response from Asmara against Qatar, Qatar had withdrawn its military force from the buffer zone between Eritrea and Djibouti five days later from the disputed news released. As a response to Qatar's action, the Eritrean government controlled the two contested territories with Djibouti; Mount Demeira and the Island Demira and these actions had added fuel to the fire that is already simmering in the region (Ibid.p. 3). Accordingly, many African countries have sided to the position of Saudi's camp whereas few countries such as Ethiopia and Somalia called for dialogue to solve the dispute (Faki, 2017)

According to (Faki, 2017), if the rift within the GCC is not addressed on time, it could have adverse political, security, and humanitarian implications not only to the Gulf but also to the international peace and stability. He added that one of the implications for the crisis in the Horn Africa sub-region is in the form of border tension as observed between Eritrea and Djibouti. According to (Mehari Tadele, 2017) in 2010, Qatar mediated a ceasefire between Eritrea and Djibouti following a border conflict and assigned more than 200 Qatari soldiers to the demilitarized zone along the borders. The mediation effort did not, however, end the dispute. In 2015, Saudi Arabia and UAE convinced Eritrea to allow access to its territory from which they could mobilize forces to attack the Houthis. The agreements reportedly include a security and military partnership with Saudi Arabia. Eritrea agreed to make the port of Assab available to GCC military force. Satellite imagery confirms the use of Assab by UAE landing craft (Ibid).

Eritrea's cash benefit from its support to the Saudi Coalition in Yemen may encourage Eritrea to continue to project animosity against Ethiopia. Ethiopia, on the other hand, has expressed its concern about the financial support and agreements between Eritrea and UAE and other GCC countries (Mehari Tadele, 2017). Ethiopia warned that Saudi Arabia and the UAE will bear consequences if their activities support Eritrea's agenda against Ethiopia. Early in 2016, Sudan, Djibouti, and Somalia broke relations with Iran, which supports the Houthis, at the request of Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Sudan said it had received \$1billion from Saudi Arabia to shore up its foreign receivers and there are unconfirmed reports of even larger payments. Sudan has deployed between 350 and 700 ground troops to help the UAE forces in south Yemen (Ibid.)

In March 2016, Djibouti's ambassador in Riyadh announced that the two countries would soon sign an agreement for a Saudi military base in Djibouti and discussions are taking place on military cooperation between the two countries. Djibouti which once allowed Iran to ship supplies to the Houthis can also expect substantial assistance from Saudi Arabia.

The war in Yemen has become a financial windfall for several HOA countries (Mehari Tadele, 2017). Saudi Arabia and UAE see the HoA as the strategic opportunity to increase their ability in the Yemen operation. Turkey, on the other hand, involves a combination of heavy investment and trade agreements to improve its economic competitiveness in the region. Qatar associated with Turkey and pay attention to response to the drought in Somalia (Kantack, 2017).

However, the long-term objective of these four countries was to counter Iran's plan of expanding its naval capacity in the sub-region (Ibid.). Djibouti for example swiftly announced its unequivocal support for the Saudi-camp against Qatar (Mehari Tadele, 2017). Although both Egypt and Eritrea deny, some reporters indicate that Egypt has deployed troops to the western Eritrea base of Sawa near the border of Sudan in response to Turkey's deal to develop the Sudanese island of Suakin (Korybko, 2018, p. 1).

Starting with the Yemeni war and causing the GCC rift, influence the power balance of the Horn African countries. The changes seem rough to Ethiopia and rising from obscurity to Sudan and Eritrea. This is due to the attention given to these countries by Gulf States, Europe, and United States (Weber, 2017, p. 2). Although IS is destroyed in Iraq and Syria, its movement in the Horn of Africa is increasing and no doubt that arms supply is from the Gulf countries (Leulseged Girma, 2018).

Thus, the Horn of Africa can be said as an area ready to be a battlefield. The life of migrant from the Horn Africa countries is highly negatively influenced by the destabilization in the Gulf States. Ethiopia which is greatly reliant on various agro-investments from the Middle East and western countries is concerned about any activities on the other side of the Red Sea. Additionally, due to its war with Eritrea, became a landlocked country and this makes the country to pay special attention to the Gulf issues. Besides to the above, the increase of dependency from port access in combination with the increasing militarization of the Horn countries made Ethiopia nervous (Weber, 2017, p. 4).

Ethiopia is accusing Egypt of interfering in internal and external politics mainly in Eritrea and South Sudan in relation to the Renaissance Dam which challenges Egypt's claim for a fixed quota of the Nile water (Ibid.P.4). The Dam is the basic frustration to the Egyptian and already led to the declaration by Egyptian officials of military action to stop GERD completion and filling. The power afforded Egypt throughout the GCC connection could tilt the fragile stability in the Horn Africa region even further ((Weber, 2017, p. 4).

In the case of Sudan, there are some critical factors that affect its position on the Gulf crisis; the issue of GERD and pressure from Egypt, the economic boost from the Yemeni coalition, the lifting of economic sanction by the US, the internal crisis in Darfur, North Kordofan and Blue Nile, the developing close relation with the neighboring Ethiopia, good relation with Iran and Saudi's interest to keep Iran out of HoA. Thus, it is difficult to see Sudan as a supporter of the Saudi axis or Qatar. In spite of its supporting the Saudi coalition in Yemen and cut relation with Qatar, Sudan allows military base in its shore for Turkey which is an alliance of Qatar.

Sudan and Eritrea which had previously been politically isolated from the international community support the Yemeni war by sending troops and providing naval bases for the Saudi alliance in the ports for the sack of currency and to boost their economies (Weber, 2017, p. 4). Sudan's position on the issue of GCC rift is unclear. According to (Weber, 2017, p. 5), though Sudan was able to remain neutral by supporting Kuwait's mediation, Sudan's dependence on Saudi Arabia and UAE may force to be against Qatar.

Because of the active support of GCC countries to the NATO's intervention in the Libyan uprising 2011 and Qatar's diplomatic and economic engagement with Ethiopia between 2011 to 2015, the relation between Qatar and Eritrea faced serious setback (Mehari Tadele, 2017). The withdrawal of Qatar from Djibouti-Eritrea and the takeover of the disputed area by Eritrea after the GCC rift could trigger a strong Ethio-Djibouti and IGAD reaction against the Eritrean government's opportunistic aggressive action (Ibid.p.28).

For a long time, Sudan had rough relations with the Saudi-led camp (for that matter with all GCC countries except Qatar). Since 1992, when diplomatic relations froze for almost a decade until 1999, Sudan was considered the strongest ally of Iran, the arch-foes of the Saudi-led GCC countries. The rapprochement began with the termination of Iranian non-diplomatic activities in Sudan in 2014. Sudan also actively supported the 2011 Libyan uprising and even sent troops to fight against Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, who was supporting rebel groups in Sudan aiming to topple President Omar al-Bashir.

This was an additional reason for swift rapprochement with the GCC countries (Mehari Tadele, 2017). Not only the current GCC crisis but also the Yemeni crisis and the migration crisis in Europe are two other important global challenges that have brought significant changes to a diplomatic alliance in the HoA region (Ibid). To gain the diplomatic and military support from the HoA, the Saudi-led military coalition in Yemen has sought various levels of support from countries such as Eritrea, Sudan, Somalia, Egypt and recently Djibouti. In this regard, only Ethiopia sustained its position of neutrality and did not cut its diplomacy with Iran so as to support Saudi Arabia (Ibid.p.28).

According to (Mehari Tadele, 2017), in recent history Ethiopia's strong stand on the United Nations Security Council against the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq and clear Ethiopia's stand towards the Libyan civil war in 2011, brought GCC countries in general and the UAE and Qatar in particular, closer to Ethiopia than they were before. However, fundamentally their relationships with Ethiopia are far from being strong. For example, since the Ethio-Eritrean war 1990-2000, UAE's close relationship with Eritrea adds another geopolitical reason for the hostile relations between UAE and Ethiopia (Ibid.).

Ethiopia's current foreign policy towards the Gulf States is focusing on the key role that they could play in Ethiopia's economy. It states that in order to capture their finance, investment, and the market for our production, Ethiopia should clearly explain its policies with special attention to the Nile River and equality of religion in the country (FDRE, 2002).

Nevertheless, the above explanation doesn't consider the dynamics and differences within the Gulf States in various political, economic, security, and social factors. The policy considers the Gulf States as strongly unified countries. However, historical facts indicate that these countries have more factors separated them than unified them. Therefore, realizing the real condition of the Gulf States and manipulating it as an input to the national interest could be a continuous task for Ethiopia's policymakers. As far as the Horn African countries are in a very deep poverty and instability, there is a high potential for most of them to be a clique of one or the other party. The conflicting parties in general and Egypt, in particular, will manipulate the unstable condition against Ethiopia. Therefore, the problem for Ethiopia will be beyond diplomatic challenges.

Another important factor that persuades Ethiopia to build good relation with its African neighbors and the Middle East is its landlocked geographic feature. When Ethiopia has lost the nearest seaboards of Eritrea because of the 1998-2000 war, Djibouti, Barbara, Port Sudan, and Mombasa are the alternative ports became crucial (Shepherd, 2013). Therefore, since the influence of the Gulf States on the Horn Africa, which are potential alternative ports for Ethiopia is significant, Ethiopia's diplomatic relations with the Gulf would determine to gain or lose the ports.

Various writers have said about the economic interdependence between HoA countries and the Gulf States. Politics and economics are the two faces of a coin. Hence, most economic initiatives by the Gulf States are motivated by political factors. The financial flow from Gulf to the Horn couldn't play a meaningful role in terms of Human and Sustainable development (Verhoeven, 2017). Most economic relations between these two sub-regions are unbalanced. The forms of economic relations are dominated by assistance, aid, and various forms of funds. According to (Mehari Tadele, 2017, pp.43-4) despite encouragements and efforts from Ethiopia to attract foreign investment, the GCC countries had not responded adequately. Nevertheless, since 1991, there is an improvement in trade and investment between Ethiopia and the Gulf States.

The volume of trade and investment between Ethiopia and the GCC member countries in general and UAE in particular to some extent is attributable to Saudi Arabia's former decision to discourage any investment in Ethiopia (Ibid.).

According to (David, 2017), the Gulf States are the potential source of investment in HOA including Ethiopia because of two important reasons. One is their financial capacity and secondly, the Gulf States are dependent on food imports up to 80 to 90 percent. On the Side of HOA countries, foreign investment in the agricultural sector in order to stimulate their rural development is indispensable. The second point that the HOA countries including Ethiopia could invite foreign investment is the rich meat and meat products including livestock. The product of traditional pastoralists; organic, free-range, and grass-fed livestock is valuable and rare not only in the Middle East but also all over the world (Shepherd, 2013). Due to its population and natural resources, the IGAD region has a comparative advantage and excellent opportunity to benefit from the investment of Middle Eastern countries and the trade exchange with them, mainly in agriculture, livestock, labor and other areas of cooperation (Mehari Tadele, 2017).

According to (EIC, 2017), there are four important factors that make Ethiopia preferred destination of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). These are; political stability, conducive economic factors, favorable market factors, and well-developed infrastructure. Thus, many countries in the Middle East including; Saudi Arabia, Qatar, UAE, Turkey, Israel, Iran, and others are taking part in trade and investment with Ethiopia (Shepherd, 2013). Though there is potential for much greater trade exchange between the Gulf and HOA, trade was not a high concern of both sub-regions states relationship for long period due to some factors (David, 2017). Ethiopia's economic policy is based on the Agricultural Development Led Industrialization (ADLI) strategy, which focuses on increasing productivity of agricultural products. (FDRE, 2005, pp. 174-75).

The objectives of Ethiopian trade promotion strategy are; ascertaining sustainability of Agricultural products, generating required foreign exchange, and promoting competitive industry (Ibid. pp. 174-75).

Nevertheless, because of the oil demand, the trade balance between Horn of Africa including Ethiopia and the Peninsula has become rocked (Verhoeven, 2017, p. 4). All these facts show that the economic relationship between the Horn of Africa and the Gulf States is an extended form of political and diplomatic interests and objectives. Hence, in order to gain diplomatic support, there is a possibility to use economic pressure by the currently disputing Gulf States on HoA countries.

2.5. Remarkable Factors of Relations between the Horn of Africa and the Middle East

One of the most striking things about the Horn and the Red Sea is that there is no regional organization that can tackle its security challenges. The African Union does not cross the Red Sea. The Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) excludes countries with strategic interests in the Nile and the Red Sea-and also is confined to the African shore.

The Arab League is not effective, which is one reason why the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) has taken the lead in the Yemeni intervention-and is using financial muscle to win African countries to support its operations, rather than multilateral diplomacy. Ethiopia, the pivotal state of the Horn, is landlocked and keenly fears being surrounded by hostile states backed by historic rivals such as Egypt. Another vital striking concern for the relation between Ethiopia and the Middle East is the issue of Nile River and religion (Kinfu Abraham, 2004, p.33). The different interpretation of the Al Nejshi history by the Arab people and the relation between the Egyptian Coptic and the Ethiopian Orthodox on one hand and the historical dependence of Egyptian people on the Nile water contributed by Ethiopia, on the other hand, are undeniable historical factors of the relation.

All these historical facts need to be managed and handled based on democratic and scientific manner. Hence, there is a difficult assignment on both sides in general and Ethiopia in particular to build common understanding and mutual benefit.

Transnational problems like climate change, high population growth rate and low employment opportunity are some of the policy drivers that have to be considered in each strategic option. The new Trump administration with its unpredictable decision and little interest in Horn Africa, the China's transition towards a service economy, the interest of the Gulf States and Turkey in the Somalia coastal areas and along the Red Sea are some factors that could be taken into consideration while policy designing (IRIS, 2017).

Logically, integration among neighboring countries would increase the interdependence with each other. Integration between and among countries do not only boosts cooperation and collaboration but also encouraged to develop a common interest. However, the level of integration among the countries of HoA is so weak. Instead, competition between each other is the common character of all states. For example, four months before the Qatar-GCC crisis, Somali land grants the UAE the right to build an air and naval base in Berbera in order to keep secure its coasts and balance power against its neighboring countries (Mustafa, 2017). According to his information, when Somali land allowed its ports for other countries to build military bases to compute against the Djibouti monopoly in the region, there have been facing strong resistance from Djibouti and Somalia. The government of Puntland announced in March 2017, that UAE is close to winning recognition for the development of base at Bosaso port (Ibid).

This weakness, in turn, will affect unity and increase the vulnerability of the countries to any external imposition and pressure. Moreover, the division of ethnic groups within a country such as in Somalia, and the border dispute between the countries in the HoA worsen the condition. Therefore, designing diplomatic strategy that could harmonize private and collective security measures in the Horn of Africa is too much difficult. Therefore, unless these entire prominent things are solved, it is difficult for the Horn African countries to be free external impositions. It is also difficult for HoA countries to create effective national and regional policies.

CHAPTER THREE

3. Background, Root factors, and Actors of the Current GCC Crisis

3.1. Historical Background of the Crisis

Most of the crisis and conflicts in the world are not the outcomes of overnight factors. Likewise, the dispute between Qatar and Saudi Arabia may have its own development process through time. The conflicts and disagreements are mainly caused by some critical and incompatible interests of the conflicting parties. Therefore, the main concern of this sub-chapter is to analyze and discover if there is a historical background of the current dispute between Qatar and the Saudi-led group GCC States.

A key informant from IPSS explained that the state formation process of Middle East countries lacks so many values that might be developed through evolutionary national development. The state formation of the Middle East countries was recent and externally influenced. They don't have any evolutionary and historical process of state formation. The fast economic wealth is also not based on their hardworking culture; rather it is because of their oil resources. All these are factors for their poor unity and weakness. He concludes that leave alone the issue of bringing regional unity, it is difficult for them to build national unity within their own single state. In his explanation, he stated that although there are some historical differences, such as lack of shared view and agreement on the issue of Arab-Israeli war and religious sectarianism, he argues that it is impossible to find historical factors for the current Qatar-Saudi-led group conflict. His argument stressed the Saudi's anger because of the strong regional and international influence of the small country Qatar. According to his idea, the most critical issue that made the Saudi-led group angry was the question of how a geographically smaller country, with a low number of population, and less economic power than Saudi could dominate the regional and international politics and diplomacy¹. (See the profile of informant 1 at the appendix)

According to the study participant from PSIR at AAU, who is a political science professional, describes that to look at this particular issue one has to go back to their history. For long period of time, these two countries were so cooperative characterized by their closer friendly cooperation on various critical issues with respect to each other and they were the closest ally on various issues of the Arab League and in the GCC. Above all the similarity of their foreign policy in general, and their attitude towards the western influence, in particular, was the strongest connector for their diplomatic ties. However, he adds, in the practice of international relations, having various commonalities between two countries or the availability of one common friend for two countries doesn't guarantee eternal unity among them. Thus, whenever a national, regional, or international event is fund against one's national interest, the relation will be distorted¹⁰

This key informant also added the difference in regional and international diplomatic role of Qatar and Saudi Arabia has been increasing for the last ten or more years. The Al-Jazeera media outlet (especially the Arabic Channel) is the most influential instrument for Qatar to show it's more pro-Islam than other Middle East countries including Saudi Arabia. The media also have been exposing how the Arab governments are dictatorial regimes for their citizens. This propaganda directly contradicted with the perception of the international community on Saudi Arabia as the head and protector of Muslim. As a result of the facts released by Al-Jazeera, people of Muslim countries mainly the oppressed have been murmuring that Saudi Arabia is no longer a protector and promoter of Islam. The other historical dividing factor between Qatar and Saudi Arabia, as it's reflected by the other key informants is their position on the issue of Palestine. While Qatar has a clear stance and supports Hamas officially; on the contrary, Saudi Arabia and its allies, and Egypt labeled Qatar's position as a 'terrorist' act towards a 'terrorist' group. Therefore, these different political positions of Qatar on other Middle Eastern issues became wider and irreconcilable over the years¹⁰. (See the profile of informant 10 at the appendix)

Another Study participant from PSIR at AAU explained that there are various historical junctures and events that have to be taken as legacies of the dispute in the Gulf. The Arab-Israeli war, the Saudi-US military security alliance, the US's patronage, the emergence of Al-Jazeera as prominent media, and the attitude of Gulf States towards the role of Western powers in the Middle East politics, are some of the crucial historical and political factors among other issues². (See the profile of informant 2 at the appendix)

According to another key informant from PSIR at AAU, the two countries (Qatar and Saudi Arabia) were much-closed friends for a long period of time. Their closed relationship emanated from various commonalities including; religion (i.e. the Caliphate of Sunni sect of Islam), language, culture, ethnicity, the policy towards the Westerners, etc. However, he added that when we say this, it doesn't mean that they did not have their own national interests. According to his, explanation, although the two countries have many factors in common, this doesn't necessarily guarantee to achieve their specific national interest. In his explanation, the conflict between Qatar and Saudi Arabia started after the Arab Spring in 2011 and their differences towards Bahrain's and Egypt's crisis.

According to this point of view, the political dynamics especially the popular uprising and the emergence of Muslim Brotherhood as a political movement in Egypt from 2011 to 2015, was the most critical time for their spoiled relationships. The Qatari backed the Muslim Brotherhood, which was a political Movement in both Egypt and Saudi and other ME countries became a major factor in changing their relationship into serious competent and disputant. In the development of the crisis, Al-Jazeera has played a vital role⁷. (See the profile of informant 7 at the appendix). Two study participants from the IGAD organization have also agreed with the above explanations.^{4&5} (See the profile of informant 4 and 5 at the appendix)

An Ethiopian Diplomat in the Middle East and participant in the study puts it in historical context. He said that Saudi had minor territorial border disputes with all of its neighboring Gulf States including the UAE, Qatar, and Yemen. However, he adds, the border dispute was solved without any significant negative impacts on their inter-state relations. On the other hand, according to this informant, there are no strong historical disagreements between Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

Their current conflict is, therefore, the outcome of both states aspiration for regional power control and influence in the Middle East and abroad⁶. (See the profile of informant 6 at the appendix)

The 2011 ‘Arab Uprising’ might be taken as one important historical event that created a rift between ‘Arab Spring’ alignment and realignment among the Gulf Middle Eastern States governments. He also said that Muslim Brotherhood, which was the influential religious political party in the ME countries, was strongly supported by the Qatar government. This, in turn, leads Qatar to a direct support towards the other regional power, namely Turkey. Although the dispute was not strong, tensions between Qatar on one side and Saudi Arabia-UAE block on the other side have existed since the 1970s due to their long-standing unresolved border dispute between them. This information is confirmed by Rol (2017), too.

Al-Jazeera Report of June 9, 2017, supports the key informant’s explanation about the existence of border disputes among the Gulf States, which erupted in 1991 between Qatar and Bahrain over the ownership of Hawar Islands. In 1992 another border clash took place between Qatar and Saudi Arabia that’s followed by the death of three people. Although Qatar and Saudi Arabia signed a border demarcation agreement in 1996, the issue has not been settled for a long time. Another important event was the boycotting of Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) summit held in Doha by Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz of Saudi Arabia in 2000 in protest of Qatar’s trade relation with Israel. As a reaction to the controversial comments made by Al-Jazeera, Saudi Arabia withdrew its ambassador from Doha in 2002.

The Al-Jazeera report also added that in 2005, Saudi Arabia withdrew its approval for Qatari plans to build a gas pipeline known as ‘Dolphin Pipeline’ to Kuwait, UAE, and Oman. During that time, Saudi also rejected a plan to build a bridge linking Qatar to the UAE and Bahrain. In 2008, the final Border Dispute Settlement Agreement was signed by the Saudi Arab governments. In 2010, the then Emir of Qatar pardoned a number of Saudi Arabian citizens accused of participating in a coup d’état which was organized to overthrow the Emir. This measure taken by Qatar played a very significant role in improving the inter-state diplomatic relationship between the two countries by then.

Only after a year, and during the Arab Spring and the uprising of Bahraini people, both Saudi and Qatar were seen as supporting different sides. In 2014, UAE charged a Qatari citizen Mahamoud al-Jaidah with supporting Al-Islah considered as a branch of Muslim Brotherhood and it sentenced him to seven years jail service. On March 5, 2014, the Qatar government and Al-Jazeera were accused of breaching the 2013 GCC security agreement by supporting Muslim Brotherhood and its 'hostile media' Al-Jazeera. Consequently, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Bahrain agreed to suspend ties with Qatar.

After eight months, in November 2014, the three countries agreed to return ambassadors to Doha. In 2015, the UAE employed a British consultancy by assigning it to brief British Journalists about Qatar which brought in a campaign accusing Qatar of funding 'terrorism' in ME. On May 23, 2017, Qatari News Agency (QNA) website was hacked and a statement falsely attributed to the Emir of Qatar Sheik Tamim bin Hamad was posted. On June 4, 2017, another hacking of the email of Yosef al-Otaiba, the UAE Ambassador in the US was reported. The content of the email was the ties between the ambassador and a pro-Israel think-tank in the group in Washington. It also includes the tasks to undermine the image of Qatar and to some extent the Kuwait government internationally. Furthermore, the email was requesting to shift the US Central Command operations from Qatar to UAE. On June 5, 2017, although the Qatari Foreign Minister rejected it, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, UAE, and Bahrain announced to cut diplomatic relations with Qatar.

At the same time, Saudi Arabia expelled Qatar from its coalition leading the war on Yemen. On June 9, 2017, although Qatar dismissed it as baseless allegations, twelve organizations and fifty-nine individuals including the chairman of the International Union of Muslim Scholars, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, and eighteen prominent Qataris were placed on a 'Terrorist list' by the Saudi-led countries (Al-Jazeera, 2017). Among the key informants, seven out of the ten (70%) agree that the current rift within the GCC didn't emerge accidentally. The differences among the Middle East countries have a long history. The major factors are the disagreement on the Arab-Israel war, their differences in religious sects and their differences on secular ideological outlooks worth mentioning.

However, the dynamics of the dissimilarities and significant differences among the Middle East countries developed to multidimensional factors. The events of the last 26 years, for example, indicate that the current Qatar-Saudi conflict is an outcome of accumulated historical irreconcilable positions and interests which have been continually accumulated and stayed unresolved over the years. According to the key informants and the assessed documents, the forms and types of the disagreements were the dominant irreconcilable positions containing various elements such as historical border issue, economic factors, security issues, insurgency, and diplomatic antagonism. The data from the key informants and documentary evidence show that the current differences among the Gulf States widen over the years and have been developed to the struggle of ensuring regional hegemonic ambition both at regional and global levels.

3.2. Root Factors of the Current Gulf Crisis

The main concern of this part is to identify the root causes of the current Qatar-Saudi-led conflict. Thus, it also tries to understand and anticipate its implication on the Horn of Africa States/countries. ‘Saudi-bloc’ countries demanded Qatar cutting diplomatic and military relations with Iran in June 2017. Besides, they insisted on the immediate shut down of any of the Al-Jazeera Media Network operations by considering them as the root causes of the rift. The support of political opposition group movements especially the support to Muslim Brotherhood was also taken as one of the key demands of the Saudi led countries. However, the ideas of various political analysts and informants in this study have different opinions and explanations regarding this issue. Therefore, the key informants’ perspectives and explanations about the major root causes of the crisis of the Qatar-Saudi block countries are going to be discussed as follows.

As explained below by the study participants, it is easy to pinpoint the principal cause for the ultimate eruption occurrence of Qatar versus Saudi led-block dispute is Qatar’s closest ties and its strong alliance with Iran and Turkey. Since Turkey is the key supporter of Muslim Brotherhood, all the conservative Sunni believers including Saudi Arabia and Egypt have strong opposition to Turkey.

For the Saudi government and its backers/block, these two countries are considered as regional rivals. The other cause for the current conflict is Qatar's refusal to shut down and stop the operation of Al-Jazeera see Mehari (2017). The important point that causes the proxy war in Yemen and other ME countries between Iran and Saudi is the key factor that causes much of the violence in the region. Even its extended proxy war in the Horn of Africa resulted because of their rivalry and unhealthy competition. Tehran accuses the Saudi-America alliance along with Israel as the main causes of the instability in the Middle East; it firmly believes that it has to be tackled only by armed struggle. Riyadh, on the other hand, accuses Tehran is undermining the stability in the Gulf by encircling Saudi Arabia with Shia regimes in Bahrain, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen.

All key informants of this study have agreed that the conflict was caused by irreconcilable political and ideological factors. A key informant from PSIR at AAU explains that the root factor for the current Saudi block vs. Qatar crisis could be seen in terms of their foreign policy language. Thus, he stresses that it is important to assess the Qatari foreign policy strategy and outcomes during the last two decades. He further notes that during the past two decades, Qatar has played significant political and diplomatic role within and out of the region; as a result, it gained a good reputation and became an influential state both at regional and international level. For example, Qatar has an ambitious policy to be influential by using both hard and soft power diplomacy inside and outside the region and it succeeds as it planned².

The strategy of sponsoring strong media made Qatar to consider itself as the champion of democracy and voice of the poor people. In spite of its small size, by imitating and practicing the Western giant News Networks experience, Qatar became highly influential at regional and global level. It is not only in the foreign policy but also in the domestic policy Qatar became different from other Gulf countries. All these internal and external developments in Qatar have made Saudi and its allies' jealous, anger, and suspicious. In his conclusion, Qatar's strong diplomacy and its outcomes are root factor for the current Qatar-GCC rift².

According to another key informant from PSIR at AAU, although Qatar is an Arab-Sunni State of Sunni Arab, its pragmatic diplomacy, its strong relationship with the Shia Iran, its plural accommodation of diversity of political, ethnic, religion and tolerance of western values and different ideology were regarded by Saudi and its allies as antagonistic⁷ (See the profile of informant 7 at the appendix)

According to the Key informants from IGAD, the root causes for the eruption of Qatar-Saudi conflict are political factors. According to their understanding, the Qatari significant influence in the international politics, Qatar's good relation with Iran and Turkey, and Saudi's fear of being dominated by Iran and Turkey are taken as root factors for the crisis. Both of these key informants consider the 13 demands of the Saudi as irrational and both support the Qatar position^{4&5}.

The Key informant from IPSS agreed on the explanation of the above participants and he added some important factors. The appearance of Al-Jazeera which is the unconventional concept of media outlet and its influential role in motivating and agitating the poor people before, during, and after the Arab spring terrorized the Arab monarchies. Therefore, in order to protect strong popular protest opposition, Saudi leaders and their allies demand to close Al-Jazeera by accusing it as a 'terrorist's' media outlet. He added that the Sunni Vs Shiite sectarianism and the Iran nuclear deal which Saudi Arabia and its allies consider as a favor for Iran was another factor for the bad relationship. Meanwhile, the stronger relationship between Qatar and Iran made Saudi and its allies nervous. He also added economic factor as an additional cause for the rift. According to his explanation, the decreasing of oil price due to various global factors is forcing the Middle East countries to diversify their economy so as to get away from the oil-dependent economy. In this regard, Saudi is lagging behind the other small Gulf States¹.

Qatar and UAE, for example, are in the move of applying modern technological development supported by western experts and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). The growing hostility among the Gulf States themselves is one important factor for growing deep interest in the Horn of Africa¹.

While Saudi Arabia considers itself as the regional hegemony and the main representative of Sunni Islam in the world, Qatar and UAE on the contrary, consider themselves as entitled independent foreign policy in which they follow their own interest and ideological vision in the Arab world. He also explained that there is an assumption that most of the time, it is concluded that people with the same, language, religion, culture, and ethnicity are more likely to live peacefully. However, the reality in the Middle East and the Gulf States doesn't exhibit the above". He added that the ideological and political difference among the Gulf States along with their competition to be dominant regionally as well as internationally has to be considered as their vital dissimilarities¹.

The above idea is supported by the key informant from EFPSSI who classified Qatar as an important competitive force in the region. He explained that Qatar despite its smallness in terms of size, military, and population, it has expanded its visibility in the region as well as in the world. Its diplomatic strategy, its intervention as a mediator of various conflicts in the Horn Africa such as the Darfur conflict, Eritrea, and Djibouti conflict increase Qatar's acceptance by the Horn Africa. The key informants' explanations given above are also supported by literal sources on the issue. For instance, Brook (2016) stated that as there is similarity among the Gulf countries and there are also significant differences among them i.e. ideological, political, and ethnic, national interest based differences⁹. (See the profile of informant 9 at the appendix)

Saudi Arabia and UAE were competing against Qatar's global as well as regional influence mainly its influence among the Horn African countries including Sudan Eritrea, Somalia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, and South Sudan, see Mehari (2017). The Qatari influential diplomatic role in the HoA Region countries was mainly in the form of intervention to mediation such as in Darfur, Djibouti, Eritrea and direct support to State and non-State actors. These Qatari interventions in the HoA countries in the past decades were seen by Saudi and the UAE as serious obstacles for their diplomatic influence in the HoA region countries. The competition among the Gulf countries for wide influence in the HoA countries states exhibits in other socioeconomic sectors as well. The UAE strives to be the hub of manufacturing for agricultural products to supply Africa and the rest of the world, through the processing, packing, and selling products internationally.

Qatar's hosting the World football Cup and UAE's aims to become the world's tourism hub is another form of socio-economic competition between the two countries. The main goal of the Saudi Arabia and its ally the UAE is to see the overthrow of the current Qatari leadership. Qatar has successfully subverted the Saudi-UAE plan of sponsored regime change. This further angered the Saudi, UAE and their allies' sea Rol, (2017). As most of the study participants and evidence from sources, Qatar's closer bilateral diplomatic relations with Iran and its support for Muslim Brotherhood are the two major factors for the current Qatar-Saudi blocks conflict. The other factors that contribute to the conflict are the fall of oil price and the competition to compensate the deficit are additional reasons for the current Gulf dispute⁹.

A key informant from PSIR at AAU said that the main contradiction between Qatar and Saudi is the competition to be seen in the ME region as the real protector and representative of the Islam. The expanding of pan-Arabism by Qatar and it's being dominance diplomatically in the region and outside made Saudi nervous. Qatar announces itself as a small but vital role player for the unity and liberty of the Arab world. Formerly Saudi's hegemonic competition was only against one i.e. Iran. However, in the last two decades, a different form of hegemonic competition appeared in the region. Unlike Iran, the new competitors are Sunni believers. Thus the form of competition is away from sectarianism and it is a little bit complicated which focuses on political culture difference. He also agreed with the above statement given by different people¹⁰. (See the profile of informant 10 at the appendix)

According to a key informant from the School of Journalism and Communication at AAU, the major cause for the Qatar-Saudi crisis is political and ideological. These two groups (Qatar and the Saudi-led) have their own way of thinking and understanding of the global and regional issues. Saudi is ruled by a monarchical system whereas Qatar is by the elected caliphates. Parts of Muslim who are ruled by caliphates consider themselves as the true followers of Islam. The power competition among Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Turkey is also an important factor for the current crisis⁸. (See the profile of informant 8 at the appendix)

Like the previous key study participants, he mainly stresses on political factors as the major cause of the rift. Despite its small size and very little population, Qatar is rich and highly influential in the region. Al-jazeera the powerful global outlet media has helped Qatar to introduce Qatar as the only and real pro-Islam country in the ME and the Arab world. Particularly during the Arab spring, the Qatar state was considered by many of Arabs as the real and tangible threat to the monarchical systems of the region⁸.

Though Qatar's relationship with the political opposition factions in the region is established with facts and debatable opinions, it supports Muslim Brother Hood party in Egypt, Al-Islah in Yemen, and other Arab countries. To the contrary, Qatar's relationship with the US and western powers is very strong and it has supported by and is party to the US-led combat against terrorism⁸.

Moreover, Qatar continues to maintain its bilateral relations with the state of Iran and it developed its gas resource field. This approach was obviously fast-tracked after the signing of 2013 agreement between the US and Iran over Iran's atomic program agreement that may possibly destabilize the whole Middle East by increasing military completion. The competition between Sunni Saudi Arabia and Shia Iran for the regional hegemony is also an important factor which has also lead to conflicts in many countries in the region⁸.

Qatar's political authorities have taken three mechanisms to accomplish their country's foreign policy goals. The first action was securing a long-term military alliance with the USA and Turkey to the extent of allowing bases and building of US Central Command at Al-Udeid air base as well as additional logistical bases at Sayliyah. Besides to that Qatar has signed military alliance agreements with the state of Turkey including military train, build defense industry, intelligence capacity, and protection from potential foreign invasion. Qatar's political authority wisely embraced the A-Jazeera channel as a vital instrument to accomplish its foreign policy objectives by working 24 hours a day and 7 days a week⁸.

Al-Jazeera serves the people of the region by providing data for almost any political developments in the region and the world including armed clashes, military coups, invasions, struggles, and pre-post elections, clashes etc. Last but not least, Qatar has struggled mediation as the third instrument to accomplish its foreign policy goals⁸. (See the profile of key informant 8 at the appendix)

Mehari, (2017) argue that there are major factors which led to the current Qatar-Saudi-led GCC block conflict. The Qatari democratic elements including opening free media, Al-Jazeera, and determination to democratize the country by promoting elections, became a serious threat to the rulers of the GCC sheikdoms. The rulers of absolute monarchies of the Saudi Arabia and other GCC countries were totally opposed to take political reforms and reject the introduction of any form of democracy in the region as well as in the Horn of Africa. Hence, the Qatar elite to reform their systems of government have been seen as a causing serious threat to the political system of the Saudi and GCC region governments. The rivalry for regional power status and dominance between Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey, and to some extent by Egypt was regarded as the third reason for the dispute. Another important factor for the conflict is the volatile and unpredictable foreign policy decisions of the USA government which are dependent on the unstable personality of Donald Trump.

Yet the USA has a strong alliance with Saudi, Egypt, Qatar, and Israel. Unlike the other countries, Qatar is soft on Iran and Muslim Brotherhood. Its failure to cooperate with the Sunni Arab nations in their opposition against the Iran and Muslim Brotherhood is an important factor in their relationship.

In this regard, Qatar sees itself as the aspiring for the transformation of conservative leadership style in GCC and Saudi towards a new and progressive Islam leadership style. Unlike in the western world, the separation between government and religion leaders is not the norm in the Middle East. Consequently, the old-fashioned Sunni rulers in the GCC region consider the Al-Jazeera as a serious threat to the political stability of their countries and they believed that it has to be stopped by any means.

According to the research participant from PSIR at AAU, another significant factor in the current Gulf conflict is the Muslim Brotherhood ideology. Rulers of Qatar and Turkey believe that it is possible to rule a country democratically by permitting the operation of the Muslim political party. In order to expand this idea, the rulers of Turkey and Qatar are willing and give support to the Muslim Brotherhood movement anywhere in the region including in Egypt. This has led the current government in Egypt to stand in opposition against Qatar and its allies. Symeltanuesly, the response of Egypt, Saudi, and GCC to that shared vision leads to a strong military alliance between Qatar and Turkey. The relationship between Turkey and Qatar is to the extent of significant military agreement⁷.

In spite of some variations in their explanation, all research participants basically agree on that the political and ideological factors as root causes of the current Qatar-Saudi conflict. Nine out of the ten key informants' interviewed for the present study, i.e. 90% who forward views support the Qatari diplomatic approach and its dominant Mass media (Al-Jazeera) are as main contributors to the Qatar-Saudi/GCC dispute. They all agreed also on the other factors that contributed to the eruption of the conflict. These include issues such as competition and ambition of states of being dominant, the politicized religious sectarianism mainly Sunni Vs Shiite, fear of revolutionary movement against the Gulf monarchies and the external intervention mainly the US and its allies are also stated as additional factors.

3.3. Actors of the Current Gulf Crisis

The study participants have also been asked their knowledge about the actors of the current GCC conflict. They all agree that there are direct and indirect actors of the conflict. According to the participant from IPSS, AAU the main or direct actors of the current GGC crisis are Qatar at one side and Saudi with its allies; Egypt, Bahrain, and UAE on the other side. He further said that due to their special national economic, political, religious and social interests, Turkey and Iran were the two countries that actively took part in the recent Qatar-Saudi-led block dispute. He added that the common understanding among Turkey, Iran, and Qatar on the issues of the correctness of Muslim Brotherhood ideology and type of government system became a strong bond for them¹.

A key informant from PSIR at AAU stated that one feature of almost all conflicts in the ME is that all attracted the intervention of external powers. Historically the major interventionists in the region in the Cold War Era (1945-1990) were the USA and the USSR now Russia. Over the years the number and type of intervening powers are changed. Currently, the USA and its allies are the most involving parties in the Middle East geopolitics. The paradox in the current rift within the GCC is that both Qatar and Saudi Arabia are best friends of the USA and all claims that they are against terrorism and extremism. This study participant fully elaborate that the USA had various security and economic agreements with the conflicting GCC. USA has a strong military base in Qatar. This is because the US foreign policy is judged by realism which applies either the divide and rule system or manipulating the conflict or peace between two States for performing its national interest in the region².

He further explained that it is difficult to take Turkey and Iran as indirect actors in the conflict. For this reason, these two were explicitly mentioned in the 13 far-reaching document handed to the State of Qatar by the Saudi led group. Besides to this, the historical, ethnic, cultural, political differences between Iran and Saudi Arabia are observed by their allies in the form of the proxy wars. He emphasizes that Qatar would exploit and manipulate fragile relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia led block for its advantages².

Moreover, he stated that the regional and international counter balance diplomatic struggle of Qatar against the Saudi would maintain the balance. Thus, it would be difficult to see a winner and a loser in this conflict in short period of time. The condition seems to be difficult for the USA and other Western countries to be on the side of one of the disputant party. Although, the current USA government Trump did not seem to have persistence in foreign policy, as of now Tramp's emphasis is on strengthening bilateral relations with the ME States. Hence, his relation with Saudi Arabia and Qatar looks not bad. Other European countries also would focus on promoting their national interest. Their involvement in the conflict would be to act as mediators between the two disputing blocks².

The research participant from IGAD articulates the following explanations. He says that in the current Gulf crisis, the USA is an active participant. There are three important factors that pushed the US's involvement in the Qatar vs. Saudi led block dispute. This included geopolitical concerns, namely the strategic geographical location of the Gulf States, the Seaway that connects the US to play its international police-role. Secondly, the power competition between Iran and Saudi has a critical security implication for both US and Israel. Thirdly, the US gains huge economic benefits through selling arms to both oil-rich disputing Gulf States (Qatar and Saudi). Hence, the US will not take a side in this conflict. Rather, it approached both to sell its armaments to the disputing blocks. This key informant further pointed out that in Yemen's conflict around 400 billion pounds were expended from arms purchase to Western companies⁵. His view was also shared by another key informant⁹ by saying that the eruption of this war is a blessing for the US and other Western powers namely; UK, France, Germany etc. Immediately after the dispute has erupted the USA rushed for interference and started manipulating the disputant to promote its national interest⁵. (See the profile of informants 5&9 at the appendix)

According to a key informant from PSIR at AAU, becoming a strong ally of one party to defend the other is the nature of the game of politics. The historical rivalry between Iran and Saudi and Turkey's competition for regional hegemony are two scenarios for Qatar that has to be manipulated in the current crisis. Therefore, besides the main actors, it is obvious there are various latent actors in the Qatar-Saudi conflict⁷.

All participants in this study agreed on that the involvement of latent actors in the current Qatar-GCC dispute was indispensable. The two groups; Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bahrain, and Egypt on one hand and Qatar, on the other are the direct actors in the conflict. Turkey and Iran were the two countries which were actively involved in the conflict in many ways which include, military, economic, and political and diplomacy. The participants interviewed for this study are also stated that manipulating the Iran-Saudi contradiction by Qatar is expected. Other international powers including; US, Russia, Europe, and China were the other participants in the conflict be it directly or indirectly. They also agreed on the unpredictable nature of foreign policy of the USA.

As of now, the USA does not take side with one or the other disputing block. The study finding clearly indicated that the conflict between the two rich Gulf countries has been taken as a blessing for the USA in selling armaments to the disputing parties. Among the study participants, key informants from IGAD noted that the USA had benefited from the current Yemeni war through arms sells of worth 400 Billion pounds worth sells to Saudi Arabia. Other countries such as; Europe, Russia, and China seem to be beneficiary from the conflict, for they have been selling armament to both disputing blocks. Diplomatic and economic factors are also drivers of external involvements^{4&5}.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. Implications of the current Gulf Crisis and Diplomatic Shifts in the HoA Region

In the present era of increased interconnections between countries, development of information technology, economic exchange, etc. the overall interdependence of countries is becoming higher than before. Any development or any crisis at one corner of the world will directly or indirectly affect countries at the opposite corner. Therefore, in the current extremely interconnected world, no national or regional crisis or conflict will remain restricted to that single state or region. Due to the geographical proximity and other historical links in both sides of the Red Sea Basin, the peoples and governments of both the GCC and the HOA regions were and still are mutually interdependent and hence influenced each other. As it is mentioned above, the conflict between Qatar and the Saudi block has not been limited to the disputants, instead, it has resulted in diplomatic, economic, and security implications on the states of the Horn of Africa. In the following section, the researcher will discuss the data that can show the actual and potential implications of the current Qatar-GCC dispute on Ethiopia in particular and the Horn Africa in general.

4.1. Regional Implications

It is not an exaggeration to claim that the Horn of Africa region countries were and continue to be an attraction for various external pressures. The findings from interviews and document analysis support the above statement. Accordingly, below is the assessment of the implications, actions, and reactions of the Horn African countries followed the current GCC rift. As the types and forms of the implication vary from country to country due to the geopolitics variation of the HoA countries, the consequences also vary. Therefore, it would be worthwhile to see the diplomatic and security implications of the current rift within the GCC on each state of the Horn of Africa with more focus on Ethiopia.

All writers on the issue do agree on the criticality of the implications of the dispute between Qatar and the Saudi-led GCC countries on the Horn of Africa Region. Scholars are agreeing on the geographical proximity and historical ties as the major factor that caused the implication inevitable. All key informants for the study do agree with and support the reviewed idea by adding facts on the current actions and reactions in the region. Below is the detail of informants' idea regarding the implications.

According to the Ethiopian diplomat in the Middle East, although the countries of HoA are in fragile condition, the region, in general, is a strategic geopolitical concern for all powers in the world including the Middle East. The criticality of the region in terms of military, diplomacy, and economic is highly significant. Above all, he added, the region is a corridor of transportation and connector of three continents. Thus, it is obvious, that the Gulf disputing parties are highly interested to influence and control the HoA. One important fertile ground taken as an opportunity by the rich Gulf States is the poverty and competition among the HoA⁶.

A key informant from the AAU department of PSIR described that the Horn Africa and the Middle East are two regions but highly interconnected. The central part of these two regions (the Red Sea) is the main connector of the sub-regions. Thus, the interconnection of these two regions is multidimensional including; geographically, historically, culturally, economically, socially, language, and religion-wise. Above all the political and security condition of these regions is highly volatile, vulnerable, and unstable. The Horn of Africa has additional problems such as; the prevalence of poverty, insecurity, and high division to the extent of state within a state¹⁰. The defacto states in Somalia illustrate the above explanation.

According to another study participant from the Department of PSIR at AAU, although the implications of the rift within the GCC on the Horn of Africa are multidimensional, it would be sensible to focus on diplomatic and security impacts. In diplomacy, there is no static and eternal policy. That means, there is neither eternal friend nor enemy rather eternal national interest. The volatile political and security condition in the Horn of

Africa is the additional factor for the current diplomacy dynamics within the region⁷. Therefore, participating in the alliance and counter alliance diplomatic struggle is a day to day activity of the governments in the region⁷.

A key informant from EFPSSI states that the diplomatic dynamic between the Disputing Gulf States and HoA that we are observing this time shows the overall weakness of the Horn Africa States. The contradiction and competition among the Horn Africa States along with their internal crisis exposed them to be easily influenced and dominated by the computing rich Gulf States. In the case of Sudan for example, there are two important events. As all know, Sudan was under the UN sanction for the last decade or more. After the sanction is partially lifted, Sudan became relax to some extent and it never needs to lose this opportunity. The other important thing for Sudan now is the move of Egypt against Sudan by assisting the weak Eritrean government. Thus, Sudan necessarily is in search of assistance to tackle this tangible problem⁹.

Another encouraging event is Somalia's strong opposition not to compromise the principle of neutrality. Though Somalia is found in a multidimensional crisis, it couldn't give-up its sovereignty for the sack of money. Nevertheless, Saudi is successful in its isolation strategy of Qatar from the Horn Africa to some extent. However, it was difficult to achieve complete isolation of Qatar from the Region¹.

The strategic location of Somalia has attracted the Middle East rival powers to increase their pressure to persuade the nation to abandon its neutral stance. Qatar and Turkey by their substantial humanitarian assistance need to persuade Somali to maintain its neutral stance. In order to achieve these objectives, both Qatar and Turkey attempt to employ various economic, political, diplomatic, and social activities in Mogadishu.¹

According to this key informant, unless there are some unpredictable global incidents, the current Gulf dispute seems to continue for some years. He said that the diplomatic struggle between the two contending groups of Gulf States for achieving international support including from the Horn of Africa becoming very dramatic.

Qatari smart diplomatic approach is convincing the global stakeholders which have a significant influence on its dispute with Saudi¹. In his opinion, the Saudi group is losing the moral ground. His idea is justified by Qatar's hiring of international legal firms to claim compensation for all illegal actions taken by Saudi and its allies.

With the assistance of Germany 'Martial Plan', Eritrea's economy could recover in the past few years. The Saudi-led group also offers much money to the Eritrean government. Egypt with its special interest in the Horn of Africa is committed to supporting the Eritrean regime to its maximum level. All these financial backing may encourage the Eritrean government to play its regional destabilizing role¹.

On the Issue of UAE, this key informant stated that the UAE has been and is still more active in the Horn Africa by investing in the ports. However, the respondent considers these huge investments as adventure risky diplomacy. He justifies the condition that UAE doesn't understand the dynamic nature of the Horn. Nobody knows what will happen tomorrow. If any form of regime change takes place and reject the UAE's relations, it will be difficult for UAE to maintain its interest¹.

Since the inception of the Gulf crisis (June 5, 2018,) various forms of diplomatic dynamics have been taken place between Gulf and the HOA regions. Because of the response from Asmara against Qatar, Qatar had withdrawn its military force from the buffer zone between Eritrea and Djibouti five days later from the disputed news released¹. As a response to Qatar's action, the Eritrean government controlled the two contested territories with Djibouti; Mount Demeira and the Island Demira and these actions had added fuel to the fire that is already simmering in the region see Mustafa (20170).

Key informants from the IGAD organization said that if we go back to a decade or more Doha and Asmara were close friends. The United Islamic Court (UIC) the forefather of Al-Shabab, was supported by both Asmara and Doha to control Mogadishu. Qatar was officially or quasi-officially supporter of UIC by considering it as the best alternative

government for Somalia. The personal relationship between the Qatari Emir and President Isayas was much closed^(4&5).

In their explanation of the dynamics, the 2011 Arab Spring was a critical or turning point for the change in relations. During the Egyptian movement and Mursi's period, Qatar was the strong supporter of Egypt. When Muslim Brotherhood was outlawed in Egypt, Qatar along with Turkey didn't recognize the Al-Sisi government. As a result, the relation between Egypt and the two countries (Qatar and Turkey) changed to bad. Another historical event is the proxy war of Saudi Arabia and Iran. In this case, both parties have attempted to control the Horn Africa coastline. The competition in Asmara, Djibouti, Somalia, Somali land, puntland, and Sudan are some examples. The Eritrean government has taken the current support of UAE and Saudi as its security backup^(4&5).

Ethiopia on the other hand, although it didn't recognize the defacto state of Somali land, it has taken a 19% share of the port development project funded by UAE. The power hegemonic network in the region has been expanded through various actions. Sudan For example when Egypt allowed Saudi to develop projects on the Egypt Islands, Turkey and Qatar signed an agreement with Sudan to develop military bases around Swakin Island. Since Qatar is not an easily controlled state by the Saudi led group, the competition, and expansion of both parties in the Horn of Africa will continue in quite dynamic nature. As both Egypt and Sudan are members of Arab League and Sudan is a partner in the Yemeni war, Saudi Arabia will attempt to play an amicable role. However, Egypt is more important than Sudan for Saudi Arabia. Hence, Sudan needs additional support from Turkey to balance its power^(4&5).

According to the key informant from the department of PSIR at AAU, both parties mainly Saudi, Egypt, and UAE on the one hand and Qatar and Turkey, on the other hand, have been attempted to gain support from the Horn of Africa by isolating one another. As a result, one group of Horn African countries including; Eritrea, Djibouti, Somali land and puntland declare their support to the Saudi group. The federal government of Somali and Ethiopia maintain their neutral stance.

He added that Eritrea is already captured by the Saudi-led group and there is a possibility for the country to play its destabilizing role in the region. This respondent sees Djibouti's position as a shift in its foreign policy and he rose why Djibouti prefers to shift its policy should be answered. In the Eritrean and Djibouti case, there is a paradox. While both countries are entered in border conflict, they support the Saudi group. Why? He rose².

The condition of Sudan is so controversial. Sudan is part of the Saudi coalition in Yemen. To the contrary, according to the Sudan Tribune news release on March 25, 2018, Sudan allowed Qatar and Turkey to invest and build a base in the Sudan islands Swakin. Sudan's diplomatic relation with Egypt is also awful because of two important reasons². One is Sudan's support to the GERD and the other is the border crisis between them. As the Sudan Tribune news release on March 27, 2018, an American delegate led by Erik Stromyr, discussed with the Sudan Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the Issue of GERD. Al-Arab disclosed on March 28, 2018 that Egypt gains success on the convincing of US to involve on the issue of GERD as a mediator.

According to the study participant from IPSS at AAU, diplomatically, the African countries are being pressured to be at the side of one of the two. The situation in South Sudan at this moment is critical. Besides to the volatile security condition, South Sudan is in the pressure of different external powers. Moreover, South Sudan applied to get acceptance as the member of Arab League and this demand have been supported by Egypt. Why South Sudan is interested to be a member of the Arab League and why Egypt assists this interest may need further study. The South Sudan condition is highly volatile with unpredictable security situations. For that reason, and in addition to the weak internal political condition of the country, the gulf crisis is adding another pressure in the regional security in general and Ethiopia in particular¹.

Regarding South Sudan, the key informant from the School of Journalism and Communication at AAU added the following idea. South Sudan is a Christian dominant country. Historically from the British colonial period, most South Sudan people speak English; not Arabic.

Therefore the language and culture of South Sudan are different from the Arab League member countries. The reason why South Sudan is interested to be a member of Arab League is just to gain supporter in order to escape from the current instability. This, in turn, is a fertile ground for some interested Arab countries mainly Egypt to manipulate it as a means for fulfilling its interests¹.

In 2015, Saudi Arabia and UAE convinced Eritrea to allow access to its territory from which they could mobilize forces to attack the Houthis. The agreements reportedly include a security and military partnership with Saudi Arabia Eritrea's cash benefit from its support to the Saudi Coalition in Yemen may encourage Eritrea to continue to project animosity against Ethiopia. Ethiopia warned that Saudi Arabia and the UAE will bear consequences if their activities support Eritrea's agenda against Ethiopia. Early in 2016, Sudan, Djibouti, and Somalia broke relations with Iran, which supports the Houthis, at the request of Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Sudan said it had received \$1billion from Saudi Arabia to shore up its foreign receivers and there are unconfirmed reports of even larger payments. Sudan has deployed between 350 and 700 ground troops to help the UAE and Saudi forces in Yemen¹.

Saudi Arabia and UAE see the HoA as the strategic opportunity to increase their ability in the Yemen operation. Turkey, on the other hand, involves a combination of heavy investment and trade agreements to improve its economic competitiveness in the region. Starting with the Yemeni war and causing the GCC rift, influence the power balance of the Horn African countries. The changes seem rough to Ethiopia and rising from obscurity to Sudan and Eritrea¹.

Thus, the Horn of Africa can be said as an area ready to be a battlefield. The life of migrant from the Horn Africa countries is highly negatively influenced by the destabilization in the Gulf States. Ethiopia which is greatly reliant on various agro-investments from the Middle East and western countries is concerned on any activities on the other side of the Red Sea.

Additionally, due to its war with Eritrea, became a landlocked country and this makes the country to pay special attention to the Gulf issues. Ethiopia is accusing Egypt of interfering in internal and external politics mainly in Eritrea and South Sudan in relation to the Renaissance Dam which challenges Egypt's claim for a fixed quota of the Nile water. The Dam is the basic frustration to the Egyptian and already led to the declaration by Egyptian officials of military action to stop GERD completion and filling¹.

In the case of Sudan, there are some critical factors that affect its position on the Gulf crisis. The issue of GERD and pressure from Egypt and the economic boost from the Yemeni coalition is one important factor. Secondly, the lifting of economic sanction by the US, and the internal crisis in Darfur, North Kordofan, and the Blue Nile are critical for Sudan. The developing close relation with neighboring Ethiopia, the good relationship with Iran, and the Saudi's interest to keep Iran out of HoA is additional pressure for Sudan. Thus, it is difficult to see Sudan as a supporter of the Saudi axis or Qatar. In spite of its supporting the Saudi coalition in Yemen and cut relation with Qatar, Sudan allows military base in its shore for Turkey which is an alliance of Qatar. Sudan and Eritrea which had previously been politically isolated from the international community support the Yemeni war by sending troops and providing naval bases for the Saudi alliance in the ports for the sack of currency and to boost their economies. On the contrary, Sudan and Eritrea are in conflict of various dimensions¹.

For a long time, Sudan had rough relations with the Saudi-led camp (for that matter with all GCC countries except Qatar). Since 1992, when diplomatic relations froze for almost a decade until 1999, Sudan was considered the strongest ally of Iran, the arch-foes of the Saudi-led GCC countries. The rapprochement began with the termination of Iranian non-diplomatic activities in Sudan in 2014. To gain the diplomatic and military support from the HoA, the Saudi-led military coalition in Yemen has sought various levels of support from countries such as Eritrea, Sudan, Somalia, Egypt and recently Djibouti. According to the key informants, the diplomatic and security implication of the Qatar-GCC conflict on the Horn of Africa is significant.

They added to some extent and because of many factors, it is difficult to categorize the crisis as out of the Horn Africa. The most important factors that cause the implication more difficult, complicated and urgent are stated as follows. First and forms the strategic geopolitical location of Horn Africa is as much important as the other side of the Red Sea. Secondly, the historical and multidimensional interconnection between the Horn Africa and the Middle East is considered as one important factor. Thirdly, the fragile condition of the Horn Africa along with the competition and division exposed the region to external influences. Last but not least is Egypt's special interest in the Horn of Africa and the GERD is one motivating factor for some forces to transfer the conflict. No country in the Horn of Africa could be away from the diplomatic and security implication of the Qatar-GCC dispute. However, due to various socio-economic and geographical factors, the degree of the impact varies from country to country within the region.

4.2. Implication on Ethiopia

4.2.1. Diplomatic Implications

In the highly interconnected Horn Africa it is difficult to separate affected and non-affected countries of the region by the GCC regional crisis. The impact is not only on the four Sea seashore countries (Sudan, Eritrea, Djibouti, and Somalia) but also on the other landlocked countries (Ethiopia and South Sudan).

However, because of its central location along with other significant factors Ethiopia is more influenced by potential and actual impacts of the Gulf crisis than any other of the Horn country. Additionally, since the main objective of this thesis is to identify implication on Ethiopia, it is worthwhile to see the case in a separate way. Ethiopia is one of the poorest countries in the world with the population around 100 million and more than 80 percent of its population lives in rural with predominantly agrarian. However, its geopolitical location and its role in the international affairs along with historical background make the country very attractive for all international entities including the Gulf States. The data gathered from respondents and documents indicate how the condition is critical for Ethiopia.

Discussion of a group of International Relations and Foreign Policy experts and professionals in the Ethiopia News Network (ENN) TV pregame (broadcasted April 19, 2018), raised the strategic geopolitical importance of the Red Sea and the unbalanced attitude of Horn of Africa and the Middle East as the major factor of the destabilization in the region. The group was concerned about the current geopolitical development around the Red Sea and its diplomatic implication on Ethiopia. The contemporary Ethiopian Minister of Foreign Affairs Werkinch Gebeyoh said that as Ethiopia is transporting about 90% of its import-export items through Djibouti and other neighboring seaports; Red Sea is a lifeline for Ethiopia. He added that currently, the Red Sea transports 40% of European trade items which are estimated at one trillion Dollar and 15% of world oil demand is transported through the Red Sea. For the 90 to 100% oil-dependent Arab countries the Red Sea is the soul. Due to its strategic importance, Red Sea is an area of high competition among superpowers. All the permanent members of the Security Council either have or in search to have a military base on the Red Sea Shore.

Ato zerihun Teshome one of the participants in the same program, explained that post Cold War the power competition in the Red Sea look as if weaker than before. However, in the contemporary multipolar world order, the competition in the Red Sea became higher and includes various big and small powers.

Professor Medhaniye Tadese one of the participants in the discussion has agreed on the above idea. However, his emphasis was the reluctance of the Horn African countries on the very fast changing phenomenon in the Red Sea. He raised a question about why the countries of Horn of Africa are so careless in the issue of the Red Sea and the dynamic developments. He recommends that Ethiopia along with IGAD member countries have a right to raise the issue in the Security Council.

Ato Dade Desta one of the participants in the program explained and emphasized on the increasing of Arabizing activities of the whole Red Sea and Horn Africa. The Arab countries are increasing their ownership on both sides of the Red Sea. The role of Arab countries including Egypt is rising from time to time. The Arabization activities are highly influencing countries of Horn Africa, which have no historical, cultural, language or religion Arab ground. He also agrees with Professor Medhaniye's idea. The silence of IGAD on the issue of Yemen, which is very much closed to the Horn Africa, is one example to show the poor reaction of the countries.

The Center for Dialogue, Research and Cooperation (CDRC) Director **Dr. Abdeta** emphasized on the Eritrean negative and destabilizing role in the Red Sea and the Horn Africa region. The Eritrean government is not interested to take part in any regional meetings to solve regional problems rather it plays the opposite role. Dr. Abdeta also emphasizes the negative role and implication of the new interpretations of Islam on the Horn of Africa. The Horn of Africa is a home of much tolerance Muslim community. The new interpretation of Islam is highly challenging the peaceful life of the people in the Horn of Africa. He concludes that all these and other factors caused the external influence to be more than 50% on the Horn of Africa.

A study participant from PSIR at AAU explained that it is obvious that the Ethiopian geopolitical importance will force the conflicting Gulf States to strive for gaining diplomatic support from Ethiopia. Each party needs Ethiopia to be at its side and it is logical that Ethiopia couldn't make both conflicting parties equally happy. Thus this condition is challenging for Ethiopia¹⁰.

According to a key informant from the School of Journalism and Communication, as far as we are living in the globalized world and we are interconnected, any conflict between two countries will affect others directly or indirectly. In establishing diplomacy, it is too difficult to analyze the changes and continuities of the behavior of a state. Two states, for example, can be agreed or disagreed on any issue. However, agree at a given time doesn't guarantee for not disagree in the future⁸.

Diplomatic strength between countries depends on the significance to one another. In this regard, Ethiopia's diplomatic significance is critical because of various factors⁸. Ethiopia is core country in terms of geographical location in the Horn of Africa, has big population size, high political influence, rich resource (mainly water), and is a diplomatic center. Therefore from this perspective, Ethiopia is a gate to Africa from other continents⁸.

He explained that the importance of Ethiopia is not only for both the Horn of Africa and the Middle East but also for westerns and other global superpowers. Its central location in the Horn African countries, its huge number of population, and its natural resources made the country internationally more significant. Diplomatically Ethiopia is one of the founders of UN and OAU; it hosts the African Economic Commission and the head office of AU, and it is a home of various international organizations. Although the relation between Ethiopia and the Gulf States has a long history, sometimes it is explained by incompatible of positions on bilateral and regional issues. Some global and regional events and positions of both parties on the events were influencing the relationship considerably⁸.

Ethiopia's current foreign policy towards the Gulf States is focusing on the key role that they could play in Ethiopia's economy. It states that in order to capture their finance, investment, and the market for our production, Ethiopia should clearly explain its policies with special attention to the Nile River and equality of religion in the country see FDRE, (2002). Nevertheless, the above explanation doesn't consider the dynamics and differences within the Gulf States in various political, economic, security, and social factors. The policy considers the Gulf States as strongly unified countries. However, historical facts indicate that these countries have more factors separated them than unified them.

According to the explanation of the key informant from IPSS, the foreign policy of the Gulf States towards the Horn of Africa emanates from their perception and the political difference between them.

Saudi Arabia, for example, does not need strong ties with relatively stable countries like Ethiopia. Instead, it would support Egypt and some other easily controlled states of the Horn Africa. Eritrea for example because of its contradiction with Ethiopia is one preferable state for the Saudi group. The motives of the other Gulf States such as; Qatar, UAE, and Bahrain, on the other hand, are to magnify themselves through rapid investment and diplomatic influence within and outside the region. In the respondents' view, this approach is hasty and adventure with full of risky diplomacy¹.

Therefore, realizing the real condition of the Gulf States and manipulating it as an input to the national interest could be a continuous task for Ethiopia's policymakers. As far as the Horn African countries are in a very deep poverty and instability, there is a high potential for most of them to be a clique of one or the other party. The conflicting parties in general and Egypt, in particular, will manipulate the unstable condition against Ethiopia. Therefore, the problem for Ethiopia will be beyond diplomatic challenges.

According to the participants of this study, the diplomatic implication of Qatar-GCC conflict on Ethiopia emanates from two different but interrelated factors. Ethiopia is critically important not only for the Middle East but also for other countries as well. Ethiopia is a big country with about 100 million people. Geographically Ethiopia is at the center of the Horn Africa and bordered with all countries in the region. Ethiopia hosts two big international offices; the African economic commission and the AU and various international organizations and diplomats. Ethiopia is a resourceful country in terms of water and livestock.

The second important factor that has got emphasis by the respondents as causes for the implication is the importance of the Red Sea for Ethiopia. Although Ethiopia is a landlocked country, more than 90 percent of its trade is transported through the ports of Red Sea. In short, as one said Red Sea is a lifeline of Ethiopia. Therefore, these two major factors along with other elements caused Ethiopia to be highly influenced by the Qatar-GCC dispute. Thirdly some analysts take Eritrea as the one which is disturbing and destabilizing the region.

However, there should be a question to be raised how Eritrea alone could be responsible to the destabilization of the sub-region. To some extent, this idea has elements of externalizing the weakness of other countries of the Horn Africa. Had the other countries been strong in cooperation and collaboration, the issue of Eritrea would be minor.

4.2.2. Economic Implications

The main concern of this sub-title is to discuss how economic relations affect or be affected by the diplomatic relations between countries. Special attention is given to Ethiopia's relations with the currently disputing Gulf States and its interconnection with the current Gulf crisis. It focuses mainly on the current economic relations of Ethiopia with each disputing Gulf state. The economic relation indicates the level of interdependence between Ethiopia and the Gulf States. This, in turn, will help to understand the degree of sensitivity and impacts on the relationship.

4.2.2.1. Ethio-Gulf Economic Relations and its Implications

The life of majority Ethiopians is fragile and faces poor harvest, bad climate, recurrent drought, etc. Thus, in the Ethiopian case, poverty reduction and economic growth is core and principal objective of the economic policy. In order to achieve this objective, Ethiopia needs strong economic ties with the world in general and rich countries in particular. Due to the geographical proximity, Ethiopia's economic relationship with the Middle East countries in general and mainly the rich Gulf States is significant.

This part will attempt to assess the degree of Ethio-Gulf States economic relations and its connection with the impact of current Gulf dispute on Ethiopia. Although there are various types of economic relations, this part is more concerned about the two major sectors; investment and trade. Fortunately, although there are various obstacles, trade and investment volume between Ethiopia and the Middle East States is increasing from time to time. According to the data gathered from Ethiopian Investment Agency and Ministry of Trade, the investment and trade volume between Ethiopia and the currently disputing states of Middle East countries is increasing considerably. The actual investment of six Middle East countries in Ethiopia since 1992 G.C., which is displayed in the tables below would help to know and understand the extent of interdependence through investment.

4.2.2.2. Ethio-Gulf Investment Relations and its Implications

The Gulf States are the potential source of investment in HOA including Ethiopia because of two important reasons. One is their financial capacity and secondly, the Gulf States are dependent on food imports up to 80 to 90 percent. On the Side of HOA countries, foreign investment in the agricultural sector in order to stimulate their rural development is indispensable. The second point that the HOA countries including Ethiopia could invite foreign investment is the rich meat and meat products including livestock. The product of traditional pastoralists; organic, free-range, and grass-fed livestock is valuable and rare not only in the Middle East but also all over the world.

The comparative advantage that Ethiopia has; extensive arable land and huge livestock wealth, attracts the rich Gulf States to invest in Ethiopia in the field of agriculture including livestock market. Therefore, Ethiopia can be said as a long-term potential source of agriculture products for the Gulf States and other countries of Middles East for their national food security. Below are tables that show the level of investment of the conflicting Gulf States in Ethiopia in different sectors.

Summary of Saudi-led group countries' Investment in Ethiopia Since 1992 GC					
Sector	Total No. of Projects per country				
	Saudi Arabia	UAE	Bahrain	Total No. Projects	Total Capital '000' Br.
Agriculture, hunting and forestry	56	13	1	70	14,403,134
Construction	18	8	1	27	2,344,922
Education	9	1	0	10	329,387
Health and social work	13	1	0	14	737,212
Hotels and restaurants	9	1	2	12	4,142,177
Manufacturing	102	44	1	147	55,367,894
Mining and quarrying	2	1	0	3	403,198
Real estate, renting and business activities	20	20	0	40	6,270,786
Transport, storage and communication	5	1	2	8	40,004
Wholesale, retail trade & repair service	3	3	0	6	206,987
Grand Total	237	93	7	337	84,245,701

Table4.1: Investment of the Saudi-led countries in Ethiopia

Source: adopted from Ethiopian Investment Commission (2018)

The above table depicts that out of the three countries, Saudi Arabia is the first country which has a high number of investment projects in Ethiopia followed by UAE. The number of projects invested by Bahrain in Ethiopia is fewest of all. Saudi Arabia has invested in Ethiopia in ten sectors with 237 total numbers of projects. The type and number of the investment projects show that how Saudi Arabia is greatly influential in the Ethiopian economy.

Although there is a variation in the number of projects among the three countries, the total number of investment project of all countries is highly considerable, which is equal to 337 projects with the total financial volume of 84,245,701,000 (eighty-four billion two hundred forty-five million and seven hundred one thousand Birr).65.7% of the investment is in manufacturing. This indicates that the investment of these countries is highly supporting Ethiopia's economic transformation program. Therefore, Ethiopia could benefit from these investments in various ways including; job opportunity, increase export, transfer of technology, gain hard currency, etc. Thus, a little diplomatic failure between Ethiopia and this group of countries in general and Saudi Arabia, in particular, could cause to lose all the economic and social benefits gained from the investment.

Summary of Qatar's Group countries Investment in Ethiopia Since 1992 GC					
Sector	Total No of Projects per country				
	Turkey	Qatar	Iran	Total No. projects	Capital '000' Br.
Agriculture, hunting and forestry	8	1	3	12	1,653,062
Construction	38	2	1	41	3,263,862
Education	4	0	0	4	385,244
Hotels and restaurants	5	0	0	5	26,873
Manufacturing	152	3	12	167	28,481,931
Real estate, renting and business activities	30	2	2	34	706,502
Transport, storage and communication	1	2	0	3	51,8000
Wholesale, retail trade & repair service	1	0	3	4	184,922
Grand Total	239	10	21	270	35,220,396

Table4.2: Qatar's group investment in Ethiopia

Source: Ethiopia Investment Commission (2018)

The above table indicates that out of the three Qatari allies, Turkey is the highest investor in Ethiopia with 239 projects followed by Iran and Qatar with 21 and 10 projects. The total number of projects is 270 with a total financial volume of 35,220,396,000 (thirty-five billion two hundred twenty million and three hundred ninety-six thousand Birr). The investment of these three countries is in eight significant sectors. Like in the Saudi-led group countries investment, Ethiopia could benefit a lot. The investment could increase Ethiopia's export volume, it could diversify the economic sectors, and transfer of technology, job opportunity, and other related benefits.

To sum up, when comparing the level of investment of the two groups in Ethiopia, the Saudi-led group exceeds by 67 projects and by the financial volume of 49,025,305,000 birr. Nonetheless, this difference couldn't lead Ethiopia to have a stronger relationship with Saudi group than the Qatari group.

For Ethiopia maintaining the total value of the investment of both groups which is equal to 607 projects with a total financial volume of 119,466,097,000 birr and initiating both groups to increase their investment has to be the main objective. Ethiopia should appreciate and encourage both groups regardless of their current differences. The investment of these countries is necessary not only for economic benefits but also for diplomatic and political relations with the countries. It would increase the interdependence and mutual interest. Furthermore, the more the interdependency the more guarantee for good diplomatic relations will be.

4.2.2.3.Ethio-Gulf Trade Relations and its Implication

Though there is potential for much greater trade exchange between the Gulf and HOA, trade was not a high concern of both sub-regions states relationship for long period due to some factors. Ethiopia's economic policy is based on the Agricultural Development Led Industrialization (ADLI) strategy, which focuses on increasing productivity of agricultural products. The objectives of Ethiopian trade promotion strategy are; ascertaining sustainability of Agricultural products, generating required foreign exchange, and promoting the competitive industry. Therefore, unless Ethiopia could maintain its trade relation, it is difficult to achieve the stated objectives. Below are tables of the Import/export trade relation between Ethiopia and the currently disputing Gulf States.

Summary of Export Trade Volume to Saudi Allies in 2017			
YEAR	Country Destination	Net Weight in KG	Fob Value in USD
2017	Saudi Arabia	55,168,960.33	196,550,424.84
2017	United Arab Emirates	61,840,169.69	120,748,467.18
2017	Bahrain	1,498,180.06	5,820,936.92
Total		118,507,310.08	323,119,828.94

Table4. 3: Export Trade volume to Saudi Allies

Source: F.D.R.E. Ministry of Trade, Export Management Directorate (2018)

According to the table above, out of the three given states, Saudi Arabia is the first export destination of Ethiopian products followed by UAE. The total amount of export to all the three states is highly significant. That means, losing that much amount of market in one year will affect both the Ethiopian producers and suppliers of export items. This in turn, directly affects the stability of macroeconomics of the nation. For countries with rapid economic growth like Ethiopia, terminating this much amount of market will directly demoralize the sectors. Based on their nature, it is difficult to predict the futurity of relations with these countries. Trade exchange between countries is so related to the diplomatic relations between the countries. Hence, wise and proactive diplomatic measures could reduce the risk of market loss.

Summary of Export Trade Volume to Qatari Allies in2017			
YEAR	Country Destination	Net Weight In KG	Fob Value In USD
2017	Qatar	194,864.13	983,623.31
2017	Turkey	25,859,638.64	30,654,392.72
2017	Iran, Islamic Republic of	16,486,359.50	17,221,264.56
Total		42,540,862.27	48,895,280.59

Table4.4: Export Trade Volume to Qatar group

Source: F.D.R.E. Ministry of Trade, Export Management Directorate (2018)

The above table depicts that Turkey is the highest Ethiopian export destination out of the three listed countries followed by Iran. The total exported volume to all three countries is almost \$50 Billion. For poor countries like Ethiopia, this much amount of money is too much. Above all, Turkey and Iran are high potential markets in the future. The development, population, and the technological advancement of these two countries demand a high amount of raw materials for industries. Hence, Ethiopia has to handle the relationship with these countries. Qatar is a small but wealthy country that can be developed through modern industries. Therefore, the demand for raw material from Qatar is also significant.

To sum up, since these two groups of Gulf countries are powerful in diplomatic, financial, and economic capacity, they have the ability to create pressure on horn African countries in general and Ethiopia in particular. The current rift between the two groups may guide their actions towards the countries like Ethiopia. It is true that both parties will never happy equally by the Ethiopian position on the current Gulf crisis. On the contrary, Ethiopia doesn't possess sufficient hard and soft power to influence these states. Thus, if Ethiopia doesn't handle the Gulf crisis with a smart diplomatic way, the economic, as well as security impacts of the crisis, will harm the country significantly.

Summary of Import Trade Volume of Qatari Allies with Ethiopia in2017			
YEAR	Country Destination	NET WEIGHT IN KG	FOB VALUE IN USD
2017	Qatar	1,408,969.2	1,993,080.16
2017	Turkey	7,861,018,278	101,501,740.41
2017	Iran Islamic Republic of Iran	12,877,207	6,798,249.97
Total		7875304545.2	110,301,070.54

Table 4.5: Import trade Volume from Qatar group

Source: F.D.R.E. Ministry of Trade; Import Management Directorate (2018)

The table above depicts that of the three countries Turkey is the highest exporter of Ethiopia followed by Iran. Comparatively, Qatar exports fewer items to Ethiopia. However, the total amount that Ethiopia imports from this group of countries are highly much. It is almost half a billion dollar. If some obstacles faced on these imported items, it is clear that Ethiopia will be more affected than the exporter countries. This will happen because of the economic strength and stability. The interdependency is very high so that it has to be handled carefully.

Summary of Import Trade Volume of Saudi Allies with Ethiopia in 2017			
YEAR	Country Destination	NET WEIGHT IN KG	FOB VALUE IN USD
2017	Saudi Arabia	7,861,018,278	196,550,424.84
2017	United Arab Emirates	7,861,018,278	120,748,467.18
2017	Bahrain	74539225.2	5,820,936.92
Total		15,796,575,781	323,119,828.94

Table 4. 6: Import Trade from Saudi Allies to Ethiopia

Source: F.D.R.E. Ministry of Trade; Import Management Directorate (2018)

The above table indicates that Ethiopia is dependent on the products of the above-mentioned countries. By default, the highest imported item could be oil which is critical for running overall Ethiopia's economy. Therefore, let alone total termination of these trade, it is critical even if it cut for two or three days. If we look at the total imported dollar value, it is a really great part of the Ethiopian economy. Out of the three importer countries, Saudi is the highest followed by UAE. Therefore, as far as these countries are suppliers of critical item (oil) to Ethiopia, relationship with these countries has to be maintained in a proper way.

4.2.3. Security Implications of the Current Gulf Rift on Ethiopia

Horn Africa and Ethiopia can be explained as two faces of a coin. It is difficult to find secured Ethiopia without the secured Horn of Africa and the vice-versa. Thus, Ethiopia is highly concerned about the availability of any internal or external security problems in any one of the Horn Africa country. The security implications of the current Gulf crisis in the Red Sea bordered countries of Horn Africa therefore, have critical implication on Ethiopia.

Hence, the main concern of this part is to identify the actual and potential security problems of Ethiopia that are caused by the current Gulf States and their connection and implication on the regional security. In this context, all challenges of security in the neighboring countries caused by the conflicting Gulf States are assessed. Because of the multidimensional and complex nature of the current Gulf Crisis, it seems that it would be impossible to be resolved in a short period.

A study participant from PSIR described that it is obvious that the current rift within the GCC is not only between Saudi and Qatar but also with other overt and covert actors as well. Hence, he added, the security problem for Ethiopia will not be limited to only with the conflicting countries. Above all, the internal security situation in Ethiopia is very critical. The 2016 and 2017 demonstrations and insurrections in many cities of Ethiopia against the government caused death for hundreds and imprisoned thousands. Moreover, the historic inharmonic relation with Egypt became aggravated by the historical project: Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD)¹⁰.

A key informant from IPSS explained that for a long time, the Horn of Africa is a sub-region full of army, armament, and conflict. The current Gulf conflict is adding fuel and aggravates the worse situation. The situation in South Sudan is volatile; we don't know what would happen in Eritrea if something happened to the current leader; and the cooperation of Egypt and Eritrea; together with the internal instability in Ethiopia would make situations more difficult for the country to play its positive role in the region and worsens the situation. The political or military intervention of both opponent parties in nearby Somalia is a high- security risk for Ethiopia¹.

He also described that due to the fact that Ethiopia has always wise and strong neutral stand, it is impossible to press it to be at the side of one of the conflicting parties. So it is difficult for Saudi Arabia to isolate Qatar from Ethiopia. On the issue of Egypt and Ethiopia, the study participant said that until the completion of GERD, it is obvious that Egypt will persistently manipulate any condition to gain benefits at the expense of others¹.

Because of the Nile interest, Egypt has been doing and will keep doing all its efforts; bilateral and multilateral diplomacy, legitimate and illegitimate, legal illegal means to stop Ethiopia from completing the Dam. Egypt's classical interests over the Nile do contradict not only with Ethiopia but also with Sudan as well. He added the following idea on the issue. Because, if GERD is finished, Sudan would benefit a lot including; getting a regular flow of water, electric power supply, reduction of sediments, use of vast irrigation, etc.¹.

Therefore, unless Egypt stops its activities to discourage Ethiopia's initiative in any regional and international influence, it is very much difficult for Ethiopia to have a normalized relationship with Egypt. According to his explanation, Egypt's role in South Sudan indicates that Egypt never left any stone unturned up to destabilize Ethiopia. For example, South Sudan hasn't any ground to be a member of Arab League. It doesn't fulfill even the least criteria (Arabic language) as the other African Arab League member countries. However, with the help of Egypt, South Sudan is applying to be a member of Arab League. This activity indicates that Egypt's interest is buying alliance in the Nile riparian using any means¹.

Key informants From IGAD explained that all the agreements that have been done between the Horn African countries and the disputing Gulf States after June 2017 have direct or indirect implications on Ethiopia. Currently, just after the Qatar-GCC dispute, there are a lot of actions and reactions including agreements and disagreements that have been done. The Agreements between Doha and Khartoum, Asmara and Cairo, Asmara and Riyadh, Asmara and Abu-Dhabi, Somalia and Turkey, Somalia and Qatar, Puntland and UAE, and Sudan and Turkey, have implications on Ethiopia's security^{4&5}.

The study participant from PSIR focused on the vacuum created by the Qatari withdrawal of its troops from the buffer zone between Eritrea and Djibouti. In this situation, if the worst comes, it invites Ethiopia to intervene in one or the other way. In the case of Eritrea and Djibouti, there is another critical and complicated issue. While both countries are in border conflict, both are supporting the Saudi camp and this is contradicting scenario which needs attention. The issue of Sudan is also a little bit complicated. Sudan is a member of the Saudi Coalition in Yemeni war, it has complications with Egypt, and it has better relations with Ethiopia. All these complicated and paradox-like situations are security risks for Ethiopia⁷.

Study participant from EFRSSI stated the following; the Red Sea and the Nile are the two critical conditions of Ethiopia's geopolitics. The issue of the Nile comes first in the Ethiopian security context. Egypt defines itself as the 100 percent dependent on the Nile. Therefore the Nile is considered by Egyptians as a choice between life and death⁹.

Thus, Egypt will never give up designing security equations and formula against Ethiopia. Egypt could use all legitimate and illegitimate measures to achieve its goals. Hence Egypt's movement in Sudan, South Sudan, Eritrea, and Somalis are the extension of other Ethiopia destabilizing actions. When we come to the Red Sea, the Eritrean issue and the Yemen war come at the forefront. The war in Yemen is used as justification for the Gulf countries to develop their military based on the Horn Africa coastline. However, he said, the Gulf countries have been using and manipulating the Yemen condition for their ideological expansion. Therefore, it is high risk for Ethiopian security⁹.

An Ethiopian diplomat in the Middle East supports the above idea by explaining that the special interest of Egypt in the Horn Africa and Ethio-Eritrea conflict can be taken as two important additional factors that may increase the degree of involvement of the Gulf States. Thus, the less confidence government of South Sudan, the Crisis in Somalia, and the rent sicker government of Eritrea are blessing conditions for Egypt and its friends⁶.

The study participant from EFRSSI explained that Egypt because of its special interest, is attempting to encircle Ethiopia starting from South Sudan to Somalia through the whole Red Sea. Despite the fact that South Sudan has not any ground to be a member of Arab League, Egypt has taken an initiative to facilitate its work against Ethiopia and Sudan. South Sudan on the one hand, due to its internal crisis and weak tie with Ethiopia, it will be an instrument of Egypt which is a high-security risk for Ethiopia⁹. Another participant explains the negative historical attitude of the Middle East and Ethiopia towards each other is still has significant implications for their relationships. Whatever diplomatic measure taken by the Gulf States on Ethiopia, it is still influenced by three issues: the issue of the Nile and Egyptian interest; the issue of Arab-Israel war; and the role of Islam religion in Ethiopia⁸.

A political Science professional from PSIR at AAU explained that it is obvious that to understand the security impact of the Gulf Crisis on the Horn of Africa doesn't need to be expert or analyst. Currently, we are observing the direct involvement of Qatar and Saudi Arabia in the internal issues of Horn African countries¹⁰.

The Saudi intervention in Somalia by supporting the defacto governments of Puntatland and Somaliland will affect the unity among Somalia. When Eritrea became an ally of Egypt and Saudi, Ethiopia will concern and will never be silent. The same will be true if something happened in South Sudan, Sudan, and Djibouti. Unless these implications are managed, the Horn will enter into a vicious circle of instability. The potential negative security outcomes of the implication include various critical political, economic, and social problems¹⁰.

To mention some; socially, it will affect free movement of people from place to place. The criminal network will be expanded. It will create stress, suspicion among neighboring and fraternal people. Economic problems including trade, financial crimes in the form of piracy, commercialization of war (Using violence as means of income generating), and smuggling of small arms will be expanded. Politically it could cause critical problems such as the expansion of terrorist groups, mushrooming of political organizations computing for power, causes survival of dictatorial grimes. The money pushed by the rich Gulf States for the dictatorial regimes like in Eritrea is a blessing for them as it will have the advantage to strengthen their power¹⁰.

According to the experts who participated in the ENN TV discussion program on April 19, 2018, the Horn Africa is highly being influenced by the Arab world culture, religious ideology, and attitudes. Currently, Arabization of the Non-Arab Horn Africa is becoming the critical task for the Middle East countries to the extent of lobbying some countries to enter the Arab League. The new interpretation of Islam, which is not tolerable, is influencing the tolerable Islam in the Horn Africa. This condition is one of the critical security risks for the Horn of Africa, particularly for Ethiopia.

Therefore, some conditions such as the dilemma in Sudan are critical causes for diplomatic decisions in the region. The tension between Egypt and Ethiopia will be fueled by the spillover from the GCC crisis. Egypt is seemingly gaining power through its alliance with Saudi Arabia on the one hand and loses trust, influence, and strong relation in the HoA region, on the other hand, complicated geopolitical facts which require deep analysis before decisions.

All the study participants absolutely agree on that criticality of the actual and potential implications of the Qatar-GCC dispute on Ethiopia. One crucial issue mentioned as a fertile ground for the spillover of the Gulf crisis to the Horn of Africa is the fragile and unstable security condition of the Horn countries. The unstable situation in Somalia, Eritrea, and South Sudan are some examples. The current security condition of Ethiopia is also one internal and critical factor. According to the respondents' idea of the Nile issue and Egypt's interest to destabilize Ethiopia is an additional factor. The current Gulf crisis is a fertile ground for Egypt's unlimited strives to manipulate any security issue in the region.

Above all the high distribution and smuggling of armaments in the neighboring countries will aggravate the poor security condition in Ethiopia as well as in the region. Therefore, various forms of security problems including but not limited to; restriction of free movement of people, expansion of criminal network, stress, suspicion among neighboring people, financial crimes in the form of piracy, trade problem, commercialization of war (using violence as means of income generating), smuggling of small arms, expansion of terrorist groups, mushrooming of political factions, and support the survival of dictatorial regimes. The money pushed by the conflicting rich Gulf States will have the negative role and aggravating the situation.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. Suggested Solutions and Strategies.

If there is the honest attitude of leaders, no political problem in the world is without a solution. What matters are the way how to handle the challenges and how scientifically and fairly are the alternative measures selected? The objective of this chapter is to gather recommendations from the participants in order to select out the best alternative. Participants of the study including; politicians, diplomats, and analysts suggested different solutions that seem effective to them. Some of the proposed solutions are idealistic and unrealistic. They do not consider the objective condition of individual countries of the HoA and the sub-region as a whole.

Mehari advised the poor Horn African countries not to be part of any allegiance to any of the belligerent parties in the war that is not its own. To show the relevance of his idea resembled the situation with the analog of the 1960s joke around Budapest which says “--about a man buying tea. When asked: which teas do you want- Russian or Chinese? He replied: I will have coffee instead.”(See Mehari Tadele, 2017)

Another informant from IPSS opposed Mehari’s idea by explaining the advantage of being a neutral and good friend of both opponents. He added that if possible it would be constructive to build good relation with both and strive to serve as a mediator. He also emphasizes the Horn African countries to follow the Chinese foreign policy strategy as a model to manipulate the contradiction between hegemonic powers¹. A key informant from the School of Journalism and Communication suggested that the term neutrality doesn’t mean to be idle. Rather, it means don’t support either side but be an active participant to maintain national interest. In doing so, Ethiopia should have to increase the number of experts in areas of international concern such as International relations, Diplomacy, Hydro-politics, etc. Inviting and participating professionals as think-tank group will help to design powerful and effective foreign policy. Therefore, Ethiopia and the other Horn Africa States have to be sensitive and responsive for each diplomatic measure taken by the conflicting Gulf States⁸.

A key informant from PSIR at AAU suggested that there would not be persistent diplomatic policy. International politics along with local politics are full of controversies, contradictions, and paradoxes with fortunate and unfortunate events. Hence, countries like Ethiopia must be flexible, proactive, and responsive to the dynamic developments². Another key informant from PSIR at AAU said that unless Ethiopia faced force majeure circumstances, it has to keep a neutral position. It is obvious that the current rift within the GCC is not only between Saudi and Qatar but also with other overt and covert actors as well. Hence, he said, Ethiopia has to take care of all its diplomatic decisions¹⁰.

A key informant from IPSS at AAU suggested that Ethiopia has to watch each and every activity of the Gulf States in the neighboring Horn African countries seriously and attentively. Ethiopia has to go steps forward in the diplomacy of the Horn. He emphasized that military agreement with Djibouti must be signed as soon as possible. Ethiopia must be highly concerned about any political or military intervention in nearby Somalia and aggressive proactive diplomatic engagement against outside pressure for Somalia is essential¹. An Ethiopian diplomat in the Middle East suggested that Countries of Horn Africa shouldn't be the clique of any external power. Strengthen their unity has to be their last choice⁶.

A key informant from IGAD said that all forms of coercion including, sanction, embargo, and proxy wars in today's integrated world is inefficient and to be condemned. Above all, nobody would benefit from any form of violence. So any country including the Horn Africa has to strive for political and peaceful solutions of the Gulf crisis not for the sack of the conflicting Gulf States but for regional and International stability⁵. (See the profile of informant 5 at the appendix)

The key informant from PSIR at AAU emphasized on the way how a poor country like Ethiopia could manipulate any contradiction between powerful states. He stressed that taking non-alignment position without antagonizing any of them has to be applied. Having good relation with both belligerents could have significant benefits².

A key informant from EFRSSI suggested that Ethiopia should pay attention to all the dynamics in the relation between the Gulf and Horn Africa in general and particularly to South Sudan, Eritrea, and Somalia. He added that side by side Ethiopia should expedite to complete the GERD. It is clear that the completion of the dam reduces various types of threats⁹.

He also suggested that the first action in order to defend the diplomatic and security problems, Ethiopia must read the situation and define the problems and challenges. The following major questions; - who are the most influential and critical actors? What are the root factors? What are the core interests of each actor of the conflict? What can Egypt do on the neighboring and Nile riparian countries and how? Must be raised and answered scientifically. Ethiopia must be organized think-tank groups of experts and professionals composed of different disciplines such as military science, intelligence, economics, political science, international law, diplomacy, and hydro-politics⁹.

A study participant from PSIR at AAU suggested that Ethiopia's reaction to the current Gulf crisis should be balanced. It is logical that Ethiopia couldn't make the conflicting parties equally happy. However, as much as possible, Ethiopia has to take care not to upset any one of the conflicting part¹⁰.

The participants in the Ethiopia News Network (ENN) TV on April 19, 2018, discussion program recommend to the Horn African governments that increasing all-round integration and cooperation among the Horn African countries is the best alternative to solve the negative external challenges. They are optimistic about the paradigm shift of the regional condition after the completion of the Renaissance Dam (GERD). The Dam along with other infrastructural integrations among the neighboring will play a vital role in strengthening the unity of the Horn African countries. The huge hydroelectric power that will be generated from the GERD is beyond Ethiopia's consumption. Hence it will be sold to the neighboring countries.

This in turn, will increase the integration and interdependence between Ethiopia and the other Horn African countries. Most of the key informants suggested that neutral position is the best alternative policy for the Horn African countries. Non-alignment with any one of the conflicting parties is suggested. All the Horn African countries should support Kuwait's proposal towards the Qatar-Saudi Led group conflict.

CHAPTER SIX

6. Discussion and Recommendation

6.1. Discussion

Due to the geographical importance of the Red Sea and its major connecting factor of the Horn and ME, it is difficult to think the Gulf and the Horn as two different and separate regions. Besides the above statement, there are various social, economic, political, cultural, and historical factors that connect the two regions. Therefore, every country found in one of the two sub-reigns has to be as much concerned about the events happened in any country of the region as its own problem. The survey shows that how the interdependence of both sub-regions is multidimensional and much strong. However, the survey also indicates various elements that separate the regions as well as the countries within the regions. The similarities and differences are important factors for various forms of actions and reactions between the Horn Africa and the Gulf States before and after the current Gulf crisis.

Therefore, Horn of Africa States whether they like it or not couldn't escape from the influence of the current rift within the Gulf States. According to the survey, there are four important factors that caused the implication of Gulf crisis on the Horn of Africa is inevitable. First and foremost the strategic geopolitical location of the Horn Africa is as much important as the other side of the Red Sea. Since Ethiopia's geographical location is at the center of all of the Horn African countries, its influence on the seashore states is undeniable. Secondly, the historical and multidimensional interconnection between the Horn Africa and the Middle East is considered as one important factor.

Thirdly, the fragile condition of the Horn Africa along with the competition and division among them exposed the region to external influences. Last but not least is Egypt's special interest in the Horn of Africa and the GERD is one motivating factor for some forces to transfer the conflict to Ethiopia and the HoA. However, it doesn't mean that the degree of implication is equal for all Horn African States.

In the case of Ethiopia, there are some key issues that could attract both the Gulf States and Ethiopia each other. According to the survey, one vital element is that Ethiopia is strategically important for the Gulf States and the Red Sea is strategically important for Ethiopia as well. Though Ethiopia is a landlocked country, its historical ties with the Middle East countries along with the other diplomatic factors it is important for the Gulf States. The Nile issue is another factor that both Ethiopia and the Gulf States pay great attention. The issue of religion especially the new interpretation of Islam is highly influential for the relationship between Ethiopia and the Gulf. Additionally, Ethiopia is a center of diplomacy in the Africa continent. Its rapid economic growth and huge population are two important factors that attract international investment and trade.

According to the survey, the distorted understanding of the concept of ‘National Interest’ along with the ‘zero-sum-game’ politics is found an obstacle for unity and cooperation between and among states of the sub-regions. The root factors of the current Gulf crisis and the actions and reactions between the conflicting Gulf States and HoA show how states are in unfair competition. The actions and reactions and alliance and counter alliance between the conflicting Gulf countries and HoA countries are guided by the principle of “gaining something at the expense of the other.” The pressure from the conflicting Gulf countries to gain support from the fragile HoA countries is more of pragmatic and short-sighted. The existence of prevalence of poverty, competition among each other, intrastate and interstate conflicts, of the HoA countries are considered as a fertile ground for the conflicting Gulf States. Some countries of the HoA have been forced to support the Saudi-led group as a price for the high amount of petrodollar. Puntland, Eritrea, and Djibouti, are countries sided with the Saudi-led group.

Decisions and policy actions and reactions of the HoA states to the current Gulf crisis are full of contradiction, paradox, and complex. Some Horn countries are contradicting each other but support the same bloc of the conflicting party of the Gulf. The Relation between Djibouti and Eritrea and their position on the Gulf crisis, the positions of Sudan on the issue of Yemen and on the current Qatar-Saudi-led group dispute are some examples. Because of its interest, Egypt’s involvement in the HoA after the Gulf crisis is more concerned on Sudan, Eritrea, and South Sudan.

According to some informants, the interest of South Sudan to be a member of Arab League is Egypt's strategy. (see the Explanation of all key informants except 3 and 4)

The historical development of dissimilarities and differences among the rich Gulf States is caused by hegemonic competition. The interest of the Gulf States to be regionally dominant and hegemonic in the Gulf region in terms of diplomacy, ideology, political, and economy are the major factors of the current dispute among them. However, because of the strategic geopolitical factor, external intervention mainly the role of superpowers has to be considered as an aggravating factor. The involvement of USA as a provider (seller) of modern and sophisticated arms for both along with the unpredictable policy of its contemporary leader is a good example.

In the case of Ethiopia, there are some key issues that could attract both the Gulf States and Ethiopia each other. According to the survey, one vital element is that Ethiopia is strategically important for the Gulf States and the Red Sea is strategically important for Ethiopia as well. The Nile issue is another factor that both Ethiopia and the Gulf States pay great attention. The issue of religion especially the new interpretation of Islam is highly influential for the relationship between Ethiopia and the Gulf.

The economic interdependence between Ethiopia and the currently disputing Gulf States is highly considerable. According to the data from Ethiopia Investment Commission (EIC), all the currently disputing Gulf States have 607 investment projects under operation in 10 sectors in Ethiopia. The total financial volume of the investment is equal to \$119,466,097,000.0. According to the data collected from Ministry of Trade, the import/export volume of Ethiopia from and to the conflicting Gulf States is equal to \$372,015,009.53 and \$357,258,099.35 respectively. The high economic benefits for Ethiopia could be measured significantly in terms of unemployment reduction, transfer of technology, hard currency, and economic development. Moreover, since a significant amount of oil is imported from the Middle East, Ethiopia is highly dependent on the Gulf energy. Thus, if Ethiopia doesn't handle the Gulf crisis with a smart diplomatic way, the economic, as well as security impacts of the crisis, will harm the country significantly.

From the above discussion, it is possible to conclude that the security of Horn of Africa in general and Ethiopia, in particular, is highly linked to the Middle East. The current Gulf crisis, therefore, has both direct and indirect implications for the security of Ethiopia.

There are various facts that could show how the Gulf crises affect Ethiopia and its neighboring countries. The fragile condition in the Horn, the current instability in Ethiopia, the issue of the Nile and Egypt's special interest, the strategic geopolitics of the Red Sea, the competition and division among the Horn countries are few to mention.

Therefore, the region in general and Ethiopia, in particular, are exposed to various forms of actual and potential security threats. The absence of security or instability has many social, political, and economic consequences. Problems such as restriction of free movement of people, expansion of criminal networks, the stress of civilian people, suspicious among neighboring people, and expansion of criminal networks, are some social consequences. Financial crimes in the form of piracy, trade rout problem, commercialization of war (using violence as means of income generating), smuggling of small arms, are examples of the economic costs. Expansion of terrorist groups, mushrooming of political factions, and survival of dictatorial regimes are some political challenges of the absence of security.

To sum up, the current internal and regional condition is more critical, volatile, and unpredictable for Ethiopia than ever. Therefore, it is time now for Ethiopia to be alert for any political, security, economic, or social events inside the country and in neighboring countries as well. In the era of globalization, external influence or impact is not a matter of like or dislike. Rather, it is an inevitable sociopolitical phenomenon. Hence, understanding, analyzing, and identifying the major negative implications and taking proactive measures must be the day-to-day activities of all responsible decision makers.

At the regional level, Ethiopia could play a vital role in maximizing the unifying factors and strengthen the interdependency of the IGAD member countries through integration and cooperation. This, in turn, will enhance the bargaining power of HoA not only with the oil-rich Gulf States but also with other global superpowers.

6.2. Recommendation

Ethiopia as a country found at the center of the Horn of Africa and considered as a hub of diplomacy in the region is exposed to various positive and negative forms of external influences. As the nature of the influence of the global powerful states is multidimensional, the solutions to escape from are multidimensional too. Based on the conclusions and suggested possible solutions forwarded by the key informants, the following recommendations are made in solving the negative impact of the Qatar-GCC dispute on Ethiopia and the Horn as a whole.

A. Start a wave-like revolutionary diplomatic policy from inside

A wave of diplomatic revolution must be started from the inside. Since the internal issues are the most critical factors and determinants for the diplomatic strength, Ethiopia has to work hard to reduce the things that distress its people; economically, politically, and socially. Reducing the unemployment and improving democratic culture must be taken as key and urgent tasks of the government.

According to its importance and urgency, the issue of completing GERD should be a matter of priority for Ethiopia. Finishing the Dam and starting to generate power must be one of the short-term internal national objectives. Because of the nature of the threats in the region, completing GERD will bring a paradigm shift in national security and the regional and global diplomacy.

Research and Development program on national interest and foreign relation must be the permanent activity of concerned bodies. This must be conducted by organizing multidisciplinary think thank groups composed of professionals and experts from various disciplines including; Political Science, Military Science, Intelligence, Economics, History, International Law, Hydro politics, Sociology, and Experienced Diplomats.

Proactive diplomatic measures and responsive reactions must be taken against the illegitimate actions of the Gulf States on the Red Sea in general and on some neighboring countries mainly on Somalia, Djibouti, and Eritrea in particular. Currently, Ethiopia has an opportunity to apply to the UNSC/ United Nation Security Council/ for any illegal actions taken by various powerful states including the conflicting Gulf countries. Applying the Principles of Neutrality, Competition within Cooperation is a Guarantee for Sustainable Regional Peace and Security.

Another important point that can help to reduce the negative impact of the current Gulf dispute on Ethiopia is if Ethiopia applies “Principle of Neutrality”. Ethiopia should have not to be only neutral but also should attempt to play a mediator role in the Current Qatar-Saudi Arabia dispute. At least Ethiopia should show its support to Kuwait’s proposal of peaceful resolution for the conflict. Taking side with one of the disputants and condemning the other is costly for Ethiopia and its neighboring Horn countries. Ethiopia as a leading country in the IGAD organization has to play its role in bringing the neighboring countries into common position. The position of Ethiopia, Sudan and Somalia on the current Gulf crisis indicates that there is a possibility of being neutral.

B. Special attention for Regional Integration and Cooperation

Since the national security of Ethiopia is impossible without the regional security of HoA, Ethiopia has to aim at and play its vanguard ship role in building regional integration and cooperation. Therefore, maximizing the values that unite the Horn of Africa countries through Cooperation, Integration, and Collaboration should be taken as best means of maintaining peace, security, and sovereignty. The importance of cooperation and integration is not only to tackle external impositions but also for achieving sustainable development as well. Therefore, leaders of Horn African countries should have the long-term vision to create a **’United Horn African States’ or Horn African Union, or Confederation of HoA** as a long-lasting solution for the deep-rooted sociopolitical and economic challenges.

In this regard regional, organizations like IGAD can play a vital role. However, the current position of IGAD seems inefficient to do so. Thus, to achieve such basic and long-lasting peace and security in the region it is time now to reform the IGAD organization. In order to achieve effective regional integration and cooperation, IGAD's Vision, Mission, Objectives, and its organizational structure should be changed. In doing so, experts and professionals of various disciplines from all member countries should take part in the process.

Cooperation and integration don't mean in the absence of competition among the states. The comparative advantage of countries by itself leads to competition in the form of producing more and selling more to gain profit and achieve trade balance. For example, Ethiopia's comparative advantage is hydroelectric power whereas Somalia is endowed with very long sea border. The oil in Sudan and South Sudan is also another comparative advantage for both. All these and other resources could increase the interdependence in the Horn of African countries. Nevertheless, the competition should be within cooperation. This means that there must be healthy competition among and between countries and it has to be based on mutual benefit. No country should plan to gain at the expense of the other.

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Appendices

Appendix I. Far-Reaching Demands

The Saudi-led alliance has drawn up a list of the following 13 demands for Qatar to end the crisis in the Gulf, according to international reports.

1. Scale down diplomatic ties with Iran and close the Iranian diplomatic missions in Qatar, expel members of Iran's Revolutionary Guard and cut off military and intelligence cooperation with Iran. Trade and commerce with Iran must comply with US and international sanctions in a manner that does not jeopardize the security of the Gulf Cooperation Council.
2. Immediately shut down the Turkish military base that is currently being built, and halt military cooperation with Turkey inside Qatari territories.
3. Sever all ties to all the "terrorist, sectarian and ideological organizations", specifically the Muslim Brotherhood, ISIS, al-Qaeda, Fateh Al-Sham (formerly known as Nusra Front) and Hezbollah. Qatar needs to formally declare those entities as terrorist groups based on the list of groups that was announced by Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, UAE and Egypt, and concur with all future updates of this list.
4. Stop all means of funding for individuals, groups or organizations that have been designated as terrorists by Saudi Arabia, UAE, Egypt, Bahrain, the US and other countries.
5. Hand over "terrorist figures", fugitives and wanted individuals from Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt and Bahrain to their countries of origin. Freeze their assets, and provide any desired information about their residency, movements and finances.
6. Shut down the Al Jazeera Network and its affiliate stations.

7. End interference in sovereign countries' internal affairs. Stop granting citizenship to wanted nationals from Saudi Arabia, UAE, Egypt and Bahrain. Revoke Qatari citizenship for existing nationals where such citizenship violates those countries' laws.
8. Qatar has to pay reparations and compensation for loss of life and other financial losses caused by Qatar's policies in recent years. The sum will be determined in coordination with Qatar.
9. Qatar must align itself with the other Gulf and Arab countries militarily, politically, socially and economically, in line with an agreement reached with Saudi Arabia in 2014.
10. Submit all personal details of all the opposition members that Qatar supported and detail all support that Qatar has provided them in the past. Stop all contacts with the political opposition in Saudi Arabia, UAE, Egypt and Bahrain. Hand over all files detailing Qatar's prior contacts with and support for those opposition groups.
11. Shut down all news outlets that it funds, directly and indirectly, including Arabi21, Rassd, Al Araby Al Jadeed, Mekameleen and Middle East Eye, etc.
12. Agree to all the demands within 10 days of it being submitted to Qatar, or the list becomes invalid.
13. Consent to monthly audits for the first year after agreeing to the demands, then once per quarter during the second year. For the following 10 years, Qatar would be monitored annually for compliance.

Source (Al-Jazeera, 2017)

Appendix II: Profile of Study Participants (Key informants)

Informant' Code	Educational Status	Occupation	Place of Interview	Date of Interview
Informant. 1	PhD in Peace and Security Studies	Global Studies Program Coordinator in IPSS, AAU	AAU, IPSS	March 22,2018
Informant. 2	PhD in PSIR	Lecturer & programmer	AAU , PSIR	March 30,2018
Informant. 3	MA in PSIR	Iranian Diplomat in Ethiopia	Cultural Center of Iran Embassy	April 2, 2018
Informant. 4	PhD in Peace and Security Studies	IGAD Department of Security analysis	IGAD Head Office	April 4, 2018
Informant. 5	MA in Peace and Security Studies	IGAD Department of Security Analysis	IGAD Head Office	April 5, 2018
Informant. 6	MA in PSIR	Ethiopian Diplomat in Middle East	Defense Officer's Club	April 5,2018
Informant. 7	Prof. Political Science and International Relations	Lecturer in the department of PSIR in AAU	AAU, PSIR	April 10,2018
Informant. 8	PhD in Hydro politics	Lecturer in School of Journalism and Communication	AAU School Of Journalism Office	April 10.2018
Informant. 9	MA In PSIR	Analyst of foreign Relations EFPSSI	EFPSSI office	April 11, 2018
Informant. 10	MA in Human Right PhD in International Law	Lecturer in the Department of PSIR, AAU	AAU, PSIR Office	April 13, 2019

Appendix: III. Instrument

Interview Guide Questions

Dear Madam/Sir

My name is Kidane Gebreegziabher. I am a graduate student at Addis Ababa University, Department for African Studies and Oriental Studies. The objective of this interview is to gather primary data for the topic titled *“The Current Qatar-Saudi Dispute and its Implication on the Horn of Africa; the case of Ethiopia”* I kindly request that you answering these questions honestly. Any information that you provide will be kept confidential and used only for an academic purpose mentioned above. The interview questions listed below are guiding questions. There will be probing questions based on the answers that would be provided by the interviewee to get more information associated with the study.

Kidane G/egziabher

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e-mail-kkiidd401@gmail.com

The following interview protocol was used by the researcher for asking questions and recording answers during the one-on-one interview

Duration: March 22, to April 13, 2018

Personal information

Profession-----

Current position-----

Work experience in the current or related occupations-----

Areas of questions

1. May I know your opinion on the current rift within the GCC mainly the dispute between Qatar and the Saudi-led group?

2. Would you please, explain to me if there is a historical background of the dispute between Qatar and Saudi?
3. What do you think are the root causes of the current dispute between Qatar and the Saudi-led group of countries?
4. Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, UAE, and Egypt have handed Qatar a list of far-reaching demands in order to restore the previous status which Qatar has totally rejected it. Which side do you think is correct and why? What do you think will be the next step by both parties? (i.e. By the Qatar and the Saudi led group)?
5. Immediately after Qatar cuts its relationship with many Saudi allies, Iran and Turkey have sided with Qatar's interest. What do you think the reason is behind this reaction?
6. Is there any newly signed agreement between your country and other countries mainly the Horn of Africa States and Middle East countries (in any sector) that potentially contribute to the current Gulf dispute?
7. Isolation of Qatar from the powerful states (US, European countries, and others) could have an impact. But, what do you think is the implication of Qatar's isolation from the poor HOA countries? What action/s do you think that both parties would demand to gain support from the Horn of African countries?
8. What threats and opportunities will the current Gulf States dispute have towards the Horn African States in general and Ethiopia in particular; Economical, political, diplomatic and security wise?

9. Would you explain to me your country's position on the issue of current Gulf Dispute? What benefits or detriments do you expect from the policy towards the issue?

10. Which of the three positions (Being at the side of Saudi-Led camp, or at the side of Qatar or neutral) do you think is more beneficial for the countries of HOA in general and Ethiopia in particular? And why? In other words, may you state the merits and demerits of the three different positions for the Countries of Horn of Africa?

11. In your opinion does any pressure exist from the disputing parties towards HOA countries including Ethiopia? If yes, could you please, explain to me the types and forms of the pressure? If no, why?

12. In your opinion what should be the best strategies that the HoA governments in general and Ethiopia, in particular, should follow to overcome the diplomatic challenges and problems caused by the dispute within the GCC?