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**PEACEMAKING IN THE MIDST OF WAR : AN  
ASSESSMENT OF IGAD'S CONTRIBUTION TO  
REGIONAL SECURITY**

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## Crisis States Working Paper

# Peacemaking in the Midst of War: An Assessment of IGAD's Contribution to Regional Security in the Horn of Africa

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### **Introduction**

The Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) is the regional organisation of seven Eastern African countries with a stated ambition to achieve peace, prosperity and regional integration among its member states. Each of these objectives is challenging, but none more so than the prevention, management and resolution of violent conflict in a region that has been steeped in warfare for decades. The current conflicts in the Horn of Africa include civil war in Darfur, protracted state collapse in Somalia, deep hostility and a stalled peace process between Ethiopia and Eritrea, a fragile peace agreement between North and South Sudan, a border dispute between Eritrea and Djibouti and periodic bouts of unrest in the Ogaden and Northern Uganda.

This paper assesses the contribution that IGAD has made to regional security in the Horn of Africa since the mid 1990s. It begins with a brief account of the origins of IGAD in 1986 and the development of its peace and security mandate in 1996, set in the context of an evolving African regionalism. It then examines the two major peace processes over which IGAD has presided, the first for Sudan (1993-2005) and then the Somali process (2002-2004). The next section considers the overall effectiveness of IGAD's contribution to peace and security and assesses the success of IGAD's reconciliation efforts in Sudan and Somalia. The paper argues that the regional security framework of IGAD was conceived during an exceptional (and brief) interlude of good relations among all its member states. It attributes the subsequent failure of IGAD to prevent or resolve much of the serious conflict in the Horn to an entrenched political culture that endorses the use of force and mutual intervention by states in each other's conflicts and domestic affairs. It notes that IGAD member states continue to fuel conflict even when reconciliation talks are in progress and suggests that where positive results have been achieved these are more the product of regional power politics than of IGAD's institutional strength. It concludes that the scope for the IGAD Secretariat to develop an autonomous conflict-resolution capability will remain limited, but that member states will still seek to utilise IGAD's authority to legitimise their own regional policies.

### **The African and International Context**

The efforts within IGAD to improve security arrangements in the Horn of Africa took place in the context of a broad international consensus that regional organisations should contribute to the management of conflict and the maintenance of international order. The UN's 1992 Agenda for Peace had set out a vision for securing peace and security in the post cold war world that highlighted the role that regional organisations could play in conflict prevention and peacemaking.<sup>1</sup> It articulated a new collaborative relationship between the United Nations and regional bodies for the management of regional crises that is now firmly established in

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<sup>1</sup> UN A/47/277-S/24111 17 June 1992

international practice. Increasingly, regional and sub-regional groupings are seen as the first resort for problems transcending national borders, leaving the wider international community to deal with problems that cannot be solved at lower levels. Against this background there has been considerable external encouragement for the development of African regional organisations capable of addressing peace and security problems.

The concept of regionalism has considerable resonance in Africa. It chimes with the aspiration of Africans to handle continental problems without external interference. However, the structural conditions that have favoured the emergence of regionalism elsewhere in the world are generally lacking in Africa. Regionalism in Europe was built on the foundation of strong nation states, each comprising a government capable of protecting its borders, exercising control of its territory, enjoying a monopoly of the legitimate use of force and capable of providing security and community to all its citizens. This combination of the attributes of statehood is lacking in many African countries. State weakness has tended to reinforce the attachment of Africa's political leaders to juridical sovereignty and the fierce protection of statehood rather than encouraging effective forms of regionalism (Clapham 1996). Despite a plethora of regional organisations and several ailing states on the continent, sovereignty remains as fundamental as ever in the conduct of Africa's international relations. The establishment of the African Union (AU) in 2002 marked a shift towards consolidating African peace and security activities at the regional level (Godfrey 2008). The AU's Peace and Security Council (PSC), launched in May 2004, is the key decision-making body in the new architecture. Its guiding principles include respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, sanctity of boundaries and non-interference; but these exist alongside radically new interventionist principles incorporated in the AU's Constitutive Act. AU member states have authorised the PSC, whose membership is tilted towards Africa's larger and stronger states, to act on their behalf. The fifteen-member Council can authorise the deployment of peace-support missions, recommend intervention on behalf of the AU and approve the modalities for intervention to restore peace and security (African Union 2002: Arts 4h & i).

The AU's peace and security architecture provides the broader institutional setting within which IGAD and Africa's other regional organisations operate. The 'regional mechanisms' are formally recognised as part of this architecture and the PSC is required to harmonise its activities with them<sup>2</sup>. In practice the AU looks to the sub-regional organisations to lead on crisis management within their own regions (Adar 2000). This has certainly been the case in the Horn of Africa, where the PSC has consistently endorsed all the initiatives emanating from IGAD.

### **Conflict in the Horn and the Early Development of IGAD (1986-96)**

With more than fifty member states, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) was never well suited to spearhead political or economic harmonisation at the regional level. By 1980, the Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS) and the South African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC)<sup>3</sup> were established and Africa's sub-regional organisations had been recognised as the appropriate building blocks for economic integration.<sup>4</sup> During the 1980s the UN Economic Commission for Africa worked to

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<sup>2</sup> Protocol relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, Article 16

<sup>3</sup> The forerunner to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) formed in 1996 with the addition of South Africa

<sup>4</sup> The key role for regional economic communities in African economic integration was agreed in the OAU's Lagos Plan of Action 1980

strengthen regional economic communities and to establish such groupings where none existed.

The Horn of Africa lacked a sub-regional organisation. Then, as now, it was an exceptionally unstable area and political relations among the states of the region were extremely bad. The rationale for the new body was not overtly political. The impetus for establishment of IGAD came from UN agencies that saw the urgent need for a regional coordination agency in which to address problems of famine and drought that had devastated Ethiopia and Somalia during 1984 and 1985 (Shaw 1995). In 1986, the governments of six countries – Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, Kenya, Uganda and Djibouti – signed up to form the Inter-Governmental Authority against Drought and Desertification (IGADD). The name of the organisation betrayed no political ambitions for greater regional integration. IGADD's aspirations were confined to functional co-ordination on environmental protection, food security strategies and natural resource management.

Political relations among IGADD member states remained very limited. Ethiopia and Somalia had not restored relations since the Ogaden war ended in 1978. In the course of the 1980s Ethiopia, Sudan, Uganda and Somalia all endured very violent civil wars in which hundreds of thousands of people were killed. Operating with a zero sum approach to security in the region, the governments routinely sought to destabilise one another: Ethiopia was backing rebel groups in Sudan and Somalia; Sudan and Somalia were backing rebels in Ethiopia. There was no real potential for institution building. However, the inaugural IGADD summit in 1986 was the occasion for a first meeting between President Siad Barre of Somalia and President Mengistu Haile Mariam. In order to concentrate resources on the Ethiopian civil war, Mengistu decided to seek normalisation with Somalia. The meeting at IGADD paved the way for the signing of a peace agreement between Ethiopia and Somalia in April 1988 in which both sides agreed to not to assist rebel organisations based in each other's territory.

It is symptomatic of instability in the Horn that five years after its creation, half of IGADD's founding heads of state had been driven from office, all by unconstitutional means. In Sudan, Omar el Bashir seized power in 1989 and established an Islamist government. In Ethiopia, Mengistu was overthrown in 1991 by a dual rebel alliance that split the country into two parts. Meles Zenawi went on to establish a new federal system of government in Ethiopia while supporting Issayas Afewerki to achieve the legal separation of Eritrea as an independent state in 1993. In Somalia, Siad Barre was removed from power by rebel forces in 1991, ushering in a protracted period of state collapse and the emergence of a separatist administration in Somaliland. While Somalia has yet to emerge from crisis, the new leaders of Ethiopia and Eritrea quickly consolidated their rule and were keen to exploit the opportunities for regional co-operation. Along with President Museveni in Uganda they set about revitalising IGADD with a much more ambitious mandate, including regional security.

With the accession of newly independent Eritrea to IGADD in 1993 the membership grew to seven. By then, Somalia was no longer a functioning state, so effective membership remained at six, making IGADD one of the smallest African sub-regional groupings.<sup>5</sup> While IGADD's membership remained small it covered a vast territory of 5.2 million square kilometres. Its combined population of 174 million comfortably exceeded that of SADC. High levels of poverty and underdevelopment are characteristic of the IGADD grouping, with average GNP per inhabitant only US\$383.3 per annum and an average life expectancy of 47.2 years.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> ECOWAS had 16 members and SADC 10, which rose to 11 with the accession of South Africa

<sup>6</sup> Figures from IGAD Secretariat publication, citing World Development Indicators database 2005

There were striking differences among the IGADD states. The grouping included Africa's largest country, Sudan, as well as one of its smallest, Djibouti. It contained Africa's oldest country, Ethiopia, as well as its newest, Eritrea. Political histories ranged through continuous civilian rule in Kenya and Djibouti, to protracted state collapse in Somalia and violent conflict as a consistent feature of political life in Ethiopia, Uganda, Sudan and Eritrea. The region was also a cultural crossroads where North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa meet and where race, ethnicity and religion have all been mobilised for political ends. Because of its strategic location, external powers have frequently intervened in the politics of the Horn and exacerbated local conflicts (Woodward 2003).

The characteristics of conflict in the Horn of Africa made the development of peace and security mechanisms both more urgent and more difficult than in other regions of Africa (Khadiagala 2008a). Conflict had occurred at every level – within states, between states and among proxies as well as between government armies. The use of force to achieve political goals was the regional norm and democratic accountability was largely absent. Regime change was generally achieved through violent rather than peaceful means, just as political grievances were typically addressed through armed rebellion. Inequitable sharing of national resources and lack of representation in the structures of government lay at the root of many of the internal conflicts. Large communities experienced economic marginalisation and political exclusion, often mirroring ethnic, religious and racial or clan fault lines (Healy 2008).

Many of the conflicts in the Horn challenged the basis of statehood. This applied to the dynamics of Ethiopia and Eritrea, North and South Sudan and Somalia and Somaliland. The implicit (and sometimes explicit) possibilities of new states emerging from conflict meant that essentially domestic conflicts had foreign policy implications. The advancement of (regional) foreign policy through proxy forces in neighbouring countries was part of the 'normal' pattern of relations, entrenching a system of mutual intervention that had proved highly resilient and survived radical political reconfigurations, including changes of regime (Cliffe 1999). With hostile neighbours generally acting as enablers and multipliers of one another's conflicts there were plentiful opportunities for trouble making.

The principles of the OAU, particularly that of 'non-interference', did not guide regional relationships in the Horn. The IGADD member states had been extensively involved in each other's internal wars. Presidents Museveni, Meles and Issayas had all won military victories against the prevailing order and were proud to have overturned abusive regimes. They had no attachment to the stagnant kind of stability that the OAU represented. In his maiden speech to the organisation in 1986, Museveni recalled the deaths of 750,000 Ugandans and spoke of the deep sense of betrayal caused by Africa's silence:

'The reason for not condemning such massive crimes had supposedly been a desire not to interfere in the internal affairs of a Member State, in accordance with the Charters of the OAU and the United Nations. We do not accept this reasoning because in the same organs there are explicit laws that enunciate the sanctity and inviolability of human life.' (Kioko 2003: 15)

In 1993, Eritrea's President Issayas spoke in a similar vein at his own inaugural address, saying the OAU had failed the people of Africa and the people of Eritrea.

A brief interlude from 1991 to 1993 was marked by the absence of conflict, proxy or otherwise, between IGADD member states. It was a period of internal consolidation in Ethiopia, Eritrea and Sudan. Kenya and Djibouti were both going through a difficult political

transition. Uganda and Kenya had mended fences and Museveni was focused on events in Rwanda. Somalia's collapse had produced a severe humanitarian crisis, but this was being addressed through international humanitarian intervention by the US and UN and did not appear to pose a specific threat to regional security.

The decision to expand IGADD's mandate was taken at an extraordinary summit of heads of state and government held in Addis Ababa in April 1995 (Somalia was not represented). The summit established a ministerial committee to propose amendments to the IGADD charter and make recommendations on the restructuring of the organisation. In addition to enhancing co-operation in existing areas of food security, agriculture and environmental protection, they were asked to develop proposals for 'increasing the capacity of countries of the sub-region in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, both inter and intra-state through dialogue' (IGAD 1996: annex). The new mandate was adopted at the next summit meeting in Nairobi, in March 1996, and the organisation was renamed the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

IGAD's ambitions were in tune with the spirit of regeneration in the mid 1990s that saw a shift in Africa from functional to security co-operation at the regional level (Adar 2000). Considerable hopes were placed in the new crop of African leaders to tackle Africa's security and development challenges with more success than their predecessors. In the IGADD group, Museveni, Meles and Issayas were all associated with this progressive strand of thinking. The promotion of economic integration and the joint development of infrastructure were as important as the political goals, especially for Ethiopia and Eritrea, which shared ambitious development plans and were still using a common currency. IGAD appeared to be an ideal vehicle for achieving security, development and integration. But its fortunes were tied to the regional alliance structure, which disintegrated and reconfigured (in rapid succession) between 1994 and 1998. For the most part IGAD has proved unable to prevent or contain conflict in the region. Yet at the same time major political settlements in Sudan and Somalia have been enacted in its name.

### **IGAD's role in reconciliation and peacemaking in Sudan and Somalia**

The 1996 IGAD Agreement included among its principles the peaceful settlement of conflicts, the maintenance of regional peace, stability and security, and the protection of human and people's rights. A new objective was '[to] promote peace and stability in the sub-region and create mechanisms within the sub-region for the prevention, management and resolution of inter and intra-State conflicts through dialogue' (IGAD 1996: Art.7g). Member states agreed to: a) take effective collective measures to eliminate threats to regional co-operation, peace and stability; b) establish an effective mechanism of consultation and co-operation for the pacific settlement of differences and disputes; and c) deal with disputes between member states within this sub-regional mechanism before they are referred to other regional or international organisations (IGAD 1996: Art.18a).

The IGAD Secretariat was restructured to fulfil the new mandate and in due course it established a division responsible for peace and security. However, IGAD's institutional changes lagged behind real political processes within the region. By the time IGAD announced its new mandate the short-lived peace amongst its member states that existed between 1991 and 1993 had broken down. Eritrea, Ethiopia and Uganda had identified the government of Sudan as a threat to regional security and were whole-heartedly engaged in military support to the Southern Sudanese rebels.

This unpromising state of affairs was the starting point for IGAD's most successful venture to date in conflict resolution. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between North and South Sudan is often cited as a good example of an African regional peace initiative, but IGAD's institutional role was relatively low key. The argument of this paper is that shifting regional alliances rather than new approaches to regional security largely accounted for the openings for conflict resolution in Sudan. Such openings were by their nature short-lived because volatile regional relations often threatened to derail the peace process. Where IGAD's institutional role proved crucial was first of all in framing the problem as a North-South process and then maintaining a semblance of continuity for the Sudan peace process. This long-term engagement enabled those involved to capitalise on opportunities to come to a settlement. Without IGAD's sustained involvement these would most likely have been lost.

### ***IGAD and the Sudan Peace Process (1993-2005)***

The civil war between North and South Sudan long pre-dated any notion of a regional security organisation in the Horn of Africa. Since the resumption of hostilities in 1983, the Ethiopian government had been a major sponsor of John Garang's Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). This support was a means to weaken Sudan and served as a counterweight to Sudanese support for rebels in Eritrea and the northern Tigray region of Ethiopia. The overthrow of the Mengistu regime in 1991 transformed political relations across the region and created the conditions in which IGAD engagement began. Ethiopia's new government had been hosted in Khartoum as rebels during the civil war. On taking power in Addis Ababa they stopped assistance to the SPLA and expelled its leadership to Nairobi. Soon afterwards, an ugly conflict erupted among different Southern Sudanese factions, further weakening the southern rebellion and precipitating a severe humanitarian crisis. Nigeria tried unsuccessfully to mediate.

At the IGADD summit in September 1993, President Omar El-Bashir asked his neighbours to help end the conflict. IGADD established a standing committee on peace at heads of state level, with President Moi of Kenya in the chair. Both Ethiopia and Eritrea were well disposed towards Khartoum, while Kenya and Uganda had influence with the SPLA. It appeared, therefore, to have the ingredients for a well-balanced mediation. However, the deadly rivalry within the Horn was soon to resume, tilting the balance firmly towards the SPLA. In January 1994, Eritrea broke off relations with Sudan, accusing Khartoum of sponsoring an Islamist rebel group inside Eritrea. Uganda joined the hostile stance towards Sudan, which also had the active backing of the US. Ethiopia followed suit in 1995 after blame fell on Sudan for an attempt on President Mubarak's life at the Addis Ababa OAU summit.

The IGADD Committee continued its negotiations despite the collapse of the regional alliances that had prompted Bashir's request for their involvement. Kenya alone maintained its neutrality and organised proximity talks between representatives of the Sudanese government and the SPLA. At first the Sudanese government rejected use of the term 'self-determination' on the agenda as well as any negotiation on the application of Sharia law. After a third round of talks in July 1994, IGADD negotiators drew up the Declaration of Principles calling for a secular state in Sudan and proposing that if this was not possible South Sudan could exercise the rights to self determination under a referendum (El-Affendi 2001; Woodward 2004). At the September 1994 IGADD summit, Bashir refused to accept the Declaration of Principles. However, it remained on the IGADD table and later on provided the foundation upon which the Comprehensive Peace Agreement was negotiated.

For the next two years, the focus of regional involvement shifted from the negotiating table to the battlefield. The Clinton administration supported the cause of the Southern Sudanese and provided \$20 million of US military assistance to its friends in the region, ostensibly to help them withstand the Islamist threat from Sudan (Washington Post, November 10, 1996). Ethiopia, Eritrea and Uganda – all of them fresh from winning their own civil wars – needed no further encouragement to enhance the military performance of the SPLA. With the IGAD peace process immobilised, Egypt and Libya tried to launch an initiative of their own that would ensure that the self-determination (and potential separation) of the South remained off the agenda. Boosted by the support of its neighbours the SPLA recovered its strength and made substantial military progress. In 1997, Moi revived mediation efforts and convinced Bashir of the wisdom of re-opening negotiation on the Declaration of Principles. In May 1998 more international actors, now in the guise of the IGAD Partners Forum (IPF), stepped in to buttress the IGAD process and maintain its approach to settling the Sudanese conflict. After a fresh round of talks involving IGAD, the IPF and the UN, a breakthrough occurred and the Sudanese government agreed that the principle of self-determination would be upheld through a referendum.

No sooner had this vital concession been won than the entire regional alliance structure was convulsed by the outbreak of conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea in May 1998. The trigger for this was a mishandled border incident that escalated out of control, exposing serious underlying differences between the two former allies. After a tense standoff and failed diplomatic efforts these differences came to be settled on the battlefield in three bloody rounds of conventional warfare that were to cost the lives of some 100,000 combatants (Negash and Tronvoll 2000). In order to prepare for their own confrontation both Ethiopia and Eritrea abandoned their hostility towards Sudan and took immediate steps to mend relations with Khartoum. Military logic demanded at least a neutral presence on their Western flank.

The IGAD peace process lost considerable momentum, but it was not abandoned. As Cairo and Tripoli sought to take advantage of IGAD inactivity, Western support for the IGAD process was stepped up (El-Affendi 2001). The vehicle for this was the IPF, established in 1996 as a channel for donor funding. It became the basis for a strong negotiating partnership between IGAD and external actors led by the US, Norway and UK (Prendergast and Mozersky 2004). By July 1999 IGAD's Sudan peace process had secured donor funding and acquired an institutional home in the Kenyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The new administration of President George W Bush wanted to maintain pressure on Khartoum and appointed Senator Danforth as a Special Envoy to Sudan just days before the Al Qaeda attack on New York in September 2001. Thereafter the US played a key role in driving IGAD's Sudan peace process (Natsios 2008). The US and Sudan Peace Act of October 2002, with an explicit threat of sanctions, left the Sudanese authorities little room for doubt over US intentions.

Kenya continued to lead the negotiations. By July 2002 General (Rtd) Sumbeiywo had successfully negotiated the Machakos Protocol. This secured the crucial 'one country, two systems' compromise in which the two sides agreed that Sharia law would be the source of law in the North, while the South would have its own secular administration. It also established the timing of the referendum for the South on self-determination, to be held six years after the signing of the peace agreement. Further agreements were negotiated on security arrangements, power sharing and wealth sharing over the next two years, culminating in the signature on 9 January 2005 of Sudan's Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).



The Sudan peace process had begun in 1993 as a member-state initiative, a request from the Sudanese government to neighbours it saw as friendly for assistance in mediating in its civil war. The decision to revitalise IGAD had not been taken and the establishment of IGAD'S peace and security institutions had not begun. Political events, driven by the interests of member states, were running way ahead of institutional developments. Alliance shifts soon transformed the mediating group into an antagonistic grouping against Khartoum, but IGAD'S Standing Committee on Peace pressed on to formulate the Declaration of Principles. A combination of military pressure (much of it attributable to the neighbours) and diplomatic pressure eventually convinced Khartoum to accept the Declaration of Principles. Even though the military pressure fell away in 1998 when Ethiopia and Eritrea went to war, the Declaration of Principles formed the starting point for a renewed process led by Kenya and backed up by US pressure.

IGAD'S secretariat played a minimal role in the process, with most of the negotiations taking place in Kenya and organised by the Kenyan foreign ministry. The scope for institutional development in conflict resolution within IGAD itself was thus rather limited (IGAD 2007a). Nonetheless IGAD supplied some vital components of the Sudanese peace process. It brought together in one forum all the states that were active stakeholders and participants in the North/South Sudan civil war. This gave the process a degree of legitimacy that other interventions had lacked. Between them, the IGAD members could exert decisive influence on the SPLA, which depended on them heavily for diplomatic as well as military support. On the other side, the US exerted considerable pressure on the government of Sudan. Importantly, IGAD provided continuity within the peace process so that agreements secured in earlier stages were reinforced and could not be renegotiated. Given the fast changing system of alliances that characterises the Horn of Africa, the continuity that IGAD lent to the process was a small but essential contribution.

### ***IGAD and the Somali Peace Process***

The conflict in Somalia was very different to the conflict in Sudan and stemmed from the comprehensive collapse of state institutions. When Siad Barre was overthrown in 1991, fighting erupted over control of the capital and degenerated into conflict among multiple clan-based factions. As in Sudan, Somalia'S IGAD neighbours were key stakeholders in the conflict. The emergence of Islamism as a political force in Somalia gave the conflict a regional dimension with implications for Ethiopia and Kenya, which both have sizeable Somali communities within their borders. It also excited the interest of the US and other Western powers concerned about the threat of international terrorism.

Without a government, Somalia was unable to exercise its membership of IGAD, or indeed any other international forum, and IGAD had difficulty confronting the problem of state breakdown. In 1993 the OAU had assigned Ethiopia the lead role in supporting peace and reconciliation in Somalia, but at that stage peace and security in Somalia was firmly on the UN agenda. The country was then in the throes of significant international interventions (UNITAF, UNOSOMs I and II) designed to create a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations and restore political order. But these had ended in failure in 1995.

Ethiopia'S desire to see the re-establishment of a government in Somalia stemmed from concerns about the activities of a radical Islamist group that had surfaced in various parts of the country after the downfall of Siad Barre. Al Itihad al Islamia encouraged its followers to put aside the clan divisions that were destroying the country and embrace Islam as their political goal. They sought the reestablishment of Somalia as an Islamic state governed by

Sharia law. Their vision was one that potentially embraced all the Somali peoples of the Horn of Africa, including the Somali communities in Ethiopia and Kenya. Ethiopia therefore had domestic as well as regional interests in a settlement in Somalia.

Within IGAD, Ethiopia enjoyed unchallenged diplomatic leadership on Somalia. During 1996/7 Ethiopia followed a twin-track policy. Firstly, they took military action to destroy Al Itihad camps in the Gedo region of Somalia, claiming that these housed Arab and Afghan mujahidin and terrorists linked to Al Qaeda (Tadesse 2002). The operations attracted no adverse comment from IGAD, the OAU or the international community at large and Ethiopian forces remained in control of Somali border towns at Luq and Dolo for much of 1997. Prime Minister Meles Zenawi nonetheless warned UN officials that 'Somalia was becoming a major source of instability, with extremists and terrorists operating from there, the scope of which transcended the region' (UNSC 1997: para 26 S/1997/915).

On the political track, Ethiopia organised a major reconciliation for Somali factions in the Ethiopian town of Sodere. In January 1997, this produced a 41-member National Salvation Council, headed by Abdulahi Yusuf with five co-chairmen and an 11-member National Executive Committee. Their task was to convene a 465-member national reconciliation conference later that year. The Aideed faction that controlled most of Mogadishu had boycotted the Sodere process. This opened the door for a competing initiative. In March 1998, Egypt and the Arab League jointly hosted Somali reconciliation talks with Aideed and others leading to the Cairo Agreement. This effectively undermined the Sodere peace process. The IGAD summit of March 1998 called for an end to 'the proliferation of competing initiatives' (a reference to Egypt's activities) that served to undermine the peace process in Somalia (IGAD 1998).

The outbreak of conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea in May 1998 spelt the end of IGAD's consensual approach to Somali reconciliation. Eritrea was soon reported to be arming the Aideed faction while Ethiopia stepped up assistance to its own allies in Somalia. The Ethiopia-Eritrea war thus contributed to worsening conflict within Somalia, as the two sides sought out proxy partners. As the Ethio-Eritrea war reached its climax in early 2000, Djibouti's new president, Ismail Omah Guelleh, launched his own Somali reconciliation process. The Somali National Peace Conference was held within the framework of IGAD, but included funding and support from external powers including Egypt, Libya and the Gulf states. Guelleh sought a new approach involving traditional and civil Somali leaders rather than the cast of warlords and faction leaders who had dominated previous Somali reconciliation meetings (Interpeace 2009). The Arta peace process concluded in August 2000 with the creation of a Transitional National Government (TNG) headed by Abdulqasim Salat Hassan. It had support from Islamists and much of the business community in Mogadishu and close ties with the Djibouti government. IGAD, the OAU and the UN recognised the TNG as the government of Somalia.

Within Somalia support for the TNG was patchier. Neither the Somaliland authorities in the North West nor Abdulahi Yusuf in Puntland recognised the authority of Abdulqasim. Several of the major Somali warlords were equally disaffected. After a peace agreement was signed between Ethiopia and Eritrea in December 2000, Ethiopia turned its attention once more to Somalia. Ethiopian opposition to the TNG hinged on suspicions of its Islamist leanings, its support from the Arab world and the exclusion of many of its own long term allies among the warlords. By March 2001 the opponents of the TNG had formed a new organisation, the

Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council (SRRC). It was headed by Abdulahi Yusuf and worked with Ethiopian support to undermine the TNG.

Until 2001 IGAD had played no institutional role in Somali reconciliation beyond endorsing Ethiopian and Djiboutian initiatives. In the aftermath of the Arta process IGAD faced the uncomfortable prospect of two member states, Ethiopia and Djibouti, which were technically on good terms with each other, supporting opposite factions in Somalia. In January 2002, the IGAD Summit commissioned President Moi of Kenya to start a joint initiative with Ethiopia and Djibouti to bring the warlords of the SRRC into negotiations with the TNG. Djibouti, Kenya and Ethiopia formed a frontline states technical committee in which Djibouti backed the TNG, Ethiopia backed the SSRC and Kenya had the role of mediator. Thus began IGAD's Somalia National Reconciliation Conference, a Kenyan-led negotiation conducted with the financial support of European development funds. Unlike IGAD's Sudan peace process, which was going on in parallel, neither the US nor other Western powers were actively involved in the mediation process. Some saw the apparent absence of outside pressures as a hopeful sign, and thought the IGAD mediation process likely to yield positive results because of the enormous amount of time the Somali faction leaders spent bargaining with each other (Nyuo Yoh 2003).

The negotiations began in October 2002 in the Kenyan town of Eldoret and quickly reached an agreement on cessation of hostilities. Progress thereafter was exceedingly slow, particularly over nomination rights to a large parliament to agree on a transitional charter and elect a president. Whether by accident or design, no progress had been made by the time the formal mandate of the TNG expired in August 2003. Thereafter Abdulqasim was treated like any other faction leader. Djibouti was sufficiently annoyed by this turn of events to leave the facilitation committee in September 2003, but agreed to return when Uganda and Eritrea joined it. Eventually, a parliament was appointed on the basis of clan representation and assembled in Kenya. In October 2004, it elected Abdulahi Yusuf as president of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG). After two more months and considerable wrangling within parliament, a government was formed, led by Prime Minister Gedi.

It was not immediately apparent that the TFG would be unable to establish its authority inside Somalia. From an IGAD perspective, therefore, the end of the negotiation and the creation of a government of Somalia under a new transitional charter appeared to be another successful venture in mediation. As in the Sudan process, Kenya rather than IGAD had fulfilled the secretariat function and conducted most of the mediation. IGAD's distinctive contribution to the Somali peace process occurred in the aftermath of the mediation process when it became apparent that Abdulahi Yusuf's government did not command sufficient support to enable it to function. IGAD therefore had to contend with conflicting interests among its member states as they tried to determine how to support the Somali government they had created. The issue at the centre of the controversy was the use of an IGAD intervention force.

### **The Effectiveness of IGAD's Contribution to Peace and Security**

The signing of the Sudan and Somali peace agreements in quick succession in late 2004 and early 2005 created an impression that IGAD was proving unusually adept at performing its new conflict-resolution role (Francis 2006). Two IGAD settlements within three months appeared a remarkable accomplishment, especially when taking into consideration that both addressed long and complex conflicts that had defied previous attempts to secure peaceful settlement. However, a closer examination of the circumstances in which the agreements were achieved points to a more nuanced judgment about IGAD's institutional role.

In origin, the IGAD peace initiatives in Sudan and Somalia were political initiatives, conceived and largely executed by one or more member states. The lead regional mediators were also interested parties (Khadiagala 2007). They did not entrust the mediation to the IGAD Secretariat, which had neither the capacity nor the authority to lead and manage the peace processes that were carried out in its name. Indeed, at the point when the Sudan process began in 1993 the organisation had no remit to work on peace and security issues and had yet to develop its conflict resolution mandate.<sup>7</sup>

Once underway, the peace talks required an organisational and logistical effort that was beyond the capacity of IGAD's modest secretariat in Djibouti. The Sudan and Somalia peace processes both relied heavily on Kenyan diplomatic capacity. Kenya supplied the chief negotiator in each case: General Sumbeiywo as mediator in the Sudan process and Ambassador Bethwell Kiplagat for the Somali process. The importance of Kenya to the success of the peace processes was not confined to its provision of diplomatic and organisational capacity. Its ability to maintain political neutrality was vital. Without Kenya's neutrality after 1995 IGAD's Sudan process might not have survived. Kenya went on to play a key role in securing government agreement on the Declaration of Principles when Khartoum was under maximum pressure. Similarly Kenya provided a neutral venue in 2002 for the different Somali parties backed by Ethiopia and Djibouti.

Notwithstanding its institutional weakness and lack of authority over member states, the IGAD Secretariat successfully institutionalised donor support through the IPF. The willingness of external donors to carry the financial burden of the peace process was both a blessing and a burden. The extent of their involvement generated frictions over the ownership of the process and the imposition of spurious deadlines ('deadline diplomacy') tied to financing (IGAD 2007a). This was especially apparent in the Sudan negotiations (Sumbeiywo 2006). The strong involvement of the Troika (US, UK, Norway) has also been blamed for maintaining an exclusionary top-down process approach to the Sudanese peace process (Young 2005). In the Somali case, US involvement was much less apparent and there was less clarity over what the Western donors expected from the process even though they were willing to foot the bill.

As well as drawing in support from the West, IGAD's nominal ownership of the peace processes helped to secure the exclusion of secondary actors from outside the region: principally Egypt, Libya and Yemen. All of these countries have clearly identifiable interests in the Horn of Africa but IGAD's collective intent was to establish a monopoly over the peace processes in the region. It is noteworthy that new initiatives invariably arose in the Arab world whenever IGAD peace processes stalled. IGAD's peace-making activities helped to secure legitimacy for the organisation and build wider international acceptance of IGAD as the only appropriate forum for tackling conflict in the Horn (Francis 2006). In order to maintain this primacy, IGAD has needed to secure one of two things: either actual success in conflict resolution (as in Sudan); or the ability to align its peacemaking activity with the interests of powerful external actors (as in Somalia and the global war on terrorism).

Looked at in the context of the overall regional conflict environment it is clear that IGAD is far from providing an institutional basis for regional security in the Horn of Africa. The region continues to experience exceptionally high levels of violent conflict. The relatively successful mediations in Sudan and Somalia in 2004 and 2005 stand alongside IGAD's

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<sup>7</sup> IGAD leaders again exceeded the organisation's mandate in January 2005 with a summit decision to authorise deployment of a Peace Support Mission in Somalia to provide security support to the TFG.

inability to prevent or resolve the Ethiopia-Eritrea war of 1998-2000 or to deal with violent conflict in Darfur and rumbling conflicts in Northern Uganda and Eastern Ethiopia. Even during the Sudanese and Somali peace processes IGAD member states demonstrated their willingness to prepare for and engage in war at the same time as organising for peace.

In the case of Sudan, regional relationships had soured to such an extent that by 1996/7 the 'peace process' resembled a hostile encirclement by IGAD neighbours in support of the SPLA. This was not unhelpful for the 'IGAD process'. Military action by Ethiopia, Eritrea and Uganda provided a level of pressure that persuaded the government of Sudan to negotiate seriously with the South. In later years, when regional alignments had changed, external (particularly US) pressure helped to maintain the incentives for a settlement. Similarly, the Somali process amply demonstrates the willingness of IGAD member states to persist with military means to achieve their preferred conflict-resolution outcomes. The reports to the UN Security Council's Sanctions Committee on the Somali arms embargo consistently recorded the existence of military assistance from Ethiopia to its allies among the Somali factions throughout 2003/4 when the Somali National Peace Conference was in progress (Expert Group and Monitoring Group on Somalia 2003-2005). Eritrea's assistance to Islamist opponents of the TFG scaled up from 2005 onwards, reaching a peak in late 2006 just before Ethiopia's intervention (Expert Group and Monitoring Group on Somalia 2006). The two member states thus actively undermined the IGAD peace process.

The phenomenon of militarised 'peace processes' can be seen as part of a regional culture in which a high proportion of IGAD leaders came to power through violent means and several show a continuing propensity to project military power beyond their own borders. This creates a particularly difficult environment in which to build regional structures for peace and security. These require member states to surrender a degree of sovereignty, either by agreeing to be bound by regional rules and decisions or by giving the IGAD Secretariat some independent authority. Moreover, IGAD's leaders have not felt constrained by the limitations of the organisation's remit and have been willing to disregard IGAD's legal framework and to adopt bold initiatives that were technically outside its mandate. Examples include launching the Sudanese peace process in 1993 and the authorisation of an intervention force to support the TFG in Somalia in 1995.

The authoritarian political culture of the region militates against the IGAD secretariat attempting to play a proactive or autonomous role in peace and security. Leaderships that enjoy unfettered power in the domestic arena are not well disposed to accept regional constraints that rely primarily on consensual arrangements. IGAD member states seek instead to direct IGAD activity in pursuit of their own interests. This in turn compromises IGAD's capacity to maintain the neutrality required of a regional mediation body. Furthermore, the IGAD region lacks a clearly distinguishable lead country capable, by virtue of its superior size and strength, to play unchallenged the role of a hegemon as South Africa and Nigeria can in their respective regions (Mwaura and Schmeidl, 2002). Ethiopia's recent efforts to secure this position for itself (e.g. in Somalia) appear to have made matters worse.

The region's most enduring failure since the establishment of IGAD's peace and security mandate has been the inability to dissuade Ethiopia and Eritrea from settling their differences on the battlefield in 1999 and 2000. Although the two sides signed a peace agreement under OAU auspices in December 2000, implementation has been stalled since 2002 over the question of boundary demarcation. IGAD has been powerless to persuade Ethiopia and Eritrea to normalise relations or to finalise a peace settlement. Their intense mutual hostility

continues to poison regional relations and exacerbate other conflicts. It remains the key obstacle to any progress towards developing an improved regional security framework.

At the technical level, IGAD's Secretariat continues to do innovative work on peace and security. The programme funds of the IPF have generated analysis and project work that deepens analysis and recommends action. It has developed an early warning mechanism, the Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN), which is monitoring three areas of pastoral border conflict (Apuuli 2004). A second IGAD security-sector programme is the IGAD Capacity Building Program Against Terrorism (ICPAT), tasked with 'building national capacity to resist terrorism, and promoting regional security co-operation' by tightening border control and enhancing judicial measures against terrorism (ICPAT 2006). Whatever the value of such programmes, the IGAD Secretariat has played no visible role in containing the serious conflicts of the last five years in Darfur, in the Ogaden, in Mogadishu, in Kenya, in South Sudan or between Eritrea and Djibouti.

### **Measuring Success in Sudan and Somalia**

IGAD's conflict-resolution activities have displayed a clear, unresolved tension between IGAD, the political forum – characterised by mutual suspicion, alliance-building and power play among member states – and IGAD, the regional organisation – seeking to develop the institutional capacity to improve peace and security and give practical assistance towards conflict resolution. Where IGAD has been able to claim some success it has more often found itself reaping the whirlwind of regional and international power politics than advancing classical mediation and peace-building processes.

The key question is what impact IGAD's reconciliation activities have had in enhancing peace in the region, among states as well as within Sudan and Somalia. In the case of Sudan an assessment of the success of the CPA cannot ignore the conflict that erupted in Darfur towards the end of the CPA negotiations. The negotiation of the CPA could be seen as a contributing cause of the Darfur rebellion because it provided an example to other marginalised groups that armed struggle could secure political advantage (Woodward 2004). It also aroused fears among the Darfuris that their own marginalisation would be entrenched since the CPA negotiations purported to be a national settlement but involved only two parties (Nathan 2007).

Despite bringing an end to the war in the South, the CPA has been widely criticised for the limited scope of the negotiation to address the problems of Sudan as a whole. It was confined to the Northern government and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (excluding other key constituencies in the country, including in the South) and failed to involve civil society or other stakeholders who were needed to build a sustainable peace (Young 2007). Some of its weaknesses are implicitly a product of how the problem was framed when the organisation was first seized of the matter (Cliffe 2004). As befits a forum for regional co-operation, IGAD's frame of reference was to settle a troublesome conflict rather than to achieve the transformation of Sudan. It was about empowering the South, upholding their right not to live under Sharia law and giving them the option to gain independence. On all these scores the CPA can be regarded as a considerable success.

Four years on the CPA has maintained the peace and provided for the injection of significant financial resources into the South and the large-scale return of refugees. The South has established a government of its own, the Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS), and maintains its own armed forces. The CPA will culminate in a referendum in 2011 when

Southern Sudan can vote on self-determination, including the option of full secession. Trust between the two parties is sorely lacking. Both sides are spending heavily on military equipment, with unofficial estimates as high as 60 percent of GOSS expenditure on security and defence in 2008 (Thomas 2009). A number of external factors – such as reduced oil revenues and the International Criminal Court action against President Bashir – are putting additional strain on the relationship between the two sides at a time when co-operation is needed to complete implementation, including settling boundaries and agreeing procedures for the referendum (Natsios 2008). IGAD, however, has not been involved in the implementation process.

The benefits of the IGAD peace process in Somalia have been less evident than those of the CPA in Sudan. The government arrangements negotiated in Nairobi did not secure real compliance and as soon as the process ended Abdulahi Yusuf appealed to the African Union for a 15,000-strong military force to help establish his government's authority. The January 2005 IGAD summit (held in Abuja) authorised the deployment of a peace support mission to Somalia (IGASOM) consisting of 10,000 peacekeepers.<sup>8</sup> Many Somali parliamentarians vehemently opposed such a deployment, which they saw as cover for Ethiopian military intervention in support of Abdulahi Yusuf. To counter these suspicions IGAD Foreign Ministers agreed that the first phase of IGASOM's proposed intervention would exclude neighbouring states and involve only troops from Uganda and Sudan (IGAD 2005). The IGASOM mission was authorised by the AU's Peace and Security Council in May 2005, but no resources were available to mount the operation. These decisions, however, laid the foundations for the interventions that were to follow. IGAD's disregard for the strong feelings expressed against an external intervention harmed IGAD's neutrality and credibility in Somali eyes.

The prospects and purpose of external intervention changed dramatically in 2006 when the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) took power in Mogadishu. This introduced new dynamics and sharply raised US interest in the situation in Somalia. Ethiopia warned that radical jihadists associated with Al Ittihad Al-Islami dominated the ICU leadership (Zenawi 2006). The US government accused the ICU of harbouring international terrorists associated with the 1998 East African embassy bombings. Ethiopia shored up its military support to TFG and IGAD's rhetorical support for the TFG as the 'legitimate' government of Somalia amplified. Somalia urgently needed mediation between the TFG and ICU. But IGAD proved 'too narrow a forum and too internally conflicted to provide the kind of direction needed' (ICG 2006).

The AU's Peace and Security Council backed IGAD and reaffirmed that a peace-support mission would 'greatly contribute to peace and stability in Somalia' (African Union 2006a). Ignoring the ICU's repeated objections to the use of foreign troops, the PSC endorsed an IGASOM deployment (African Union 2006b). With hostile international attention focused on Mogadishu, the UN Security Council (2006) authorised IGAD and AU member states to establish a military mission in Somalia to protect the TFG. On one key issue, however, IGAD's authority was upheld and this proved to be a determining factor in the events that followed. IGAD's 2005 decision to exclude troops from neighbouring states was carried over into the text of the UN resolution, and prevented Ethiopia from representing its subsequent

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<sup>8</sup> In agreeing to this IGAD's political organs were ahead its institutional development: there was no provision in IGAD's founding agreement to allow intervention in a member state. IGAD itself lacked any institutional mechanisms for the political oversight of such a mission. Coincidentally, such mechanisms were in the process of being established for EASBRIG, the projected East African Standby Brigade, which was already under development with the participation of several IGAD member states

intervention as a peace-support operation. Therefore, when Ethiopia moved against the ICU in Mogadishu in late December 2006, it did so unilaterally. Ethiopia provided justification for its military intervention on three grounds recognised under international law: the right to self-defence in face of clear and present danger, against terrorist threat and at the invitation of a legitimate government (Yidhego 2007).

The AU, with IGAD and the Arab League, called for the withdrawal of Ethiopian troops and renewed dialogue in Somalia (AU, LAS & IGAD 2006). Ethiopia calmed the situation with a pledge to withdraw quickly. On 19 January the AU Peace and Security Council established AMISOM (in place of IGASOM) and with UN authority 1,700 Ugandan troops were deployed to Mogadishu with US assistance.<sup>9</sup> The security situation in Mogadishu deteriorated sharply as Islamist insurgents mobilised against the Ethiopian presence and Ethiopian forces responded with massive military operations, killing hundreds and putting tens of thousands of people to flight (Human Rights Watch 2007). IGAD lined up firmly behind Ethiopia and expressed:

‘appreciation to the Ethiopian Government for all the sacrifices it has made to promote the common position of IGAD Member States, which is fully consistent with the commitment of the organisation to the success of the TFG and to the interest of the people of the IGAD region to achieve peace and stability and to protect the region from terrorist and extremist forces’ (IGAD 2007b).

Eritrea, whose government was sheltering the ICU leadership, demonstrated its dissent by announcing the suspension of its membership of IGAD.

Ethiopian forces remained in Somalia for two years propping up the TFG. Abdulahi Yusuf failed to make his government more inclusive and the Islamist insurgency grew in violence and popularity, in a nationalist reaction to an Ethiopian occupation (Menkhaus 2007). Eventually, in December 2008, Ethiopia announced the withdrawal of its forces and Abdulahi Yusuf resigned from the presidency. AMISOM has remained in Mogadishu, a target of the insurgency that continues unabated. The UN presided over negotiations between moderate elements of the TFG and the ICU to produce a successor to Abdulahi Yusuf in the person of Sheikh Sharif, former head of the ICU. Throughout the violence neither IGAD, nor the AU and the wider international community showed any disposition to protect Somalia’s civil population, of whom 1.3 million were displaced and 16,000 killed. The legacy of the Ethiopian intervention has been violent insecurity and heightened radicalisation (Menkhaus 2008). These factors continue to undermine prospects for lasting peace and security in the region.

## **Conclusions**

In the thirteen years since IGAD added peace and security to its mandate there has been no appreciable reduction in the level of conflict in the Horn of Africa. The region still lacks the most rudimentary regional security framework. IGAD member states continue to flout the old fashioned inter-state rules of respect for territorial sovereignty and non-interference in each other’s affairs, ‘victims of their neighbour’s insecurities, or conversely, as threats to the neighbours’ (Khadiagala 2008b). As yet, there are few signs of their moving towards collective security arrangements or genuinely endorsing institutional processes of regional consultation or decision making. All this could point to the conclusion that IGAD is paralysed

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<sup>9</sup> AMISOM deployment was authorised by UNSCR 1744 of 20 February 2007



by conflict among its member states and unlikely to succeed in advancing regional conflict resolution.

However, thirteen years is a relatively short time in which to judge the efficacy of new approaches to peace and security, the more so after a century of regional conflict. The IGAD-led peace processes in Sudan and Somalia have qualified the expectations that such a conflicted neighbourhood would have no contribution to make to African regional peacemaking. The two agreements are important achievements in the era of IGAD's expanded mandate and provide relatively rare examples of regional mediation in internal conflicts within the wider African sub-region. Formally speaking, both sets of negotiations achieved the results that the IGAD leaders sought – a settlement between Northern and Southern Sudan that preserved the option for independence for the South, and a process for selecting a new central government for Somalia. In both cases, the longer-term outcomes have proved far more problematic in this volatile region.

IGAD is due to unveil its new peace and security strategy, including the promised 'mechanism' for the pacific settlement of disputes, in October 2009. On the basis of past performance, member states are unlikely to embrace any new regional security mechanism that might significantly restrict their own freedom of action. As we have seen, the peace processes in Sudan and Somalia were dominated by the far from disinterested engagement of regional (and sometimes extra-regional) powers, often competing against each other to achieve outcomes favourable to their own national security interests. They can be expected to move cautiously, if at all, on conferring the IGAD Secretariat with the authority or the means to develop an independent conflict-resolution capability.

The existence of IGAD nonetheless brings a new diplomatic dimension to conflict management in the Horn of Africa. This is a forum that locks in the regional states but also locks out other interested parties beyond the region. The new ingredient is the internationally conferred legitimacy that IGAD possesses to address conflict within the region. Paradoxically, the recognition that national security interests are intimately connected across the region implies that, however imperfect and compromised, IGAD's regional peace and security activities will remain in place and gain incrementally in importance. If IGAD is to consolidate its role, its institutions, including the Secretariat, will eventually need to be strengthened so that it can assert some autonomy. But the organisation has already played a crucial agenda-setting role in directing African and wider international responses to conflict in the region. Over the longer term, and provided that other member states recognised its utility, IGAD also has the potential to serve as the forum in which unequal relationships and localised hegemony could be managed without recourse to violence.

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