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Democracy Deficiency and Conflict in the Horn of Africa

Making Sense of Ethiopia's December 2006 War in Somalia

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Master's Program in Peace and Conflict Studies (PECOS)

Department of Political Science

UNIVERSITY OF OSLO

Spring 2012

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A Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Philosophy in Peace and Conflict Studies

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Abstract

Ethiopia, situated at the heart of the volatile Horn of Africa, has long found itself in various conflicts that have ravaged the region. Among them is its 2006 war with the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) inside Somalia in support of the country's weak Transitional Federal Government (TFG). It was a major projection of power by an African state in another country that ended up with Ethiopia's 'occupation' of Somalia for the next two years. Nonetheless, the nature of the threat, the scale of the military operation, the justifications given to it and the context in which it was conducted show that it would have been unlikely to fight the war had Ethiopia been a democracy. Despite the conduct of periodic elections since the current EPRDF regime militarily took power in 1991, its rule has been characterized as authoritarian. This thesis accordingly tries to make sense of the war from the prism of Ethiopia's domestic political system by attempting to answer the research question: how *did authoritarianism lead Ethiopia to the 2006 war in Somalia?* Guided by eclectically synthesized analytical framework on democratic constraints and authoritarian triggers of conflict, the thesis identifies four major mechanisms as a set of answers to the research question: a) by serving as the genesis of the threat; b) limiting the capacity of the regime to accurately assess the magnitude of the threat and the capabilities and commitments of its allies; c) increasing the gains of fighting the war to the regime, whose interest is fused with the national interest; and d) eliminating the institutional constraints and audience costs of fighting the war.

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All errors and omissions in this thesis are mine.

Solomon Gashaw Tadese

Oslo, May 2012

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Acronyms

AFD: Alliance for Freedom and Democracy

AIAI: Ali-Tahad Al-Islamiya

AMISOM: AU Mission in Somalia

ANDM: Amhara National Democratic Movement

ARPCT: Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism

ASWJ: Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama

AU: Africa Union

CIA: Central Intelligence Agency

EIIPD: International Institute for Peace and Development

EPRDF: Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front

EPLF: Eritrean People's Liberation Front

ERTA: Ethiopia Radio and Television Agency

ESDL: Ethiopian Somali Democratic League

ETV: Ethiopian Television

FANSPS: Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and Strategy

FBC: Fana Broadcasting Corporate

IGAD: Intergovernmental Authority on Development

IGASOM: IGAD Somalia Mission

ISS: Institute for Security Studies

IPSS: Institute for Peace and Security Studies

MP: Member of Parliament

ODA: Official Development Assistance

OLF: Oromo Liberation Front

ONLF: Ogden National Liberation Front

OPDO: Oromo People's Democratic Organization

PFDJ: Peoples Front for Democracy and Justice

PM: Prime Minister

PSIR: Political Science and International Relations

SRRC: Somalia Reconciliation and Restoration Council

SEPDF: Southern Ethiopian Peoples' Democratic Front

SPDP: Somali People's Democratic Party

TNG: Transitional National Government

TFG: Transitional Federal Government

TPLF: Tigrian People's Liberation Front

UEDP: United Ethiopian Democratic Party

UIC: Union of Islamic Courts

UNMGOS: United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia

US: United States

WSLF: Western Somalia Liberation Front

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Introduction

Ethiopia's 2006 war with the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) in Somalia is its major war with a non-state actor in another country's territory. Ethiopia justified the war with alleged aggression by the UIC. It accused the group of sheltering, arming and infiltrating Ethiopian rebels (ONLF and OLF); repeatedly declaring Jihad; and claiming Ethiopia's Somali region (Ogden). The government also expressed its conviction in the "clear and present danger" the UIC had posed to Ethiopia's security in cooperation with Eritrea. It supported its allegation with the report of the UN Monitoring Group on Somalia (UNMGOS) issued on 22 November 2006 (HPR-FDRE, 2006a: 25). According to the report, the only incident that resembles aggression happened in July 2006, when it escorted ONLF fighters in transporting a shipment of arms supplied by Eritrea across the border from within Somalia (UN, 2006: 14). However, it was the same report Ethiopia criticized as "baseless, erroneous and fabricated" for accusing it of violating the UN Security Council's arms embargo on Somalia together with other countries (Ibid: 59 – 60).

Earlier in June, the UIC had controlled the Somali capital, Mogadishu. It also threatened to wipe out the country's weak Transitional Federal Government (TFG), which was temporarily seated in the town of Baidowa near the border with Ethiopia. Ethiopian troops then reportedly crossed the border into Somalia in defense of the TFG. On 30 November 2006, the Ethiopian parliament granted the government with the power to take all the necessary measure including the use of force to address the alleged threat. On 12 December, the UIC gave Ethiopia one weak ultimatum to leave Somalia or face a major Jihadist attack. On the 24th, the war officially started with Ethiopia's admission of the presence of its troops inside Somalia in a "counter-offensive" against the UIC.

In announcing the war to the nation, Prime Minister Meles said, ' "We are not trying to set up a government for Somalia, nor do we have an intention to meddle in Somalian internal affairs. We have only been forced by the circumstances" ' (quoted in Sudan Tribune, 2006). However, within five days since the onset of the war, Ethiopian troops escorted the TFG to Mogadishu. By the end of December, they ousted the UIC from its stronghold in Chisimayo city in the Southern tip of Somalia (BBC News, 2009). According to Colonel Gebre Egziabher, Ethiopia's military and political coordinator of

the war, ONLF, OLF and a few foreign Jihadists from various countries fought alongside the UIC. Eritrea provided the UIC with military advisors and trainers, and served as a major source and conduit of external assistance. Worried about a possible formation of a Taliban regime in Somalia, United States, on the other hand, provided political and diplomatic support to Ethiopia's military campaign (Interview). According to David Ignatius of the Washington Post, about 8000 UIC fighters were killed while Ethiopia lost 225 of its own (Ignatius, 2007). Despite Prime Minister Meles' oath to withdraw his troops in two weeks, Ethiopia ended up "occupying" southern Somalia, bogged in the post-war insurgency for the next two years.

Reflecting the intricate nature of the war, various explanations have been forwarded as to why Ethiopia conducted the war. Given the stalemate between Ethiopia and Eritrea and the latter's support to the UIC together with Ethiopian rebels, the war is interpreted as the extension of Ethiopia's proxy with Eritrea into Somalia. The war, therefore, was aimed at averting the potential that the threat from Ethiopia's foreign and domestic adversaries in Somalia would increase over time (Lyons, 2009: 173 – 175). Prendergast & Thomas-Jensen explain the war as a result of Ethiopia's apprehension by the similarity of UIC's acts and motives with those that had previously led Ethiopia to war with Somalia in 1964 and 1977/8 and to a limited military operation against AIAI, a Somali radical group, in the 1990s (2007: 63 – 64).

According to Cochran, Ethiopia acted as a surrogate of United States, which feared that the UIC would create a Taliban-like regime that would make Somalia the third front of Holy War, after Iraq and Afghanistan. This argument is based on Washington's policy of avoiding a direct presence in Somalia after the 1993 infamous Black Hauk Crisis; the demise of the CIA-sponsored alliance of anti-radical Islamic Somali warlords by the UIC; and the absence of a Sub-Sahara African force as willing, capable and reliable as Ethiopia, which after 9/11 had become "an African front line state in the war on terror" (2010: 126 – 137). As briefly discussed in Plaut (2007) and (Hesse, 2010: 253), others argue that it was only in the interest of a Christian-dominated Ethiopia to avert the danger of Somalia becoming a UIC-led Islamic state that would give sanctuary to al-Qaida. For Whitehouse, however, Ethiopia's conduct of the war was '…an exercise in regional power politics conducted in the name of the "war on terror" '; and with '…real objectives…not to install

a viable government, but to prevent Somalia's Islamists from trying to form one; and to win the favour of the US for loyal service in the "war on terror" '(2007). Unable to explain it in terms of Ethiopia's national security concerns, humanitarianism and surrogacy, Bamfo, on the other hand, describes the war as a "senseless audacious action" with "seemingly befuddling" motive(s) (2010).

Nonetheless, a thorough analysis of the nature of the threat, the scale of the military operation, the justifications given to it and the context in which it was conducted makes the war grounded in Ethiopia's own domestic politics. The existence of Ethiopia's own rebels that allied with the UIC and arch foe Eritrea in Somalia gives a domestic picture to the genesis of the war. Ethiopia's tenuous relation with Eritrea to the extent of extending their proxy into Somalia echoes the age-long rivalry Ethiopia's dominant ruling elites have with their Eritrean counter parts. Despite Ethiopia's legitimate security interests in Somalia, the manner of its support to the TFG resonates authoritarian regional powers' preference for a similar system in their neighbourhood as discussed in Burnell (2010). Given Somalia's moderate Islamic tradition and balkanization in the post-1991 period, conducting the war based on UIC's Jihadist and irredentist rhetoric enunciates the limits of authoritarian regimes to accurately assess threats. The argument that Ethiopia acted as a US surrogate has a danger of denying or misunderstanding Ethiopia's own domestic and foreign policy concerns and interests. A surrogate action also presumes the fusion of the interests of incumbents and the nation, which is only possible in an undemocratic environment.

A while after the end of the war, the Ethiopian government argued that it conducted the war based on a formal request for help from the TFG (cf. MFA, 2007; Adow, 2007). Jibril Mohamed Osman, the Deputy Head of Mission/Consul at the Somalia Embassy in Ethiopia, confirms TFG's request for help (Interview). However, the issue of invitation was not mentioned in any of the government's official statements before the war. "…we didn't know…later, after the logic of their entrance waned, they [the government] started saying out of the blue 'it was because we were invited by the Transitional Government that we entered' …it was not mentioned from the start when the issue was brought [to the parliament]…what they said was the threat was 'present and imminent'…there is a word they use…", says Prof. Beyene Petros, former MP from the then opposition

coalition *Hibret* (Interview). The invitation argument also makes Ethiopia's initial self-defence justification unsound. The ease of going to war based on unsound justifications and a seemingly domestically rooted external threat signifies the absence of viable institutional constraints to the actions of the government.

Despite Ethiopia's long independent statehood, it was not until the Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) militarily took power in 1991 that the country was introduced with a multi-party electoral politics (Clapham, 2004). Nonetheless, the EPRDF regime has failed to translate its democratic rhetoric beyond introducing a new constitution and periodically conducting nominal elections (Tronvoll, 2009a). Dominated by TPLF, one of EPRDF member parties comprised of elites from the Tigray region, the regime maintains a significantly narrow social base. With a contested power, EPRDF's rule has significantly relied on repression and co-option through the conflation of party and state institutions (Tronvoll & Hagmann, 2012; Pausewang et.al., 2002; Aalen, 2002). Though the 1995 constitution is generous in its human rights provision, the regime's record in protecting and promoting them has been poor (Tronvoll, 2008; HRW, 2010; 2008; 2005).

In the period leading to the May 2005 election, a short-blinked relative political liberalization was witnessed with live broadcasted open-debates between opposition parties and the ruling party and a relatively higher press freedom. The election was conducted with a record high voter turnout of over 80%. Despite the oppositions' considerable gains, the election was followed by a crisis through which EPRDF retained its absolute majority seat in the parliament. The government's response to peaceful protestors was so heavy-handed that hundreds were killed and tens of thousands including opposition supporters and leaders, journalists and activists were arrested across the country. Prior to the onset of the war in Somalia in December 2006, Ethiopia had rapidly slid back to authoritarianism (Aalan & Tronvoll, 2009; Abbink, 2006; Lyons, 2006). Hence, the likelihood for the government to face a significant institutional constraint as it exists in a democratic system was minimal. It is against this background that this thesis tries to make sense of the war by arguing that the war is largely the outcome of Ethiopia's democracy deficient (authoritarian) political system. It accordingly

attempts to answer the research question: *how did authoritarianism lead Ethiopia to the 2006 war in Somalia?*

The thesis is subsequently structured in two major parts. Part one discusses the methodology and the analytical framework that guided the research, each in two separate chapters. Part two discusses the findings of the research. It is divided into four different chapters, each dealing with each of the four mechanisms that link authoritarianism in Ethiopia and the war. Then, the thesis ends with a conclusive section that summarizes the main findings and forwards some remarks.

I. Methodology & Analytical Framework

1. Methodology

1.1. The Research Design

The thesis employs a qualitative case study approach for three reasons: one, the research focuses on a particular event – Ethiopia's December 2006 war in Somalia; two, it aims to explain the occurrence of the war from the traits of Ethiopia's authoritarian domestic political system; three, explaining a particular event requires unearthing enormous amount of information, which is possible mainly through a qualitative method (King, Keohane & Verba 1994: 4). As a result, the thesis largely follows an inductive reasoning approach and does not adopt a full-fledged theoretical framework. But, it's guided by analytical framework on the democratic constraints and authoritarian triggers of conflict, which I eclectically synthesised (in chapter 2) based on existing literature.

1.2. Method of data collection

The thesis relies on first-hand information from fieldwork and secondary sources such as books, journals and news articles. Over the period between 15 January and 28 March 2011, I have done a fieldwork in Ethiopia. During this period, in-depth official interviews were held with over 16 informants who had some degree of understanding and proximity to the research topic. They are supplemented by various conversations and discussions with other informants and field observations. The informants principally include government officials, ruling party members, opposition leaders and former parliamentarians during the war, intelligence officers, scholars, experts and officials in Addis Ababa-based regional and international organizations. The interviews were guided by a set of *guide* questions, whose content sometimes differed depending on the nature of proximity the informants have to the research topic. Most of the interviews were conducted in Amharic (Ethiopia's working and widely spoken language) while the remaining few were in English. As a native speaker of Amharic, I have depended on myself for the translation. The contacts I had developed in my previous studies and professional engagements in Ethiopia were of significant importance in getting the contact addresses and willingness of some of the interviewees.

Nonetheless, the fieldwork was not free from challenges. The complexities and sensitivities that surround Ethiopian politics create the temptation for my informants and me (as an Ethiopian scholar) to engage in conversations on issues directly unrelated to the research topic. They have, therefore, tested my ability to concentrate on the topic and lead my informants throughout our conversations. Getting the relevant personnel for interviews was very demanding in terms of time, patience and ability to develop trust. Despite the commendable hospitality in most of the government offices, getting relevant officials for interviews was difficult. This was mainly due to their occupation with work-related engagements, expressed insufficient awareness about the research topic and inaccessibility. So was not it easy to get other informants especially the academia and experts. Having appointment was not a guarantee for conducting the interviews or having discussions. Some of them often cancelled or postponed the schedules a little before our meetings. However, success in conducting the interviewees and the various conversations is largely attributed to the informants' conviction in the relevance of the research and courage to risk the environment of fear and suspicion, which I found it as similar as I had left it a year and half ago.

Accessing relevant primary sources other than those the government made public was not easy. The minutes of the parliamentary sessions in which the issue of the war was discussed are the major primary sources I gathered during the fieldwork. The rule of the Parliament Library, where the minutes were documented, does not allow borrowing or copying to other readers than parliamentarians. With a one-day permission to use the library, thoroughly reading those big volume minutes on that day amidst other previously held appointments with potential interviewees proved very difficult. It was through an EPRDF MP[1], t I met through a friend, that I managed to get the copies of the minutes. Other primary sources have been gathered and used in the course of writing. As I was in Ethiopia during the war, some of my field observations from that time have also been used as supplementary information.

[1] Except one opposition and another pro-government independent parliamentarians, all the rest current MPs are members of EPRDF and its affiliate parties, which together won 99.6% of the seats in the House of Peoples Representatives in the May 2010 election.

1.3. Ethical Considerations

According to Chambliss & Schutt, a researcher needs to adhere to the following ethical principles: honesty and openness to informants whose life is being studied; the obligation to correct what it seems to be a misinterpretation of one's research findings; and confidentiality (2010: 40 – 43). I have accordingly informed my informants about my research topic and objectives by presenting them with the letters of support from the University of Oslo and my supervisor. Communicating with them about the potential risks associated with conducting the interviews was easy as most of them told me their prior awareness from previous interviews with other interviewers. For those informants who felt insecure, I have conducted the interviews in their preferred places and times. I have anonymously quoted those who did not want their names mentioned. The tapes and original notes of the interviews and the primary sources I used have been kept safe for a later reference and validation at time of request.

1.4. Method of analysis

Explaining how authoritarianism led Ethiopia to the war in Somalia primarily requires identifying the causal mechanisms in a historical perspective. The thesis accordingly employs process tracing as the principal technique of analysing the data. It is a method that traces the links between possible causes and observed outcomes by examining histories, archival documents, interview transcripts and other sources (George & Benett, 2005: 6). Here, the focus is on sequential processes within a particular historical case, not on correlations of data across cases (Ibid: 13). Given that the data gathered are unilaterally incomplete, tracing the processes helps to make sense of them by collectively putting them in a time-line. It also simplifies the intricacy of the research topic.

1.5. Reliability of sources

As the parliamentary minutes are the direct transcripts of the speeches in each sessions of the House of Peoples Representatives, I consider the minutes the most valuable and credible sources. To the best of my memory from the time the sessions were broadcasted live on TV in 2006, I have found no significant error in the minutes that I could think of randomly committed during transcription. The reliability of the interview responses emanates primarily from the calibre of the informants and their sufficient

understanding and proximity to the research topic. Reliable professors, experts and journalists on the respective fields have written the books, journals and news articles I referred. Reputed publishers have also published them with a high probability to be edited by competent editors. Though it is not possible to achieve and argue for total reliability, based on the above-mentioned qualities, I would assume the sources sufficiently reliable.

1.6. Validity of the research and bias

The absence of full-fledged scores in qualitative case studies makes it difficult to measure validity, i.e. to check whether the research measures what it wants to measure by minimizing systematic errors (bias) in the data. Due to Ethiopia's polarized politics, my informants are susceptible to be biased or be considered as biased. In order to maximize validity, I have primarily used triangulation technique – the crosschecking of sources for internal consistency (Jick, 1979: 602), i.e. by using more than one source. As an Ethiopian scholar with my own interest and positions on the country's domestic and foreign policies, it is hard to think of myself free from the bias my informants may have. In order to minimize the effect of my own potential bias on the research, I have tried to keep a self-reflexive mind-set throughout the work. Self-reflexivity is a qualitative research strategy of self-critique/appraisal that is used to reduce a researcher's subjectivity by keeping him/her conscious about his/her own views (Primeau, 2003). As a supplementary technique, I have also used face-validity – the use of expert opinion to judge whether the research in their opinion taps what it wants to measure (Hoyle, Harris & Judd, 2002: 87). In this regard, I have primarily relied on the comments of my supervisor, Prof. Kjetil Tronvoll, one of the Western scholars on politics and conflict in Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa. I have also tried to get the views of others who have expertise on my research area.

2. Democratic Constraints and Authoritarian Triggers of Conflict: Analytical Framework

2.1. Democracy↔authoritarianism: conceptual framework

For the sake of simplicity, the thesis adopts Huntington's dichotomous conceptualization of political systems (regimes) as democracy and authoritarian; i.e. if it is not democracy, it is authoritarian (nondemocracy). According to Huntington, democracy has the following attributes: a) the conduct of periodic, open, free and fair elections in which virtually all adult populations is eligible to vote; b) the selection of the most *powerful decision makers* through elections; c) the stability/endurance of the political system; in other words, the institutionalization of the electoral system; d) the existence of civil and political freedoms to speak, publish, assemble and organize that are necessary to political debate and the conduct of electoral campaigns. On the contrary, in authoritarian (undemocratic) system, a) no opposition is permitted in election; or b) that the opposition is curbed; or c) harassed in what it can do; or d) opposition news papers are censored or closed down; or d) voters are manipulated or miscounted; e) the major opposition political party repeatedly fails to win office. The authoritarian category includes absolute monarchies, bureaucratic empires, oligarchies, constitutional regimes with limited suffrage and all other related undemocratic regimes (1993: 7 – 13, emphasis my own).

2.2. Democratic Constraints to Conflict

Given that authoritarianism is conceptualized vis-à-vis democracy, it is the author's conviction that understanding the authoritarian triggers of conflict requires a prior insight about the democratic constraints to it.

- *The Pacifying Norms of Democracy*

The pacifying effect of democracy is partly a function of democratic values such as active civic participation, discipline and open-mindedness, which allow ideas to be expressed, discussed and debated freely. Accordingly, rationality supersedes emotionality, and differences and disputes are resolved in more civilized way through bargaining than violence. These democratic norms of conflict resolutions are institutionalized and compel individuals and interest groups at the domestic level to regularly accommodate their

adversaries. Grown up within a society of such pacific norms, democratic leaders too are accustomed to coming to terms with their adversaries by meeting them halfway (Mousseau 1998: 211).

- *Institutional Constraints to Domestic Conflict*

Beside the pacific norms, democracy poses institutional constraints to domestic conflicts. In a democracy, state power is in the hands of the people and the only way to it is through free, fair and periodic election. Through election, citizens exercise their highest level of participation as electorate/ and candidates for public office and express their consent to the government that is formed in the process. As Emmanuel Kant argues, in such established democracy, it would be self-contradictory for citizens to violently rise against the government that represents and acts in their interest. This is because, "…by rising against the system in which the people become sovereign through their representatives, they would deny themselves their own sovereign powers" (Kant, as discussed in Danilovic & Clare 2007: 403).

Democracy is a system in which human rights get constitutional protection and are best respected. A representative government that acts in the interest of the people would not engage in violent acts that cause pain to its citizens. The use of force is justified only when it is impossible to peacefully stop and bring to court citizens who violate the law. Any violent action against citizens other than this would be repression, which will in turn undermine the pacifist values that are inherent in democracy. As Davenport (2007: 10) argues, democratic institutions of participation and contestation make the cost of repressive behaviour unbearably so high that authorities can be voted out of office for their inappropriate actions.

A democratic government is supposed to be transparent in its actions and held accountable for its misconduct and failure. It, therefore, creates the legal and institutional mechanisms through which citizens are informed about its activities and the affairs of their nation and express their views including criticism against its policies. As a result, there exist strong opposition parties, vibrant media independent of government intervention and civil society *organizations* (whose number hypothetically decreases as a country finishes its democratization process and the civil society sphere consequently and

ultimately encompasses all segments of the society). The three institutions inform citizens, and they serve as forums for channelling public opinion, diffusing public discontent and campaigning for bringing the necessary reform when government policies and actions deviate from the public interest. When the actions of the government become more secrete, as Jeremy Bentham (discussed in Doyle 1997: 228) fears, the existence of a viable media and other watchdog democratic institutions serve to unfold the secretes and correct the mistakes. Independent and impartial judiciary, on the other hand, provide legal guarantee for popular control of government actions including the decision to go to war and the framework for peacefully resolving disputes among themselves and with their government.

A democratic system also ensures equal opportunity for all in the distribution of available resources and access to the means for becoming productive citizens – a crucial issue in a society where the state is comprised of multiple competing groups and itself is the principal actor in the production and distribution of resources. In a system that ensures the respect and protection of human rights, fair representation of all segments of society in government with equal opportunity in the distribution of resources, and a constitutionally entrenched and legally protected popular control over government, citizens' bond with and allegiance to their state become strong. The pacific norms of a democratic society, institutional mechanisms of peacefully resolving conflicts and the expectation for a fair outcome from a negotiation or judicial process create a more peaceful domestic environment in which violence degenerates to being at most a rare phenomenon.

- *Popular sovereignty and conflict-averse culture of a democratic society*

The same mechanisms that govern a state's domestic war/ peace decisions also determine its behaviour at the international level (Krain & Myers 1997: 110). In the normative aspect, the civic virtues that form the basis for the pacific behaviour and culture of a democratic society lead them toward a higher rationality. Cherishing the freedom to express their views, people in a democracy calculate the cost and benefits of actions they and their government take, and oppose costly engagements. War, in this regard, is too costly (at least in terms of conscription, casualty, destruction, higher tax and

the cessation of profitable economic ties) for a democratic society to conduct it unless for self-defence after all pacific means for conflict resolution are exhausted. As a result, as Schumber argues, war is undesirable and unacceptable for them, and a decision to go to war becomes unpopular (Schumber discussed in Doyle, 1997: 241 – 250).

Accordingly, democratic leaders choose to apply standards and rules of conduct that have been acceptable at home in their international behaviour. As politics for them is a non-zero sum game, they prefer negotiation, bargaining and compromise to fighting with their opponents (Russet 1993, mentioned in Leeds & Davis 1999: 7). A state's preference for cooperative foreign policies and its anticipation for a similar reaction from international counterparts further increase its preference for cooperative rather than conflictive foreign policies and actions (Leeds & Davis 1999: 10).

Beside the norms, incumbent leaders and ruling parties' need for maintaining their office necessitates them to frame their foreign policy choices in line with public opinion, which, as discussed above, is largely conflict-averse. In addition to voting out leaders with unpopular policies, citizens make prospective evaluation of the potential behaviour of a candidate and prevent potentially hawkish leaders with no moderate foreign policy from ever coming to power (Reiter & Tillman 2002: 812 – 13).

According to the Selectorate Theory of Bueno de Mesquita, et.al (1999), democratic regimes have large "selectorates" (i.e. the entire electorate or those who casted vote in election) and large "winning coalition" ("a portion of the selectorate who voted for the incumbent). In other words, democratic leaders have broad based legitimacy, and they try to ensure their re-election by providing public goods and services such as national defence that are enjoyed by all; and, do not seek loyalty of members of the Winning Coalition (those who voted for them) by bribing them with private goods, which they would have enjoyed exclusively. The norm of loyalty here is so weak that members of the Winning Coalition can switch their allegiance and vote against the incumbent if they are dissatisfied with its performance. As a result, a decision to go to war constitutes a risky business that demands a thorough and careful assessment of actual threats and the probability of victory; for rush acts and the consequent defeat in the battlefield would mean poor provision of public service in terms of ensuring the security of citizens from

external aggression and consequent removal of leaders from public office, there by making them reluctant to initiate conflicts.

However, if democratic leaders must go to war, it must be a war they are almost certain to win easily and the public is convinced in its necessity to defend the national interest. The desire for winning election and maintaining their office compel democratic leaders to try hard and mobilize all available resources within their discretion to achieve victory. The success of democratic states in winning wars they fight in turn portray them as dangerous targets that others should avoid provoking (Bueno de Mesquita, et.a. 2003, discussed in Peceny & Butler 2004: 570 – 572; see also Bueno de Mesquita, et.al 1999).

- *Transparency and the credibility of a democratic state's threat*

The credibility of democracies' threat of use of force and their high chance of achieving victory, however, is properly understood only by other democratic dyads, where rigorous public debate on foreign policies is the practice and leaders have the same incentive to make a careful and thorough assessment of the threats and capability of the enemy state. But still, "[t]he likelihood of conflict should decrease even if only one of the participants in a dispute exhibits this kind of transparency" (Peceny & Butler 2004: 568 – 569); for the ability of one of the parties to a conflict to objectively assess situations and exercise restraint reduces the likelihood of the occurrence of war to a much less extent than what would have been in a situation where both parties did not have the advantage of democratic restraint.

- *Institutional checks and balances & 'multiple veto players'*

The system of checks and balances and the institutionalization of the power of "multiple veto players" in policy processes further make war a difficult business for democratic leaders. In a democracy, legislatures have real power to check on the executive. In addition, various interest groups who have access to the decision making process through other organs of the government exist. As a result, chief executives are restrained from initiating any risky and costly foreign policy unless a consensus is reached among all relevant domestic actors (Peceny and Butler 2004: 569). Among the measures legislatures take to prevent the executive from undesirable wars include: threatening or actually withholding appropriations for war and related activities; conducting public

debate with the intension to mobilize opinion against the war to the extent of some legislatures running for office against incumbent decision-makers; passing laws or resolutions that may hamper the executive in the implementation of its war policies; scheduling parliamentary hearings; and vote of no-confidence (Randle 1970: 78 – 80). The facts that institutional structures are decentralized and methodical and decision-making process is public prohibit democratic decision makers from making abrupt policy changes. It also induces them to favour deliberation, openness and stability in the international system, and support the development of international institutions to systematize and monitor behaviour (Leeds & Davis 1999: 10).

2.3. Authoritarian triggers of conflict

- *Authoritarian triggers of rebellion*

As authoritarian regimes come to power through victory at the battlefield, coup d'état or flawed elections, they have narrow popular base and contested legitimacy. State power is often the exclusive prerogative of those in the top political circle at best or the individual leader at worst. As it's the case in the historically authoritarian Horn of African states (Markakis, 1987; 1990: 103 – 146), the state either monopolizes or is a major agent in the production and distribution of resources. As a result, monopoly over political power becomes a shortcut to control over state resources. On the other hand, as Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles argues (Meles, 2006)[2], the absence of consensus on fundamental policy issues in authoritarian states may make leaders fear for policy instability through electoral politics. The desire for continuous stay in power spurs autocrats not to tolerate any limit to the content and duration of their power; but, to either narrow or totally shut the political space for competition. This primarily requires curtailing freedom of expression and civic participation; repressing and manipulating the media through which those rights are exercised; and, as (Davenport & Armstrong II 2004: 539) argue, controlling public behaviour and attitude through coercion. Repression in turn leads to the development of fear and tension below the surface.

Tight control over the media, however, makes autocrats believe in their own stereotypes of environmental conditions and become isolated from the public. As a result,

[2] Meles, however, calls the state a *democratic developmental state* under a one-party dominant system.

they do not adequately monitor public or elite opinion, and, hence, lack a valid image of their own political situation (Randle 1970: 84). According to Mesfin, incumbent autocrats have neither the imagination nor the capacity to deal with and manage conflict through open and free dialogue and debate. As denial and cover-up are their official reactions to any mention of societal tension, they don't develop the institutional mechanisms for lubricating the tension. The irresolution of such mounting grievance and tension and the concomitant widening of the gap between (leaders' perceived) image and reality will ultimately change into violence (1999: 185 – 189). This is because, as Cramer (2002) argues, dissatisfied/grieved groups may see armed struggle as the only means of channelling their interest into the mainstream politics; or rebel leaders who make profit out of war, as Collier (2000) argues, may simultaneously exploit the public grievance for recruiting fighters.

- *Authoritarian inability of assessing threats and opportunities & war proneness*

Internationally, the likelihood for engaging in war increases due to authoritarian regimes' limit to properly understand the character of their allies; accurately assess the threats, intentions and capabilities of their adversaries; and make accurate and reliable estimates of the probability of victory (Peceny & Butler 2004: 569). As they don't make the necessary adjustment to changed conditions with the passage of time, the image they have about their enemies is as same as the one at an earlier stage of the war (Randle 1970: 84). This reduces the credibility of threats of authoritarian states in the eyes of enemies in general and democratic state enemies, which have superior institutional capability and incentive to accurately assess threats, in particular. The problem of incomprehension is worse in personalist (dictatorial) regimes than in other authoritarian regimes; for a dictator surrounds himself with sycophants who tell him only what he wants to hear (Peceny & Butler 2004: 569).

- *External war as a public attention diversion tactic*

According to the scapegoat or diversionary theory of war, political elites can use a foreign war to divert popular attention from internal social, economic and political problems (Levy, 1988: 665). Hitherto empirical research on the issue identifies two potential causes of diversionary behaviour: social unrest or a related decline in partisan

support for incumbent leaders; and a staggering economy (Pickering & Kisangani, 2005: 24).

Gelpi (1997) and Davies (2002) (both discussed in Pickering & Kisangani 2005: 24), however, argue that democratic leaders employ diversionary force more often than their authoritarian counterparts. For Gelpi and Davies, this is because democratic leaders cannot suppress dissent with military crackdowns, and diversion serves as the only available forceful policy option to quell domestic unrest. However, the premise of this argument – associating (established) democracies with domestic unrest – does not reflect the historical and existing realities in the countries and, hence, is unconvincing. In a democracy, the likelihood for the occurrence of domestic unrest to such a high level and frequency that necessitate the regime to take a diversionary foreign military intervention is very low, given the presence of pacific norms that guide democratic society's interaction among themselves and with their government; the respect and protection of human rights; and existence of effective institutional constraints to conflict and mechanisms of lubricating grievance and tensions before they turn into violence. The fact that established democracies, beyond their political development and stability, maintain strong socio-economic development narrows the material basis for mass violence against the state.

Authoritarian regimes, in contrast, often sufficiently have the domestic political and socio-economic contexts for mass violence that prompt them to deploy their troops abroad for diverting the public attention. The fact that almost all authoritarian states are yet "developing" (at various stages) – with relatively fragile institutions, insufficient and unfairly distributed wealth and poor provision of social services – further strengthens the argument. Lack of transparency and accountability, on the other hand, makes it easier for autocrats to gamble with the lives of their soldiers and mobilize the necessary financial and material resource associated with their diversionary wars.

Nonetheless, according to Pickering & Kisangani (2005), "consolidating autocracies" have higher propensity for diversionary external military engagement than "established autocracies". Established autocrats' firm grip on power, deep network of patronage and powerful internal security institutions give them little reason to fear ouster. Those who are yet building "institutions of domestic domination", however, have a higher fear of being toppled by internal elite unrest and, hence, higher levels of domestic vulnerability that

should be averted by, among other methods, military engagement abroad (Pickering & Kisangani, 2005: 25). Nevertheless, the foundation for the peace that prevails in established autocracies are still social fear so tense that it ultimately brings about a violent social revolution for its diffusion. As a result, established regimes are always susceptible to mass violence, there by making the prevailing peace unsustainable. This is a crucial point of departure from the relatively "perpetual peace" prevalent in established democracies.

- *The external promotion of authoritarianism & the temptation to interventionary war*

So much as democratic global or regional powers tend to prefer a democratic neighbour (see Carothers, 1999), their authoritarian counterparts as well prefer, and hence, promote their similar, but weaker, regime in their own neighbourhood (Bader et.al., 2010). According to Burnell, autocracy promotion across borders mainly refers "…[d]eliberate attempts to influence a regime in an anti-democratic direction, or what might be called true autocracy export…[i.e.]manipulating the instruments of hard and soft power so as to bolster authoritarian trends and/or destabilize and subvert democratic ones". To a less extent, it also refers the diffusion across borders without the active encouragement of the authoritarian source; assisting in international forums other regimes' effort to counter the pressures and inducements to democratize that come from international democracy promoters; deliberately attempting to influence the public, especially foreign, policies and the conditions in others country where one byproduct, intentional or otherwise is to move the regime in an anti-democratic direction; and helping a regime to maintain or increase its authoritarian characteristics. This is by maintaining a "business as usual" relationship with the regime in a way that gives it the freedom to determine its political trajectory vis-à-vis all its international partners (2010: 6).

According to Bader, Gra¨vingholt **&** Ka¨stner, who give a political-economy explanation, this is due to the proneness of satellite authoritarian regimes to external exploitation. Unlike democratic regimes, which rely on the provision of nationally or internationally produced public goods such as security and clean environment to the mass for re-election; authoritarian regimes rely on the provision of private goods and preferential treatments to small interest groups on whose consensus their rule depends. Even if authoritarian regimes provide public goods, it is so rudimentary that they are left

with surplus. The lack of public control over the surplus makes it so easy for external exploitation that authoritarian regional powers, again free from the constraints of institutional checks and public accountability, are induced to promote a satellite authoritarian neighbour (2010: 86 – 87).

However, such satellite authoritarian regimes often have shaky foundation and are often challenged by those who are excluded from the political and economic realms. The very small size of the ruling coalition in authoritarian states broadens the social base of the regime's rivals, who also most likely become hostile toward the regional patron for supporting the exclusivist regime in power. The prospect of a hostile regime after the overthrow of the current satellite regime and the need to protect it from being wiped out by its stronger rivals in turn prompt the patron to militarily intervene in its neighbour. Authoritarian regional powers' capability to project power beyond their borders, lack of formidable domestic institutional and public accountability and their strong diplomatic might at the international level make such an intervention an easy task.

Authoritarian regional powers may also intervene in their satellite authoritarian neighbour to depose the regime for two major reasons. One, when influencing the policies of the satellite regime becomes difficult or unsuccessful. Two, negative externalities, particularly political instability, in the satellite state may become unbearably excessive for the regional patron. This is because, first, stability in a nearby country is a default foreign policy priority for any regime regardless of their domestic traits; second, too much instability in the satellite sate would create inability to enter into credible long term commitments, which would in turn reduce the patron's expected gains from the satellite state (Bader et.al, 2010: 90). But, such a regime-change-centred intervention requires the existence of a rival group friendly to the intervening patron, or the absence of rivals hostile to the patron so that it can make its own satellite from among them and install it to power.

- *Low audience cost of authoritarian aggressiveness*

The little price authoritarian regimes pay for their failures increases their violent behaviour externally. According to Fearon (1994, discussed in Frantz 2003: 5), authoritarian regimes in general have lower domestic audience costs for backing down

after making a threat than democracies. This is because, the absence of (free and fair) elections and institutional checks and balances for holding the executive accountable for its failures renders autocratic leaders with little or no institutional limit to their aggressive behaviour.

Authoritarian elections, when and where they are held, rather enable incumbents to, one, co-opt elites, party members and large groups within society. This is by spreading the spoils of office broadly among the elites and making the elites perceive the election as a free and fair method of distributing the spoil. Two, as autocrats overwhelmingly win elections by cajoling, buying and intimidating voters, elections aid them to deter defection among members of the ruling coalition; for such overwhelming victory signals to the latter that opposition is futile. Three, authoritarian elections enable incumbents to co-opt and divide opposition parties in three ways: by paying off those parties that may want to benefit from the spoils of government; creating "divided structures of contestation" comprised of parties that are allowed and forbidden to participate in the election; and creating the electoral environment and rule that lead the opposition to divisions over whether to participate in the election, form electoral coalition or accept the election result. Third, authoritarian elections enable incumbents to identify their bases of support and opposition stronghold; punish the latter for not voting previously and induce or intimidate them into either voting for the incumbent or stay at home next time; and assess the loyalty and competence of their party cadres using local poles as signals to their (in)competence or (un)popularity with the people (Gandhi & Lust-Okar, 2009: 405).

The result of such a nominal election would be rubberstamped parliament; circumscribed judiciary; and an executive free from the democratic constraints of institutional checks and balances, electoral accountability and public transparency. Hence, policies and the nature and magnitude of threats to national security are not publicly discussed between the government and the opposition. Repression on the private press and tight control over the state-owned media further leave the people too ill-informed to even attempt at checking on the decisions and activities of the government (Peceny & Butler 2004: 569). This makes autocrats more likely to risk costly foreign policies including, as Kant argues, the conduct of war "even for the most trivial reasons" (Kant, discussed in Levy 1988: 658 – 659).

According to Peceny & Butler, "personalist" (dictatorial) regimes in this regard are the least institutionally constrained as the chief executive exclusively holds power with no constraints that other authoritarian leaders face from other veto players either within their ruling party (in single party regimes) or their military high command (in military regimes). Constraint is further eroded by the non-indispensability of popular consent for leaders' stay in office and the lack of executive accountability to the electorate (where there is a nominal periodic election) (2004: 569 – 570). As a result, personalist regimes have the least audience cost for not following through with their threats (Frantz, 2003: 7 – 8). Hence, the more authoritarian a state becomes in terms of descending to dictatorship, the more violent its behaviour would be both at the domestic and international levels.

To sum up, a representative democracy with strong elected legislature, separation of powers and rule of law makes government select those wars, if it has to engage in any, that its citizens will support (Doyle 1997: 286). On the other hand, the lack of the normative and institutional constraints increases the propensity of authoritarian states' engagement in war based on domestically generated and inaccurately assessed external threats.

2.4. Hypothesis

Based on the analytical framework, a preliminary assessment of the war and traits of the EPRDF regime as briefly discussed in the introduction, I had hypothesized that authoritarianism had led Ethiopia to the war in three ways: by creating the condition for the creation or sustained existence of rebels whose cooperation with the UIC increased the magnitude of the threat; by limiting the regime's ability to accurately assess the credibility of UIC's threat and its capability to realise it; and, by providing the regime with the freedom to conduct the war with out sufficient parliamentary scrutiny and concern for audience cost.

II. The Research Findings

How did authoritarianism lead Ethiopia to the 2006 war in Somalia?

The research identifies four major mechanisms through which Ethiopia's authoritarian (democracy deficient) political system led it to the war in Somalia: a) by serving as the genesis of the threat; b) limiting the capacity of the regime to accurately assess the magnitude of the threat and the capabilities and commitments of its allies; c) increasing the gains of fighting the war to the regime, whose interest is fused with the national interest; and d) eliminating the institutional constraints and audience costs of fighting the war.

3. The Domestic Roots of The (External) Threat

Authoritarianism has served as the genesis of the threat in three ways. One, it was Ethiopia's only domestic experience to share with the TFG in Somalia, where it faced a threat from the latter's excluded and stronger rivals organized under the UIC. Two, authoritarianism has sustained the unaccommodating domestic political climate in Ethiopia that initially created the rebels (ONLF and OLF) with which the UIC allied in exchange for sanctuary. Three, it has created and sustained the hostility with Eritrea, which used the UIC as instrument of escalating its proxy with Ethiopia in Somalia.

3.1. The export of authoritarianism & the temptation to war

Ethiopia guides its external relations with a *Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and Strategy* document issued in 2002. According to this well-articulated document, Ethiopia's foreign policy to Somalia is defined as a "damage limitation policy". It aims at limiting the damage on Ethiopia that would arise from the instability in Somalia. This is based on a clearly stated conviction of the EPRDF regime that the condition of instability in Somalia is likely to persist for sometime. Despite the pessimism, the document states Ethiopia's sincere desire to see a friendly government in Somalia committed to fighting disorder, terrorism and extremism in cooperation with its neighbours (FANSPS, 2002)[3].

Ethiopia's desire for a friendly government in Somalia is legitimate. Aggressions by Somalia's previous irredentist governments have led it to war in 1964 and 1977/8 (Gebru, 2000; Markakis, 1987). A series of bomb attacks by AIAI, a Somalia-based radical Islamist group, has also prompted Ethiopia to take a covert military operation across the border in the 1990s. However, the manner Ethiopia acted to achieve its desire resonates authoritarian regional powers' tendency to promote a satellite authoritarian regime in their neighbourhood as discussed in Bader et.al. (2010) and Burnell (2010). As previously discussed in section 2.3, the satellite regime's narrow social base will, on the contrary, broaden the social base of its rivals and bolster their strength. Subduing them, therefore, requires a strong security apparatus as commanded by its regional patron. The quest for

[3] The downloadable version of FANSPS (2004) I used does not have page numbers to make page-specific citation of the information referred from it.

protecting the satellite regime from its rivals in turn drags the patron into interventionary war across the border.

Ethiopia is the indisputable core state and hegemon in the Horn of Africa with the capability to project power across its borders (Clapham, 2008; 2007). When EPRDF took power in 1991, it had promised a departure from Ethiopia's previous dictatorial and absolutist regimes and a transition to democracy founded in ethnic equality. Nonetheless, any hope for a viable democratic transition was replaced with a "victor's peace" grounded in EPRDF's "winner takes all" dictum. It maintains a narrow social base confined mainly in the Tigray region, where TPLF, the dominant party in the EPRDF coalition, waged insurgency for 17 years. Its effective use of the country's vast security apparatus against those who dared to challenge its undemocratic traits enabled it to quickly consolidate power (cf. Aalen, 2002; Pausewang, Tronvoll & Aalen, 2002; Merera, 2003; Clapham, 2005). As a regional power with no viable democratic success to share, it was those authoritarian traits of the regime Ethiopia replicated to the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in Somalia.

Since the collapse of central government in Somalia in 1991, there have so far been a number of efforts at forming a transitional government of national unity for the country. Among them was the two-year old Nairobi Peace Conference, which resulted in the formation of the TFG in 2004. It was negotiated by Kenyan diplomats with UN and European Union support and under the auspice of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) (Menkhaus, 2007). IGAD is the Horn of Africa's regional bloc comprised of Djibouti, Eritrea (suspended), Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda. Using its dominant position in IGAD and very close ties with the West, Ethiopia dominated the process and significantly determined the outcome of the conference. It managed to staff the TFG leadership mainly with individuals from the Somalia Reconciliation and Restoration Council (SRRC) – a Darood clan-dominated coalition of pro-Ethiopian factions that opposed the previous anti-Ethiopian and the rival Hawiye clan-dominated Transitional National Government (TNG) (Terdman, 2008: 56; Menkhaus, 2007: 359 – 360).

At the height of Ethiopia's domination of the peace process was the "election" to the TFG presidency of Colonel Abdulahi Yusuf – Ethiopia's long-time ally and an anti-

Islamist central figure in SRRC belonging to Darood's Mijerteen sub-clan. Being president of the autonomous region of Puntland in middle eastern Somalia, Yusuf was also a strong advocate of a federal structure; a repressive archetypical warlord known for his heavy-handed tactics against his political opponents; and a divisive and controversial element in Somalia's troubled politics (Terdman, 2008: 56; Menkhaus, 2009: 2; 2007: 363; ICG, 2004). It was said that the parliamentary vote for Yusuf's presidency was purchased with money provided by the Ethiopian government, with a going rate for an MP's vote ranging from $3000 to $5000 (Menkhaus, 2007: 361; Plaut, 2006: 588).

Confirming to his pursuant of a narrow political agenda, Yusuf subsequently stacked key ministerial positions, senior ranks of the army, police, and intelligence services mainly with his clansmen from the SRRC. Worse was the President's Office, which resembled "…a family business, with virtually all senior posts, including most presidential advisors, the commander of the bodyguard, cashier and spokesman – to name but a few – drawn from the president's closest clan relatives or his immediate family" (Prendergast, 2008: 7). In order to give a multi-clan picture to his government, Yusuf chose Ali Mohammed Ghedi – a pro-Ethiopian veterinarian from the rival Hawuyye clan with no virtual political experience and visible constituency from his clan – to the office of premiership (Terdman, 2008: 56). As a person with no seat in the new Transitional Parliament, membership to which is a prerequisite for ministerial positions, Ghedi's nomination also manifested Yusuf's worrisome disregard to the new Transitional Charter. Despite objections from the rival Mogadishu-based MPs, President Yusuf cut a deal with Mohamed Dhere, a warlord MP from Ghedi's Hawiye/Abgal/Warsengeli clan who afterward relinquished his parliamentary seat and "gave it" to Ghedi for him to be eligible to serve as Prime Minister (Menkhaus, 2007: 361 – 362).

Clans and movements that were excluded and marginalized in turn emerged as the TFG's most potent rivals. One of the major disenchanted clans was the Hawiye, the dominant clan based in and around Mogadishu to which most of UIC's leaders belonged. Habar Gidir Ayr (Ayr) is the most commercially important Hawiye sub-clan in southern Somalia dominant in trade and share control of territory extending from south Mogadishu to Chisimayu. This made President Yusuf, who belongs to the rival Darood/Mijerteen clan, too insecure to move the TFG out initially from Nairobi, its place of birth and

temporary seat, to Mogadishu. As a result, Yusuf appealed for a 20,000 strong multinational force that includes Ethiopian troops to ensure a secure environment for the relocation of his government and strengthening his exclusivist rule (Terdman, 2008: 57; ICG, 2004).

On 31 January 2005, IGAD member states except Eritrea responded to Yusuf's appeal by agreeing to send a rather 10,000 strong "peace support" mission to Somalia, called IGAD Somalia Mission (IGASOM) to be deployed throughout the country except in Somaliland (Kidist, 2009: 31). The following month, The African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council endorsed the proposal. Yusuf's rivals within the TFG and the Hawiye clan, however, perceived the proposal as the president's wile to crush them. In March 2005, a total of ten ministers and parliamentarians principally from the Hawiye clan immediately moved from Nairobi/Kenya to Mogadishu in a move to prove the stability of the city for relocating the government. President Yusuf, however, remained adamant about the insecurity of the capital; and, relocated the TFG instead first to the small town of Jawhar, then, to the town of Baidoa near the Ethiopian border after the Kenyan government bade it farewell in June 2005 (Menkhaus, 2007: 362; Terdman, 2008: 58).

Yusuf's appeal for a foreign force incorporating Ethiopian troops, however, further weakened the TFG in three major ways. One, it deepened the friction within the TFG. Yusuf's rivals who had opposed the appeal and the TFG's relocation to Baidoa formed their own wing based in Mogadishu (Menkhaus, 2007: 362 – 367). Second, it further eroded the legitimacy of the TFG as a large segment of the Somali society considered it as Ethiopia's satellite and expressed their opposition to the appeal in mass demonstrations. Third, the appeal enabled the UIC, who had well established its presence in Mogadishu, to garner public support by portraying itself as a force around which Somalis would rally against the enemy, principally Ethiopia (ICG, 2005a: 3). In an interview with the International Crisis Group, a young Somali professional said:

> "From Ethiopia's perspective it will be a war between Ethiopia and the Islamists [Ikhwaan]. But for we Somalis, it is not so simple. I have to fight side by side with anyone who is fighting Ethiopia….People do not want to join the Islamists [wadaado]…but if it comes to that, how can you refuse a coalition with them? It

> won't matter who chews qaad [the narcotic khat] and who doesn't when the enemy is just over the horizon" (quoted in ICG, 2005a: 3; b: 21).

Since January 2006, UIC forces were fighting a Mogadishu-based group called Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism (ARPCT). ARPCT was a loose coalition of anti-radical Islam warlords, some of them maintained ministerial posts in the TFG. The coalition was financed and armed by the CIA in exchange for hunting suspected al-Qaida operatives inside Somalia (Menkahus, 2009a: 225; 2007: 368 – 370). Ushered with the unprecedented, but largely unholy, public support that followed President Yusuf's invitation of Ethiopian troops; the UIC won its half-a-year long war against ARPCT and fully controlled the capital, Mogadishu, on 07 June 2006. It subsequently extended its control over most parts of south-central Somalia (Mankhus, 2007: 369 – 370).

Concerned with the demise of the TFG in a showdown with the UIC, Ethiopia expressed its determination to take all available means to protect the TFG. Two weeks after the UIC controlled Mogadishu, Ethiopia sent its troops across the border to Somalia's town of Baidoa, where the TFG was temporarily seated (BBC News, 2006b). This provided the UIC with the pretext to threaten Ethiopia with Jihad and irredentist claim over Ethiopia's Somali-inhabited region, Ogden. Sibhat Nega, one of the founders and figures of Ethiopia's current ruling party (EPRDF), explains the importance of safeguarding the TFG for Ethiopia's security:

> …the UIC declared Jihad and was preparing itself [to execute the threat]…*so, did we have to seat idle like the previous [Ethiopian] governments until we were actually aggressed?*...but, the threat was already clear and present danger…what made the threat clear and present danger was the UIC's attack on the TFG…*the TFG was the only guarantee for us not to be aggressed*…if the UIC wiped it out, we would not have had a body that would have saved us …*this is what makes Ethiopia's offensive a defensive campaign*…so, here…*the pre-emptive attack was a defensive attack*…the question was from where did we have to defend ourselves?… (Interview, emphasis my own).

The magnitude of the threat compounded due to the coordinated and multi-faceted support Ethiopian rebels – ONLF & OLF – and its arch-foe Eritrea gave to the UIC (UN, 2006). Nonetheless, it was the same repression-based exclusivist rule, which

EPRDF exported to the TFG, which also accounted to the creation of the rebels and Ethiopia's hostility with Eritrea.

3.2. Repression, exclusion, rebellion & the extension of Ethiopia's internal conflict into Somalia

Ethiopia's *Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and Strategy (FANSPS)* recognizes the indispensability of a democratic political system and economic development for ensuring national security through reducing domestic vulnerability to external threats. It explains the danger of lack of democratic and stable political system on the national security in two major ways: one, by creating forces that would be used as proxies by potential external enemies; and, second, by giving the impression about Ethiopia as too weak to present a united front at time of external aggression. FANSPS cites the repulsed aggressions in 1977/8 and 1998 by Somalia and Eritrea, respectively, as attacks conducted based on such presumption. In elaborating the "inside-out" approach of Ethiopia's current foreign policy, it states:

> …our country is home to many nations and faiths and move to form a strong unity based on the voluntary will of our peoples; and until we build strong national consensus based on the principles embodied in the constitution, we will not only be exposed to internal strife and implosion but also to external conflicts and hazards, as well. Unless we establish strong democratic institutions; reach a broad national concord based on democratic principles; assure the rule of law; isolate and through popular involvement, deal with those who operate outside legality, we will remain hostage to internal and external threats as well as dangerous conflicts and wars (FANSPS, 2002).

The foreign policy document, nonetheless, considers the post-1991 political order as increasingly democratic. It describes Ethiopians (defined in ethno-religious lines) as living in a sprite of equality, democracy and development. Regarding the Ethiopian Somalis, it asserts that, unlike previous regimes, they "…are living in brotherhood and voluntary unity with other Ethiopians in a newly defined, inclusive Ethiopian identity…" It considers existing rebels as "destructive elements" armed, trained and deployed by the Eritrean government (FANSPS, 2002).

None of my informants from the ruling party/ and the government dispute this platitude. Sibhat Nega expresses the democratic development in terms of the peace he claims to exist in the country. He explains the peace with "the absence of disgruntled people". For him, in line with the official government stance, the country's major sources of instability were ethnic-based marginalization and lack of development, both of which have significantly been addressed under the current regime. With the absence of disgruntled people, Sibhat further explains, armed struggle is illegitimate; but, there may still exist some rebels due to the quick incurability of past historical grievances, and hence, expectable, but dwindling (Interview). Abdeta Yadeta, the Director General of the Directorate of African Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, supports Sibhat's argument by appraising the political climate as too open for negotiation and too representative to leave a significant room for armed struggle. For him, rebellion currently is rather a result of poverty and stupidity of the leadership of rebels such as OLF, which erroneously thought that the Oromo people would stand by its side. But, the problem is diminishing with increasing development and tendency of rebel fighters to come to the negotiation table as witnessed in the signature of the accord between the government and a splinter group of ONLF in October 2010 (Interview).

Nonetheless, Prof. Beyene Petros, the Chairman of the opposition coalition Medrek, considers the accord as part of the government's disingenuous "divide and rule" tactic; i.e. by imposing its own terms on those fighters who got tired of fighting and dropped their guns (Interview). A government intelligence officer later told me that the ONLF fighters were rewarded with houses and money for signing the accord as per the terms put by the government. Bulcha Demeksa, an outspoken opposition figure from the Oromo Federalist Democratic Movement (OFDM), shares the criticism. According to Bulcha, the government is not intelligent to talk and discuss with rebels. Its exclusive and repressive rule and lack of the legal and institutional framework for accommodating various interests creates a legitimate grievance that can induce groups for insurgency (Interview).

A look at the post-1991 political developments in Ethiopia corroborates the criticisms about the regime. Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), created in 1989, is a coalition of four ethnic-based parties – Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), Amhara National Democratic Movement (ANDM), Oromo People's

Democratic Organization (OPDO) and Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Front (SEPDF). TPLF, as the sponsor and architect of EPRDF, is, however, the dominant party within the ruling coalition.

Few years before militarily seizing power in 1991, TPLF had attempted to bring Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), which fought for the self-determination of the Oromo people since 1973, into the EPRDF coalition. However, it could not succeed beyond creating a tactical cooperation that did not last long. TPLF subsequently sponsored its Oromo captives from the war with the ousted Derg regime and OLF defectors toward creating OPDO in 1990 as EPRDF's wing in Oromia region (Vaughan & Tronvoll, 2003: 114 – 117; Paulos, 2003: 14 – 15).

In July 1991, EPRDF convened a national conference attended by many ethnic-based parties and fronts, most of which were created for the occasion and to give an inclusive picture to the regime. In the Transitional Government formed at the end of the conference, OLF held three ministerial positions and 12 seats in the Council of Representatives. OLF's political and military presence in Oromia, however, significantly limited EPRDF/OPDO's reach in the region. In the run up to the April 1992 national and regional elections, OLF became the major target of EPRDF's discrimination, intimidation and repression against opposition parties. This ultimately forced OLF to boycott the election together with many other opposition parties and withdrew itself from the Transitional Government few days before the Election Day. On the same day of OLF's withdrawal from the government, its fighters went into the bush and resumed their insurgency after EPRDF forces moved to control their urban military camps (Aalen, 2002; Pausewang et.al., 2002).

Ogden National Liberation Front (ONLF) was another independent political force operating in Ethiopia's Somali region previously called the Ogden. ONLF's social base is largely in the Ogden clan, who comprise nearly half of the region's population. ONLF was formed in 1984 as a splinter group of the previous Western Somalia Liberation Front (WSLF), which Somalia's previous irredentist regime sponsored as part of its broader military strategy to annex the Ogden. In the 1992 election, ONLF won 60% of the Somali region's parliamentary seats and administered the region for the next two years. Its relations with EPRDF broke when ONLF members of the regional parliament requested

for an independence referendum in 1994. The EPRDF government swiftly reacted by sponsoring a coalition of non-Ogden clans called the Ethiopian Somali Democratic League (ESDL), which, in the absence of ONLF, won the regional election in 1995. Later in 1998, the government also co-opted an ONLF faction, integrated it with ESDL and sponsored the restructuring of the latter with a new name called the Somali People's Democratic Party (SPDP). Having been excluded from formal regional and national politics, ONLF quickly resorted to armed insurgency for the "liberation" of the "Ogden" (Abdullahi, 2007; ICG, 2006: 34; HRW, 2008: 14 – 28).

The political climate in the period towards Ethiopia's 2006 war in Somalia was more rebellion triggering than accommodative and open to genuine discussion and debate. Berouk Mesfin, a Senior Researcher at ISS, attributes this to EPRDF's rebel mind-set and siege mentality. According to Berouk, this forbids the regime from having the courage and commitment to satisfactorily respond to the easily answerable demands of various interest groups including the rebels. As a result, EPRDF's rule has been more of continuity than a change from previous authoritarian regimes (Interview).

Dawit Hagos (his name changed), associate professor of political science at Addis Ababa University, shares Berouk's assessment of the regime. He expresses aggrieving factors that might push the people for insurgency in Ethiopia as excess. Resolving the problems, according to Dawit, requires accommodating various interests through institutionalized politics and thinking beyond the personal, both of which, however, are absent. In a context where politics is not institutionalized, individuals and their actions matter. In this regard, Dawit does not see those in power as having either the capacity or the willingness to think beyond the personal. They rather associate the nation's existence with their continued stay in power by telling the people, "…if any other force than EPRDF comes to power, it will destroy you!"(Interview).

EPRDF's determination to stay in power is manifested in the foreign policy document. It underscores the necessity of a strong central government with strong military power, similar with Japan's 19/20th C Meiji Restoration, around which Ethiopians would rally to come out of their humiliating historical "underdevelopment" (FANSPS, 2002). This is further elaborated, among others, in Prime Minister Meles' famous 'preliminary draft, not for quotation' piece, extracted from a monograph he said was

under preparation: *African Development: Dead Ends and New Beginnings*. In this seemingly incomplete monograph, Meles argues that a predominantly agrarian developing country like Ethiopia must be a "democratic developmental state" to achieve accelerated growth and development. The need for policy continuity and stability makes it imperative for the developmental state to be a "*one-party dominant democracy", where* the ruling party forms a strong coalition with the rural mass, which is the overwhelming majority. According to Meles, it is with the interest of this group that the activities of the state should be congruent. In developed democracies, he argues, solid consensus among politicians and the people on fundamental policies has been achieved and politics is confined to dealing with trivialities and personalities. Electoral change of incumbents in those countries, therefore, could not technically cause policy inconsistency and instability. Nonetheless, in developing countries like Ethiopia, solid consensus on fundamental policies is rare or absent; hence, change in leadership in electoral politics has a danger of policy discontinuity from the previous administration. As a result, the most likely scenario would rather be the emergence of a dominant party or dominant coalition democracy (Meles, 2006).

However, the conviction in one-party dominant system has made the regime inflexibly prescriptive and hampered consensus on fundamental issues. The regime's authoritative nature has in turn created suspicion within the public even for its praiseworthy development activities in the country. Inability to broaden its social base beyond the Tigray region (Clapham, 2009: 185), comprised of 6% of the total population (CSA, 2011), also makes the regime to be wary of defeat in a free and fair election. As a result, all national and local elections have so far fallen short of the international standard for a democratic election (Tronvoll, 2009a). This has made coercion the major instrument of rule. Ethiopia's human rights record has subsequently been very poor. The rights violations are reported to be severe in Somali and Oromia regions, where ONLF and OLF operate, respectively, and their alleged sympathizers are subject to arbitrary arrest, beatings and extrajudicial killings by government forces (Tronvoll, 2008: 65 – 72; Hagmann & Korf, 2012; HRW, 2005). Fido Tadessa Ebba is the head of OLF's diplomatic division. In describing how government repression makes it easy to recruit rebel fighters, he says, "…It's easy…if you have trainers and equipment, you can recruit

thousands of people within a short time" (Interview, in Plaut, 2006: 590). Fido's assertion came after an Ethiopian army general with more than hundred soldiers defected and joined OLF in Eritrea six month before the onset of war in Somalia (BBC News, 2006a). Hagmann & Korf describe the long-standing the tenuous state-society relations in Somali region as a "state of exception", where government counter-insurgency campaign increases civilian support to ONLF (Hagmann & Korf, 2012).

Dictated by the need for external assistance and sanctuary, OLF and ONLF allied with domestic and regional forces that respected their causes and raised arms against the EPRDF regime. Advantaged by the rebellion-triggering post-2005-election crisis, they allied with other old and newly formed armed and peaceful Ethiopian opposition groups and formed the Alliance for Freedom and Democracy (AFD) in May 2006 (BBC News, 2011; Ethiomedia.com, 2006; ICG, 2009: 10). At a time of AFD's little success, the UIC emerged as the dominant and anti-Ethiopia force in Somalia in June. OLF and ONLF, then, allied with the UIC in its expansionist military campaigns in southern Somalia. In return, they got access to the external assistance that was being channelled to the UIC and secured sanctuary with close proximity to the regions/peoples they aspire(d) to "liberate" and to their headquarters in Eritrea (cf. UN, 2006; Abdullahi, 2007: 560; Plaut, 2006).

3.3. Minority rule & the extension of Ethiopia's proxy with Eritrea into Somalia

As discussed in section 2.3, the non-electoral ways through which authoritarian regimes come to power leave them with narrow social base and contested legitimacy. Their continued cling on power, therefore, relies heavily on paying off and preferentially treating a very small coalition comprised of regime insiders and supporters (Bader, Gra¨vingholt **&** Ka¨stner, 2010). State power in the Horn of Africa has historically been the exclusive prerogative of groups organized along ethno-religious lines (Fukui & Markakis, 1994). After imperial Ethiopia's fluctuating territory gained its current shape in late 19th C, power was monopolized by the (Showa) Amhara elites, whose Abyssinian culture and Amharic language became the hallmarks of Ethiopian nationalism (Markakis, 1998: 103; 1987). During the military (Derg) regime, which filled the vacuum created in the 1974 revolution that abolished the monarchy, power was controlled by more mixed/

and more multi-ethnic military officers. The soldiers, as the creation and guardian of the state, however, opted for militarily preserving the country's unity as incompletely transformed from a multi-ethno-religious empire state to a "nation state" by their predecessors. After EPRDF overthrew the military junta in 1991, Ethiopia's politico-economic life for the past two-decade has significantly been dominated by Tigrian elites organized under TPLF, EPRDF's dominant constituent party (cf. Aalan, 2002; Berhanu, 2011; Clapham, 2009; Vaughan & Tronvoll, 2003: 76 – 79; Paulos, 2003; Merera, 2003). The same is true for Eritrea, where the Tigrigna speaking *Kebetsa* elites organized under the Peoples Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ), a successor to EPLF, dominate politics and economy (cf. Tronvoll, 2009b; Reid, 2003; Shumet, 2001).

Tigrians in Ethiopia and their ethnic identical Kebetsa people (here after called as the Kebessa) across the border in Eritrea have been long-time rivals. Before Eritrea was detached from Ethiopia as an Italian colony in 1890, their rivalry used to centre mainly on two things: power struggle between their respective nobilities (Tronvoll, 2009: 39); and, competition over land, ownership to which has historically determined relations of power within the agrarian Christian highlanders in both countries (Dirar, 2009). In 1876, Emperor Yohannes IV appointed *Ras* Alula, Ethiopia's celebrated Tigrian general, as the governor of Mereb Mellash and Midri Bahri covering most parts of present-day Eritrea. With Alula's appointment, the rivalry changed into resentment among the Kebetsa, who rebelled against his "repressive" rule (Yohannes, 2004: 21; Wrong, 2005b).

Italian colonization of Eritrea later created the condition for *the Kebetsa* to banefully offset their grievance. After their massive forced conscription into the colonial army, the largely understaffed agricultural and urban labour market in Eritrea came to be filled with Tigrian migrant workers from Ethiopia. The Kebetsa, though themselves victims of racist colonial policies, subsequently developed a sense of superiority over their Tigrian rivals – dismissively calling the latter *Agame*, who would do all dirty and demeaning jobs in Eritrea (Dirar, 2009: 37; Wrong, 2005a: 365). The feeling was strengthened with Fascist Italy's issuance of a decree in 1937. According to the decree, Eritreans were to be treated as superior over Ethiopians, who had not undergone a colonial civilizing process. This, coupled with formidable Italian investment in Eritrea, made the Kebetsa to consider themselves as "modernized" and "civilized" (Tekeste, discussed in Tronvoll, 2009b: 43).

With the formation of TPLF in Tigray in 1975 under the mentorship of its older Eritrean guide, EPLF, the superiority-inferiority complex extended to their armed struggle against Ethiopia's previous Mengistu regime. Tigrians' animosity toward the Kebetsa soared following EPLF's blockage of relief aid to famine-affected Tigrians through EPLF-controlled areas from across Sudan. After TPLF and EPLF held power in Ethiopia and Eritrea in 1991, respectively, the foreign policies of the two states became mirror images of the pattern of amity and enmity between the two Tigrigna speaking communities across the border (cf. Shumet, 2001; Reid, 2003).

Ethiopia's 1998-2000 border war with Eritrea was fought by all Ethiopian nationalities. But, for the Tigrians the war was also about ensuring their battlefield superiority over their rival Eritrean ethnic brothers; for Eritreans annoyingly attributed TPLF' victory in the Ethiopian civil war to the support the former gave to the latter. "We [Eritreans] had to teach them [Tigrians] how to fight. Without us, Mengistu would still be in power" (ex-Eritrean liberation fighters, quoted in Wrong, 2005b). Defining the border war in the prism of the Tigrian-Kebessa rivalry, Abay Tsehaye, TPLF politburo member and current security advisor to Ethiopian Prime Minister, was quoted, "…Did they wish for Tigrians to remain as their labourers and maidservants?..." (Shumet, 2001: 55).

After the end of the border war with Ethiopia's military victory, Eritrea and Ethiopia continued their rivalry through proxy wars (Abbink, 2003), to which Somalia's unfolding insecurity situation in 2006 presented a much more convenient field. According to the UN Monitoring Group on Somalia, Eritrea became the major source and conduit of external support to the UIC. It allegedly armed, trained and advised UIC, ONLF and OLF fighters (UN, 2006). What emerged in the few months before Ethiopia's blitzkrieg on 24 December 2006 seemed a quadripartite front between the UIC, OLF, ONLF and Eritrean forces against the bilateral alliance of Ethiopian and TFG forces. This coupled with UIC's Jihadist and irredentist rhetoric increased Ethiopia's apprehension.

As discussed so far, authoritarianism has served as the genesis of the threat in three ways. One, it was Ethiopia's only domestic experience to share with its satellite government in Somalia, i.e. TFG, whose survival from its excluded and stronger rivals organized under the UIC demanded Ethiopia's protection. Two, authoritarianism sustained the unaccommodating political climate that created rebels with which the UIC

allied. Three, it created and sustained the hostility with Eritrea, which used UIC as instrument of escalating its proxy with Ethiopia in Somalia. Nonetheless, the scale of Ethiopia's military operation, as discussed below, illustrates the authoritarian limits to accurately assess the magnitude of threats and opportunities.

4. Obscure Decision Making, Inflated Threat, Inaccurate Expectations & the war

In its foreign policy document, the Ethiopian government recognizes the accurate identification of threats and their eradication at their sources as the basic strategy to minimize vulnerability (FANSPS, 2004). As discussed in chapter two, authoritarian regimes have selective perception problem. This precludes them from accurately assessing the threats, intensions and capabilities of their adversaries, the character of their allies, and the probability of their victory. The problem of incomprehension gets worse in personalist regimes than in other authoritarian regimes; for a dictator surrounds himself with sycophants who tell him only what he wants to hear (Peceny & Butler 2004: 569).

4.1. Shadowy decision-making & the little room for appraisal

- *The opaque decision making circle*

The situation in Ethiopia before the onset of the war was that most of the political decision-making seemed to occur outside the formal institutional framework (Abbink, 2006: 174). It had also witnessed increasing personification of power in the hands of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi. According to Paulos, this started during the 2001 split within TPLF/EPRDF, from which Meles came out victorious while his rivals went to jail or became apolitical (2003). The trend has strengthened in the period after the 2005 election with the increasing prominence of Meles as EPRDF's chief ideologist (Tronvoll, 2012).

Gebru Asrat is a former President of Tigray region and TPLF/EPRDF polit-bureau member. He currently chairs *Arena Tigray* (ATDS), the only Tigrian party alternative to TPLF in Ethiopia. He expresses PM Meles as an idol worshiped by EPRDF members and supporters as if they wouldn't breath without him in power (Interview). An EPRDF supporter and friend of my aunt whom I met at my grandmother's house during my fieldwork in Addis can't get it enough praising Meles. "I don't think of the nation to be peaceful without him …Meles is everything for this country" (personal communication). Meles is profoundly felt among his supporters and opposers, both sides' praises and criticisms of the regime centring on him and his deeds. Reminiscent of the documented

trend by his predecessors, Meles' pictures are posted across major avenues and squares and on the walls of government offices including the gate of the Parliament Library, among others. "…it's the ID card to be safe and get things easily done in many places now-a-days…" says a friend of mine in Addis staring at a picture of the Prime Minister on the frame of a key chain held by the manager of a restaurant, where we were being served breakfast.

Dr. Negasu Gidada has worked with PM Meles for over ten years as President of the 2nd Republic (1995 – 2001) and member of EPRDF's executive committee (1991 – 2001). In response to my question as to which executive office he thinks would have a crucial say in the decision on the war in Somalia, Negasu, after thinking for a while, answers: "it's difficult…not the Office, but the Prime Minister himself in consultation with the Foreign Affairs *Minister*…and the Chief of [General] Staff…" (Interview). Later, I went to the Ministry of Defence to check the status of my request for data. I was talking to a female soldier receptionist at the main gate of the Ministry's compound at *Ambassador Theatre*. One of the soldieries who stood nearby intervened when he heard me mentioning the Minister's name (Siraj Fergessa) to the receptionist: "…the minister doesn't know that much about stuffs like the war in Somalia…it is the Chief of General Staff, General Samora, you should talk to…he is the main body…" I was a bit worried about how his colleagues would react to him for saying so. To the opposite of my fear, they rather told me that it wouldn't be as such easy to talk to the general (Personal communication). Their tip is supported by a Wikileaks released classified cable wired from the US Embassy in Addis Ababa to Washington in January 2008, i.e. before Siraj replaced Kuma Demeksa as Defence Minister. As stated in the cable, Ambassador Yamamoto expresses General Samora as the holder of "the reins of power" in the ministry with the power to dictate the Minister, whom he considers as a figurehead differing overwhelmingly to Samora and Meles on substantive military issues (Yamamato, 2008).

Further manifesting the inconsequence of the formal institutional framework regarding decisions on major security issues, officials in the relevant ministries seemed largely ignorant about the war. "Hello, Ato [Mr] Solomon!" speaks a very polite man on the phone while I was seating in the crowded minibus taxi on my way to meet one of my interviews. He was the head of a desk in one of the ministries where I had submitted a

letter of request for data. "…I saw your letter you submitted through the Records Office regarding the military operation in Somalia…this is the right office…but, to be honest, I am new to this post…and, I don't know much about this issue…you better find ways to talk to the previous head…he is the person on the issue…" When I thankfully asked him for the contact address of the person he referred, "that I can't help!" was his answer (telephone conversation). Similar politely worded answers were what other officials in the rest of the relevant ministries gave me either on the phone or through their secretaries.

Nearly a month had passed since I started my fieldwork when an intelligence officer gave me a tip about the very few regime insiders whom he suspected had close proximity to the Prime Minister and informed him about developments in Somalia at that time. A pundit on Ethiopian politics later shared the officer's suspicion, and I found it convincing afterward on the course of my work. Though I managed to talk to very few of the suspected insiders through my connections, their answers were rather in line with the official government view as repeatedly expressed by the Prime Minister and within the limit of secrecy that they justified on the ground of national security. "…don't expect me to be open about everything I say…" friendly warns me one of the officials I talked to (Personal communication).

- *Fear & the absence of scholarly influence on the government's war decision*

There is no trace of informed debate, researches or analysis about the threat and merits of fighting the war before its onset in December 2006. I visited the Ethiopian International Institute for Peace and Development (EIIPD), the only government "think-tank" on security and foreign policy issues established in 1996 by the Council of Ministers. It looks more abandoned than what it used to look when I last used its small library a year before the onset of the war. The librarian was the only person I found inside the library room during my visit. Neither he nor I could find any study or conference proceedings that implicate informed discussion or debate on the issue before (and after) the start of the war. The situation is similar in other places I visited.

Ever since EPRDF came to power in 1991, its relation with the academia has largely been hostile. Scholarly criticism and student protests against the government have been reacted by expulsion of professors and students with out due process, campus raids, mass

and indefinite detentions, extrajudicial killings, closure of universities and disruption of classes (HRW, 2003). During the war, journalists, pundits and activists who were critical of the government were still in jail together with opposition leaders (cf. Abbink, 2006; Tronvoll, 2012). The chance to influence decision making with objective analysis of the alleged threat was, hence, minimal. According to a countrywide study commissioned by the Forum for Social Studies (FSS) in the pre-war period, academic freedom in Ethiopia's higher education institutions was significantly constrained (Taye, 2008; Tesfaye, 2007). The situation was reported as worse in humanities and social science areas, where "…research…has always been prescribed and often under-funded and…indirectly discouraged…" (Baye, 2008: 57).

Dawit Hagos (his name changed) teaches at the department of Political Science and International Relations (PSIR) of Addis Ababa University. It's the only department in the country for the study of politics and international affairs, and, hence, with direct link to the issue. Dawit discontentedly says that there is no research conducted or panel discussions held on issues related to the war at the department. He attributes this to fear within the staff and the government's negative attitude towards social science researches that left them highly underfunded. Dawit further elaborates this:

> When it comes to researches on politically sensitive issues such as the war in Somalia, the problem becomes worse…Even if the government says to have used any [independent research or analytical work], it is a work that only supports its own decision passed in the narrow political circle. There were some self-styled scholars who were making speeches on the media only in support of the government's decision to fight the war. But, this was *expert endorsement*, not a genuine opinion" (Interview, emphasis my own).

According to Dawit, the regime has a Leninist (vanguard) view of knowledge that makes it unreceptive and intolerant to what scholars say unless it supports its position. This, for Dawit, has created uneasy apprehension within the academic circle about the consequence of their intellectual opinion. "…you do not even dare to give your intellectual opinion to newspapers…*who do you ask or hold accountable if the newspaper misquotes you in a country where there is no rule of law?"* (Interview, emphasis my own). Berouk Mesfin strengthens Dawits comments saying: "…everything is politicized in Ethiopia…taking

position on an issue is considered as taking a political party side … *if you have family, you do not take the risk!*...even if you dare to do so, *nobody listens!*" (Interview).

- *Constrained media, insignificant expert opinion & threatened "opposition"*

Prior to the onset of the war, the post-2005 election crackdown had already weakened the private press with much less number of private newspapers operating than the pre-election period. Their public outreach was limited to a small section of educated urban dwellers, particularly in the capital, Addis Ababa, and to some extent in other major cities. The Institute of Ethiopian Studies at Addis Ababa University has a collection of the newspapers published in the country. A glimpse at the coverage of some of the newspapers' published in the pre- and post-war period shows no analytical or expert opinion other than some interviews with few people from the opposition or government personnel. Ato Melaku Demissie is the Editor in Chief of the Amharic edition of *The Reporter*. He says that there were no publicly expressed opinions about the war other than informal coffee hour discussions. He adds that *The Reporter* had tried to talk to experts and relevant scholars such as those who teach at Addis Ababa University. But, none of them were willing to comment (Interview). According to Elizabeth Equbay, a reporter for *Addis Admas* newspaper, experts tried to avoid risk by presenting either some body's opinion or portraying theirs as others at times they were willing to give their opinion (Interview). Further elaborating experts' fear, Melaku again says:

> "…Let alone on the Somalia issue, even on the 2010 election and the very recent 'price cup' issues, those who were willing to tell us their opinion were extremely much fewer than what we needed. People do not talk much. When you approach and ask them [for interview], they say, 'could you skip this question?' This is because of lack of confidence…this is fear … from what they tell us, people fear vengeance…as it is known, what the government wants to be reported is a message that supports its view. What we face is something that impairs public debate and public opinion…" (Interview).

Ethiopia Radio and Television Agency (ERTA) and Fana Broadcasting Corporate (FBC) are agencies controlled by the government and the ruling party, respectively, which monopolise(d) the broadcasting media. They are guided by the government's doctrine of "developmental journalism" (Lodamo & Skjerdal 2009; Price, Al marashi & Stremlau,

2009: 4 – 11). As anonymous EPRDF official told me, journalists are required to be developmental by reporting only 'hope-giving' and positive activities of the government (Personal communication). All my informants except from the ruling party/government consider all the media outlets under both ERTA and FBC as propaganda tools. "…to tell you the truth, I don't trust the government media…I've never heard it saying the truth…" says Colonel Asrat, the only opposition member of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Security during the war (Interview). Asrat's comment echoes the funny and critical public comments about Ethiopian Television (ETV) that are recently circulated on facebook. One of those posted on the wall of an ETV reporter reads: "…if ETV speaks truth, it means your TV is off'!"

Ato Lidetu Ayalew is a former MP and Chairman of UEDP-Salvation (*Edepa-Medhin)*, the only opposition party that supported the war. For him, the private media has insignificant distribution; hence, it is not countable as existing as long as it isn't reachable to the people. Regarding the government media, he says:

> The major media that have a reach to the people are the one under government control…on the issue of war, they do a propaganda work…The work they do is to make sure that one political view would have acceptance and one-directional…they had never the desire to fill the gap and to reflect various stances and views on that issue [the war]. Let alone other political forces, even we who supported the measure in Somalia did not have the chance to reflect our stance. They present only in a way they want (Interview).

The two parliamentary sessions about the war were broadcasted live on ETV. As will be elaborated in Chapter six, the "debates", however, were unintended and occurred in the course of opposition MPs' careful objections and reservations to an "*adjournment motion"* the executive presented to the House. Despite EPRDF's absolute majority seat in the House, PM Meles warns opposition MPs: "…rejecting the motion is regrettable…and shows who is standing where…" (HPR-EFDR, 2006a: 25).

4.2. Inflated threat, inaccurate expectations & the scale of the operation

On the 6th Ordinary Session of the Parliament, PM Meles stated the sufficiency of UIC's verbal Jihadist threat and its military capability as documented in the report of the UNMGOS for taking a military action (HPR-EFDR, 2006b: 8) The UN report portrays the UIC as militarily, politically and economically imminent force in Somalia. It further

describes the UIC as "…increasingly organized military-style force … [having] military command and control; military advice, direction and guidance; diverse forms of military training; arms and the military material and logistics necessary to support military operations; financial and economic strength…" (UN, 2006: 41). In addition to the major support from Ethiopian rebels and Eritrea, the UN report states support from Egypt, Hezbollah, Iran, Libya, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Syria to the UIC – resonating the long-standing animosity of Middle Eastern countries toward Ethiopia on the grounds of the Nile River and Islam (cf. Erlich, 2002; Mesfin, 1999: 82 – 85), which is not the scope of this study. Nonetheless, According to Colonel Gebre, their support to the UIC was mainly due to their strong relations with the Eritrean leadership (Interview).

One of the three groups that comprised the leadership of the UIC was consisted of radical Islamists led by Sheikh Hassen Dahir Aweys. Aweys used to be the military commander of the extremist AIAI in the 1990s; maintained a direct contact with Osama Bin Laden; and had the desire to establish a Taliban-like Islamic regime in Somalia. In October 2006, Aweys became the Chairmanship of the *Shura Council*, which approved the decisions of the officially highest organ of the UIC, i.e. the *Supreme Islamic Court of Banaadir*. Aweys accession to the most power organ of the UIC further radicalized the domestic and foreign policy of the UIC (Terdman, 2008: 53, 58 – 63). UIC's verbal Jihadist threats were backed by Bin Laden's call for international mujahidin to come and fight the infidels in Somalia. He expressed IGAD's plan to deploy peacekeeping force including Ethiopian troops as "a continuation of the Crusade against the Islamic World" (Ibid: 68 – 69).

Ethiopia then focused more on *pre-empting* the rhetorical threat than accurately assessing it. It accordingly conducted the war in a manner of conventional warfare, involving about 10,000 well-equipped soldiers backed with heavy artillery, helicopter gunships and Sukhoi Su 27 flanker fighter jets (Colonel Gebre, Interview; Gettleman, 2006; Aviation Week, 2007). Gebre expresses the UIC as a group that would not have hesitated to cause a huge destruction to Ethiopia hadn't it been militarily obliterated (Interview). "…did we have to wait until they attacked us like during the previous regimes?..." Sibhat Nega inquisitively justifies the pre-emptive nature of the war (Interview). Sibehat's words reverberate what Zemedkun Tekle, a spokesman for

Ethiopia's information ministry at time of the blitzkrieg, said to the media, "What did you expect us to do?...Wait for them to attack our cities? (quoted in Gettleman, 2006: 2).

Nonetheless, what was seen on the battlefield was largely a negation to the UN report regarding UIC's military strength – rather too weak to engage a regional hegemon commanding one of Africa's most formidable militaries (see Oziewicz, 2006; Shinn, 2005: 107). It also supports Andrew McGregor's doubt on the accuracy of the report (McGregor, 2006). Within six days since the official start of the war on 24 December 2006, Ethiopian forces escorted the TFG to the capital Mogadishu. By the end of the month, they routed UIC from its last stronghold in Somalia's southern tip city of Kismayo (Gettleman, 2007b).

Following Ethiopian troops control of southern Somalia, the US sent its Special Forces to hunt suspected al-Qaeda operatives. It also moved its Navy into the waters off the Somali coast to monitor the crossing in and out of Somalia of Islamic fighters; and conducted sporadic air strikes against targets suspected of hosting most-wanted al-Qaeda operatives (McCrummen, DeYoung & Wilgoren, 2007; CBS News, 2009). Sibhat, however, expresses America's sporadic post-war missile attacks inside Somalia as a deceitful move to claim presence in a purely Ethiopian operation (Interview). One of the government intelligence officers I talked to on condition of anonymity supports Sibhat's statement. But, he adds that America, from its military base in Djibouti, has assisted Ethiopia only with satellite images about the exact location of UIC fighters. The swift victory, on the one hand, demonstrated Ethiopia's undisputed military superiority in the Greater Horn of Africa. But it, on the other hand, was a manifestation of its inflated image about the threat and inaccurate assessment of the commitment and capability of its allies.

- *Jihad: a sham threat*

Despite the Jihadist rhetoric by the radical elements within the UIC leadership, Somalis have a strong moderate Sufi culture. In this regard, UIC's radical agenda was more a source of its own extinction than serving as a tool of mobilization. Somalis are not scrupulous in following Islamic practices. They have a strong Sufi tradition that their clan customary laws and civil laws have superseded Sharia law. Their pre-Islamic customs,

such as the veneration of ancestors as saints, still continue to thrive. They consider Saudi Arabian-inspired strict Wahhabi interpretation of Islam as an imposition of the Gulf-Arab culture and "un-Somali" (Menkhaus, 2002:111; Østebo, 2010: 48 – 49; Mohamed, 2009). Gebre, based on his two-year say in Somalia, describes Somalis as "traditionally moderate" (Interview).

UIC's prohibition of the selling and chewing of the Horn of Africa's popular narcotic leaf – *kchat* –, listening to music, watching movies and attending football matches was so unpopular that Somalis opposed it in street demonstrations (Østebo, 2010: 49; Terdman, 2008: 73). When Ethiopian and TFG forces chased UIC fighters after Ethiopia's blitzkrieg, Somalis such as residents of the city of Mogadishu and Kismayo ignored the Islamists' call for resistance, refused them shelter and told them to evacuate their neighbourhood (Gettleman, 2007a,b). More organized popular resistance to radical Islam was also seen later with the revival of the previously peaceful Sufi movement represented by Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jama'a (ASWJ), which posed major challenge to UIC's former military wing, al-Shabab, in the post-war period (Raghavan *2010*). The short-blinked coercion-based initial public support after it controlled Mogadishu was mainly due to its success in bringing a relative law and order – services that had been largely absent for the past 15 years. A Mogadishu resident, whose brother was killed in a robbery following the oust of the UIC, says, "[t]he courts were not good, but at least we had security" (Quoted in Sanders & Albadri, 2006).

- *UIC'S claim over Ogden: old-fashioned rhetoric & imprudent strategy of garnering support*

UIC's irredentist claim over Ogden was rather a flawed strategy to garner public support than a cause for formidable threat to Ethiopia's integrity. Somalia got its independence as a unified state of the former British Somaliland and Italian Somaliland in 1960. Successive regimes afterward were pre-occupied with the idea of creating Greater Somalia by incorporating the "lost" Somali-inhabited territories in Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya. However, Ethiopia's Somali regional state (Ogden) is the only territory that they attempted to militarily annex. This is due mainly to Somalis' historical animosity with Ethiopian Christian highlanders; and the political profit and prestige Somalia's embattled authoritarian regime would get from defeating Ethiopia. After the collapse of central

government in Somalia in 1991, the irredentist agenda continued to be entertained by AIAI in the 1990s (Terdman, 2008: 48 – 50). The UIC, whose leadership included ex-AIAI leaders, imprudently repeated the long-standing, but unsuccessful, strategy for the same purpose.

After central government collapsed in 1991, politics in Somalia has witnessed a radical decentralization and regionalization largely along clan lines (Hagmann & Hoehne, 2009: 52 – 53; Hagmann, 2005). Regionalization has sometimes resembled fragmentation as the former British Somaliland unilaterally declared its independence in 1991. Somalis in the rest part of the country subsequently declared several autonomous states such as Puntland in 1998 and Galmudug in 2006 (Hesse, 2010). ONLF in Ethiopia's Somali region, unlike its predecessors in the 1960s and 70s (Markakis 1987: 169 – 201), does not have an agenda of uniting the multi-clan region with Somalia proper. ONLF has confirmed this when it partnered with EPRDF in the Transitional Government formed after the overthrow of the Derg regime in Ethiopia. ONLF even complains that its armed struggle has been "misrepresented" as the border conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia (Mahdi, 2011). The *Greater Somalia* rhetoric had, therefore, become largely too obsolete to get as much gravity within the majority Somalis as the UIC desired. As Hesse notes, "…Somalis have nearly always lived with a dizzying array of flags, but rarely united under one of their own" (2010: 248).

From a military strategic point of view: Ethiopia's wedge-shaped Somali-inhibited region of Ogden gives it a strategic advantage; for it splits Somalia into two and puts Ethiopian forces within easy reach of Somalia's urban centres including the capital, Mogadishu (Markakis, 1987: 169). Ethiopia's cordial relations with Somaliland and Puntland in northern and north-central Somalia, respectively, reduce the threat that arises from the nearness to and accessibility of the Ogden from every part of Somalia. More over, as discussed in section 3.1, Ethiopian forces had readily been deployed since June 2006 both along the border and within Somalia's territory protecting the TFG in Baidoa town near the Ethiopian border. Hence, Ethiopia was in a position to easily repel any encroachment from within Somalia or to take a covert military operation as similar as the one against AIAI in the 1990s, if the UIC engaged in any covert destabilizing acts inside Ethiopia. As Gebre clarifies the operation, it was from their bases inside Somalia that

Ethiopian forces started their offensive in three ways; i.e. from Baidoa in two directions toward Kismayo and Mogadishu, and from the border town of Beledwein toward Mogadishu (Interview).

- *Ethiopia's exaggerated view of TFG's capacity to establish a "victor's peace"*

According to David Shinn, former US Ambassador to Ethioipia, Addis Ababa had hoped that the TFG would somehow control the situation after ousting the UIC (quoted in VOA, 2009). Fiseha Shawel, as described in a Wikileaks released cable from American Embassy in Addis Ababa, was the Ethiopian government "Somalia-watcher" prior to the war. In briefing American diplomats, he argued that ousting the UIC would give the TFG a room to operate and make progress in establishing real authority in Somalia (discussed in Huddleston, 2006b). The TFG's post-war performance, however, was much below Ethiopia's expectation. This was due mainly to lack of viable state institutions after 15-year government collapse in Somalia, intra-leadership rivalry and serious corruption. Preference for a victor's peace again prohibited TFG from being more inclusive by making a significant compromise with its rivals, whose insurgency in turn illuminated any chance at dialogue (Menkhaus, 2007: 384 – 385). Gebre expresses the TFG as incapable to actively move to make use of the chance created after UIC's defeat to stabilize Somalia. He also considers this, together with insufficient international assistance to the TFG, as a major challenge that prolonged the presence of Ethiopian troops in Somalia (Interview).

- *Ethiopia's inaccurate expectation from its international allies*

IGAD's initial proposal to deploy a peacekeeping force, as discussed in section 3.1, was revised in September 2006 to exclude Somalia's front-line states – Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya – from the mission. Due to the inability of Sudan because of its internal crisis and the unwillingness of Eritrea to contribute troops, Uganda remained the only IGAD member state to carry the burden with a strong support from the US. However, UIC's fierce opposition to foreign troops, its successive campaigns of expansion towards Southern Somalia and the onset of a heavy fighting in Baidoa town made the situation too insecure for Uganda to deploy its troops (Kidist, 2009). Ethiopia's conduct of the war, in this regard, was based on the expectation that, once it created the secured condition by ousting the UIC, the peacekeeping forces would be deployed with increased international

assistance to their operation and the TFG. In his parliamentary brief two days after the war, Prime Minister Meles said:

> …Returning our troops within few weeks is our unchangeable conviction. We cannot be peacekeepers beyond creating the conducive environment for peace… we say that the international community, having understood this and based on the decisions of the African Union and the UN Security Council, is expected to strive toward quickly deploying a peacekeeping force and avert unnecessary power vacuum after the withdrawal of our troops. Beyond this, we call upon the international community to provide the Somali people with humanitarian assistance immediately and in an amount that could alleviate their problem…" (Transcribed in HPR-FDRE, 2007: 13 -14).

Ethiopia's expectation was initially met with positive appraisal by the international community – hailing Ethiopia's victory as "a window of opportunity" to promote reconciliation and revive a functioning government in Somalia. Three weeks after the end of the war, the African Union (AU) authorized 8000 strong peacekeeping force (AMISOM) comprised of troops from its willing member states. Led by America's pledge of $100 million in immediate aid, Western donors promised support to the TFG (Menkhaus, 2007: 385 – 6). Subsequent post-war developments, however, showed the implausibility of Ethiopia's expectation. The AU was only able to deploy 1500 Ugandan troops, who were a year and half later joined by equivalent Burundian troops. This was mainly due to AU's poor resource; insufficient external support to the mission; and Ghana, Nigeria & Malawi's withdrawal of their initial offer on grounds of insecurity (Hull & Svensson, 2008). ' "Why would Ghana care about Somalia?" ' a US diplomat inquisitively explains the back-down (quoted in Cochran, 2010: 136). Dr. Admore Kambudzi is the Secretary of AU Peace and Security Council. He laments that Ethiopia's military action was a "golden opportunity" that the AU lost to stabilize Somalia. It's due to the organization's inherent weakness as a collection of weak states that deprived it of vigorous means to effectively act (Interview). The lack of the desired international assistance, the untimely and insufficient deployment of peacekeeping forces and TFG's inability to establish its authority meant Ethiopian troops' prolonged presence in Somalia – trapped in the escalating insurgency for the next two years

5. The Instrumentality of the War in Reconsolidating the Regime: An Enticing Gain

By the time the UIC controlled Mogadishu in June 2006, the EPRDF regime was yet trying to reconsolidate its power after it faced unprecedented challenge during and in the aftermath of the May 2005 election – a challenge, which Prime Minister Meles remembers as the third most difficult time of his 15-year rule[4]. As discussed in previous chapters, power reconsolidation was based primarily on heavy-handed government measures: killing hundreds of peaceful demonstrators, and arresting tens of thousands including students, opposition leaders, activists and journalists (Abbink, 2006: 185 – 195; Pausewang, 2009: 77 – 79).

The clampdown was immediately followed by a costly project of "homogenizing the party, the people and the state", which I call it, the "*Eihadegization*"[5] project. This was implemented through massive political indoctrination and coercive conscription of the public to party membership in exchange for getting new or maintaining old government jobs (Tronvoll, 2012: 277). It was six month before the onset of the war in December 2006 that I graduated from Addis Ababa University with a B.A. in Political Science and International Relations. Seeing EPRDF party membership application form held by students before and after graduation on the busy streets of the "university district" from the main 6kilo campus to 4kilo campus was common. "*Enjera new*" (it's a matter of "bread" – literal meaning) was the justification of those graduates who had previously been arrested in the post-election in-campus protests. The conscription marked increased form of fusion between state and ruling party structure and interests. According to former President Negaso Gidada, the decision to use state resources for EPRDF's interest including the integration of party members into government offices was made in 2001 (Interview).

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[4] It was on nationally televised press conference that PM Meles said in response to a question raised by a journalist. The first two difficult times he mentioned were the period immediately after EPRDF overthrew the previous military regime (Derg) in 1991 and the intra-ruling party split in 2001.

[5] *Eihadig* (ኢህአዴግ) is the abbreviated Amharic version of EPRDF, *Ye Ethiopia Hizboch Abiyotawi Democrasiawi Ginbar* (የኢትዮጵያ ህዝቦች አብዮታዊ ዴሞክራሲያዉ ግንባር).

Nonetheless, significant decrease in overall Western aid on grounds of rights violations posed a setback to sustain the *Eihadegization* project, which bloated the bureaucracy, soared government expenditure and overstretched its aid-dependent budget. The decrease in aid started with the suspension of $375 million in budgetary support a month after the killings of protestors in November 2005. The amount of non-budgetary components of Official Development Assistance (ODA) subsequently stagnated, thereby keeping total ODA inflow in 2006 at the same level with the amount in the previous two years (Borckgrevink, 2008: 211 – 212; Chang, 2010: 8 – 9). This was followed by a more worrisome development in the US Congress. On 27 June 2006, the House Committee on International Relations unanimously approved for consideration and vote of a bill, *Ethiopia Freedom, Democracy and Human Rights Advancement Act of 2006* (HR.5680). The bill demanded the respect to freedom, the promotion of democracy and accountability of government in Ethiopia as a prerequisite for Washington's cooperation on counter-terrorism and other security matters with Addis Ababa. Given that the US holds the lion's share of total Western aid to the country, the Ethiopian government embarked a campaign to block the passage of the bill by hiring DLA Piper, a Washington-based lobbying firm, at a monthly rate of $50,000 (Getachew 2009: 108 – 111; Al Mariam, 2006).

The Bush administration and its European allies were simultaneously anxious about UIC's emergence as the dominant radial Islamic group in Somalia with alleged link to al-Qaida. The danger was previously felt with the 1998 bombing of American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania by suspected Somalia-based al-Qaida operatives allegedly sponsored by al-Bashir's Islamic regime in Sudan. Nonetheless, after the 1993 Black Hawk Dawn Crisis in which dead American soldiers were dragged in the streets of Mogadishu, the West had long maintained a policy of refraining from sending troops to Somalia. Already fighting two major wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, Washington was too overstretched to create a third front in the Horn of Africa. With the plan to deploy IGAD-led regional peacekeeping force failed (as discussed in chapter 4), Ethiopia, unilaterally preparing for war to address its own security concern in Somalia, remained the only option on which the West could depend. Given the domination of America's post 9/11 foreign policy by the Pentagon, to which human right is secondary to security (Walle, 2010: 12); proceeding

with the unilateral war plan constituted enticing gains for the Ethiopian government in silencing Western criticism of rights violations; releasing and increasing their suspended aid; and minimizing, if not averting, the possibility for the reintroduction and passage of HR.5680 in Congress.

The Ethiopian government was successful in portraying its preparation for war as in the country's own security interest; and, that the West could use it as an opportunity to address their security concerns in Somalia. According to a Wikileaks released cable wired from the American embassy in Addis Ababa a month before the onset of the war, the then Acting Ambassador (Charge), Vicky Huddleston, warned officials in Washington about the dire consequence of a possible passage of HR.5680 in the Congress. Huddleston expressed Ethiopia as "the only ideal and democratic partner" with the capability to project power throughout the Horn of Africa; and, hence, the "bulwark against the expansion of radical Islam throughout Somalia and beyond". For her, America's full and trusted partnership with Ethiopia was the only way to abort the creation of an African Taliban in Somalia that could again destroy American embassies and interests. And, in order to strengthen the partnership, she strongly warned the Bush administration *not* to *bend to demands to pass legislation [HR.5680 bill]* that puts Ethiopia in the same category as countries on our terrorist list, or *make public* its private concerns about human rights and governance. She premised her argument on her perception of Prime Minister Meles as so defiant to threats and pressures that he would replace the US with China and Russia unless he was treated with respect and as a full partner (Huddleston, 2006a, emphasis my own).

As discussed in section 3.1, UIC's control of Mogadishu in June 2006 came at the defeat of ARPCT, a CIA-sponsored coalition of warlords to gather intelligence and hunt suspected terrorists. ARPCT's defeat increased Western dependence for their on-ground intelligence needs in Somalia on Ethiopia, which, as Shinn (2005: 110) notes, maintains "impressive" intelligence capacity. This enabled Ethiopia to significantly determine the West's view about the magnitude of threat posed to their regional interests by the UIC. "…UIC's radical Islamic agenda was an advantage…it makes the West easily consume Ethiopia's intelligence about the group…they don't buy it as long as you don't put it in the 'war on terror' frame…but this doesn't mean UIC was not a threat in this

regard…they were indeed extremists…" says an Ethiopian intelligence officer (Telephone conversation). As discussed in Samatar (2007: 158), this was initially manifested when America, based on intelligence from Ethiopia, accused the UIC of sheltering al-Qaida operatives suspected of orchestrating the 1998 bombings in Kenya and Tanzania. Ethiopia's military might, coupled with the absence of significant constraints to the executive's action as discussed later in chapter 6, had increased the credibility of its readiness for the war in the eyes of the West. Ethiopia maintains one of Africa's most formidable militaries comprised of "tough, mean and effective" soldiers with a lot of experience in conventional and counter-insurgency warfare (Shinn 2005: 107 – 111; Oziewics, 2006). Failing to cooperate with Addis Ababa on grounds of rights violations constituted a regrettable loss in Washington's "war on terror" in the region. As stated in the Wikileaks released confidential cable wired on 15 November 2006, Ambassador Huddleston warns her seniors in Washington:

> As Ethiopia faces – almost alone – a radical Islamist challenge to its existence and the region's stability, *it is time to put aside our hesitations and make Ethiopia a full partner* of the US…Ethiopia is already on the front lines. Although vilified and clearly out-gunned by CIC [UIC] propaganda, the GOE [Government of Ethiopia] will not back down in defending its national security. *Meles told me that Ethiopia will defend Baidoa to the end. If Ethiopia is successful – and I believe it will be* — then the CIC momentum will be broken. An *opportunity will arise* to stop Somalia from being devoured by the radical Islam…The almost rosy scenario on Somalia has a much better chance of success if we are ready to cement a full partnership with Ethiopia, because it is only Ethiopia that now blocks a radical Islamist state from rising in the Horn of Africa. *If we fail to act, we will be the losers* (Huddleston, 2006a, emphasis my own).

Senior Bush administration officials in Washington were well receptive of the warnings of their diplomatic team in Addis Ababa and their tone towards the UIC accordingly got tougher. On 15 December, US Assistant Secretary Dr. Jendayi Frazer characterized the UIC leadership as "extremists to the core" and controlled by al-Qaida's East Africa cell individuals. This was a policy shift away from Washington's earlier emphasis on the need to engage moderates in the UIC and promote dialogue with the TFG; and seemingly constituted America's green light for Ethiopia to attack. America

also pushed through a UN Security Council Resolution lifting the UN arms embargo on Somalia so that Ethiopia would be free of charges of violating the embargo by militarily supporting the TFG. Western diplomats, led-by US Secretary of State and Norway's Foreign Minister, subsequently hailed Ethiopia's swift victory as a "historic window of opportunity" to resuscitate Somalia's central government (Menkhaus, 2007: 378, 384). It also strengthened their long-held view about Ethiopia's cruciality for the stability of the strategically vital, but volatile, Horn of Africa.

Increased Western reliance on Ethiopia for their security interest in the Horn required replacing their criticism of rights violations with increased "development assistance". HR.5680 accordingly failed to appear for discussion in the US Congress. Though it was reintroduced in the House as HR.2003 in November 2007, it failed the mark up for discussion due to strong opposition from the Bush administration (Jopson & Dombey, 2007; Getachew, 2009: 108 – 111). Western bilateral and multilateral aid to Ethiopia in 2007 amounted to $3.4712 billion, an increase by $1billion from the previous year, i.e. before the start of the war – a trend that continued with a pick at $4.3854 billion in 2009. Washington's share (excluding its non-official aid) increased from its amount of $312.2 million in 2006 to $488.6 million in 2007 and to $1.0049 billion in 2008 (OECD, 2012). In order to escape from criticism, the budgetary support component of the aid was redirected from federal to local levels (*weredas*) through the WB-led multi-donor PBS program. Given EPRDF's pervasive party structure and strong discipline; the redirection of the fund rather enabled it to proceed with its *Ebadigization* project, thereby further "…penetrating all villages in the country and embracing more or less each and every household into a top-down, controlled party structure" (Tronvoll, 2012: 278). In one and half year since the end of the war, EPRDF announced that it had over 4.5 million members (EPRDF, 2008). Nonetheless, fighting the war based on a domestically induced and exaggerated threat and in the interest of the ruling party was possible due to the absence of the democratic constraints of conflict.

6. The Ease of Going to the War

As discussed in section 2.3, the absence of institutions of accountability and the indispensability of election for political power leave authoritarianism regimes with little (or no) institutional constraints and audience costs for their aggressive behaviours. Ethiopia's decision to go to war in Somalia was accordingly made in a way that violated the constitution and with out significant parliamentary scrutiny and concern for audience cost.

6.1. The unconstitutional declaration of the war

Ato Lidetu Ayalew is a former MP and Chairman of UEDP-Salvation (*Edepa-Medhin)*, the only opposition party that supported the war. He commends the way the government went to the war. According to Lidetu, the government has created the chance for the opposition to understand the graveness of the threat in a manner that it hadn't previously done. "…the government…had closely discussed the issue with the opposition…The Prime Minister and I together with three other opposition leaders have discussed…This is unusual thing" (Interview). According to Article 55(9) of Ethiopia's constitution, the House of Peoples Representative (here in after referred as "the House") is the only body that has the power to "proclaim a state of war" on the basis of a draft law submitted to it by the Council of Ministers. In other words, as again stated in Article 77(11) of the constitution, the Council of Ministers, which is chaired by the Prime Minister, cannot declare, but *submits* to the House a *draft law* on a declaration of war (CFDRE, 1995).

However, a look at the parliamentary process as documented in the minutes of the House sessions shows a violation of the constitution. As transcribed in the minutes, the issue of taking a military action was first discussed at the House's 6th Regular Session on 23 November 2006 – i.e. a day after the release of UNMGOS' report. One of the agenda of the session was listening to, not commenting on, the Prime Minister's answers to written questions he received from MPs. Hence, his unusual appearance was not to submit a draft law on the declaration of war drafted by the Council of Ministers. Nor did he, as the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, mention or present such a draft law as a reason for his attendance (HPR-FDRE, 2006b).

One of the questions the Prime Minister read was about how the government was responding to UIC's declaration of Jihad to Ethiopia (HPR-EFDR, 2006b: 1 – 3). *As a conclusive remark* to his answers, Meles asked the House to express *in advance* its official support to a possible "proportionate legal action" [i.e. military] that the government might take in the mean time the UIC continued its attack. Then, immediately after the Prime Minister finished his "answers" to the rest three questions, Ato Shiferaw Jarso, the government representative in the House, presented an *"adjournment motion"* as an urgent issue to be voted before the House proceeded to other agenda.

The motion read a resolution that the House would authorize the government to use *any necessary and proportionate legal action* to repel the UIC's *"aggression and attack"* to Ethiopia. As illustrated by PM Meles later in the session, the phrase "any necessary legal action" primarily constituted a military action of undefined proportion against the UIC and its allies in Somalia when the government *deemed it necessary*. Instead of asking the House to declare a war according to Article 55(9) and 77(11) of the constitution and supporting the allegation with concrete facts; the motion presented an official request to unconstitutionally transfer the constitutional power of the legislature on the declaration of war to the executive; i.e. for the executive to declare war at any time it saw it necessary. War was yet to be declared in the future meant that there was no actual attack or a profound change in the magnitude of the threat that would require such adjournment motion of urgent necessity. In justifying the constitutional infringement, the Prime Minister said that the *consequence of waiting* until, first, the Council of Ministers and, then, the parliament, discussed and took a stance on the issue would be of a grave damage (HPR-FDRE, 2006b: 17 – 27).

The alarming nature of the threat from the UIC was rather described roughly as [a] repetitive official *declaration of Jihad*; [b] endangering the sovereignty of the country by officially *declaring to unify all Somalis* in the Horn of Africa; [c] *arming, training, sheltering and infiltrating* forces that raised arms to dismantle the constitutional order [i.e. rebels]; [d] conducting *aggression* in cooperation with the government of Eritrea and its anti-Ethiopia allies and the increased danger it posed to the peace and sovereignty of the nation; and [e] the *government's conviction* that the force [UIC] had created *a clear and present danger* to Ethiopia's sovereignty and peace (HPR-FDRE, 2006b: 18 – 32). Representatives of

opposition parties except *Edepa-medhin* expressed their reservation on the ground of the ambiguousness of the motion; and modestly advised that it could be interpreted by a third party including the enemy as a declaration of war. They also downgraded the relevance of the motion saying that it was always the executive's responsibility to get prepared and respond to attacks whenever they tangibly occurred; hence, according to Ato Bulcha Demeksa, the leader of the opposition OFDM, there was no reason for the House to pass the motion unless it was for an illegal pre-emptive attack to fulfil other goal than the national interest. Prof. Beyene Petros, an MP representing the opposition coalition *Hibret*, reiterated the constitutional power of the House to declare war up on a request submitted to it by the Council of Ministers if the intention of the motion was this (HPR-FDRE, 2006b: 20 – 23).

Voting on the motion was delayed after Beyene advised the House about the danger of not having a common stance on the issue; and requested all the parties in the House to correct the ambiguousness of the motion through consultation before voting on it. Prime Minister Meles expressed his "partial" acceptance of Beyene's idea and underlined the importance of *approving it by consensus*. Immediately after Meles' approval, the House postponed voting on the motion to the 8th Ordinary Session. On 30 November 2006, the motion was passed with absolute majority and with no support from the opposition except *Edepa-Medhin*. The final version of the motion was rather identical with its original version except that sub-article መ of article 1 was divided into two; the English phrase "clear and present danger" in sub-article መ was omitted; and some content-unchanging words were added in article 2 and 3 of the final version (HPR-FDRE, 2006b: 18 – 19; 2006a: 2 – 3). Though the government described the threat as too urgent to wait until the constitutional procedure was respected, it was nearly a month after the House transferred its power to the executive that the Prime Minister declared the war on 24 December.

- *Rigid party discipline & the circumscription of the parliament*

The chance for challenging the views and correcting the mistakes of the Prime Minister with counter argument and avoiding the violation of the constitutional procedure and principle was missing. As always, the sessions in which the adjournment motion was presented for vote had a triple-layer structure: the government representative in the

House, following the Prime Minister's prior speech, presented the motion⇨opposition MPs were asked to express their positions⇨ruling party and its affiliate MPs led by the Prime Minister again gave their conclusive remarks and supports to the motion, which was then presented for vote. Former President Negasu (1995 – 2001), was the only independent MP at that time. Recalling the parliamentary sessions, he says, "…you forward your question or comment only once and there is no second chance to comment on their [ruling party MPs'] second comments or answers…I think I was given two minutes to speak…the opposition [whips] had about four to six minutes…and you can't say much in this limited time…" (Interview).

Despite the unexpected formidable challenge it faced in the 2005 election, EPRDF had managed to secure an absolute majority seat in a way that was largely rated as fraudulent (EUEOM, 2006; see also Abbink, 2006; Tronvoll, 2009b; Aalen & Tronvoll, 2009). It has a strong party discipline that EPRDF and its affiliate party MPs were/are supposed to conform to the biddings of the ruling party (cf. Aalen 2002: 30, 83 – 88). At the centre of the party discipline is taking the views of Prime Minister Meles, also the party Chairman, as sacrosanct. Colonel Asrat was the only opposition member of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Security. He expresses the parliament as more executive than a legislature. "…as long as the Prime Minister says so, it is so…period!...they all raise their hands…" (Interview). For Sibhat Nega, PM Meles' rumoured mentor, the identicalness between the executive and the legislature is, however, in the nature of a parliamentary system. He argues that EPRDF's MPs unanimous vote in the House does not indicate the parliament's circumscription. "…this is because they discuss issues in advance at the party level… they have their whip in the House and so do the opposition...[it's ok] as long as the system doesn't criticise you…" (Interview). Anonymous former MP from an EPRDF's affiliate party doesn't agree with Sibhat. In explaining the rigid party discipline, he says:

> …EPRDF and agar (affiliate) party MPs see themselves only as party members…which goes against the constitution of the country...they consider the Prime Minister's words as last word that can not be commented on and changed…When he enters to the parliament…you do not see any fear or concern on his face at all regarding a possible vote against his bill or a criticism to his report…if you try to deviate from the official party line, everything including non-political issues such as education and road will be

> politicized…if asking your genuine question about education and road brings about punishment, how come an MP dares to ask about Ethiopia's military intervention into Somalia?...(Interview).

Though there was a Somali MP from EPRDF's affiliate SPDP who unexpectedly abstained during the vote, Dr. Negaso says that she was later reprimanded (Interview). Party discipline is also observed in opposition parties, whose MPs too often voted in unison. According to Elisabet, outside *Edepa-Medhin*, Ato Tuka was the only opposition MP (from the coalition *Hibre*t) who voted in favour of the motion (Interview).

EPRDF's strict party discipline is also seen in the similarity between the answers of my informants in the government and EPRDF offices to my questions. But, I could have found no better example than my conversation with a receptionist at the main gate of the Prime Minister's Office. When I presented him with a letter from the University of Oslo and told him that I wanted to talk, if possible, to the Prime Minister, if not, his security advisor(s) about Ethiopia's 2006 war in Somalia; he looked surprised and angry for my audacity to ask for talking to the country's Chief Executive. Then, I politely explained to him that the government usually criticizes reports about Ethiopia as "unbalanced" with no attempt to take its views into consideration; and, that allowing me to interview relevant officials would help me reduce the "unbalanced picture" my research might have in the eyes of readers. He immediately looked happy on his face and talked on the phone to a woman [probably a secretary in an office] and told her that a *patriot* student, as he expressed me, who goes to school in Norway and is doing his research on Ethiopia's war in Somalia, wanted to take the views of the government; and, asked her which officer I should talk to. Then, he told me that the lady had told him that it was not the right place and I should rather try in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defence. When I told him that I had interviewed only one officer in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and that it was not sufficient, he charmingly said:

> …so, what do you need then…that is more than enough to know the view of the government…*it is all the same*…I mean if what you need is the view of the government, the information you get in the different ministries and here at the Prime Minister's office is the same… (Personal communication)

6.2. Impotent public opinion & little audience cost

When the House voted on the motion on 30 November 2006, it was yet one year after the post-election crisis in which government forces killed hundreds and arrested more than 30,000 people. Though most of the detained were released, prominent opposition leaders, activists and journalists were still in jail. With no actual aggression, the public seemed interested more in the calming domestic politics than the war, to which they were negatively indifferent. As Stephanie McCrummen of *The Washington Post* randomly assessed public opinion in the capital four days before the onset of the war, most of Addis' disgruntled residents considered the premier's talk of war as a ply to tighten grip (McCrummen, 2006).

My conversation with a shoe shiner, a few days after the approval of the motion was reported on the media, was a good example of how unconvincing the government's justification of the war plan was in the eyes of the general public. The shoe shiner looked in his early twenties. At that time, I used to be a graduate assistant (teaching assistant) at Bahir Dar University in the city of Bahir Dar, which is about 600 kilometers away from the capital. I chatted with him while he was polishing my shoes on my way to my office. My conversation was out of my usual interest in assessing the public opinion regarding developments in the country. When I asked him whether he would join the army to fight the Islamists in Somalia if the government needed new recruits, he precisely responded by saying, "…I will if they [the UIC] drop a bomb inside my country…but, I did not hear that they did it…" (Personal communication). Unlike the Ethiopia-Eritrea war (1998 – 2000), there was no even a call for demonstration in support of the war in Addis Ababa and major cities except in small rural towns mainly in Somali regions as shown on ETV.

While chatting with an EPRDF official during my fieldwork, I asked him if he would agree with those who considered the war as the government's tactic of diverting the public attention from the post-election crisis. His humorous reply was: "…there was no need for this….the situation was already peaceful after we arrested and punished the troublemakers…☺" (Personal communication). As Clapham (2009: 185) notes, the election debacle was followed by the regime's ever-greater reliance on state power to maintain an appearance of popular support, rather than on popular support to maintain

state power. Hence, it had little to worry about a possible (electoral) audience cost from a negative and indifferent public opinion about the war. Following Ethiopian troops' withdrawal from Somalia in January 2009, Prime Minister Meles was asked by opposition MPs about the human and material cost of the war and the continued "occupation" in a nationally televised session of the parliament. His response was: "…I don't think it is necessary…to know how many soldiers and police(men/women) are killed and wounded in every conflict…I don't also think I have the obligation to give a report about this…!"[6]

6 'Melese Zenawi says, "NO, I WON'T GIVE THE FIGURES" ' http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JDwclSgNiX4&list=PLBC7E81137AED58E5&index=22&feature=plpp_video [The video has some images that are not part of the original video as broadcasted on ETV and may be offensive or be considered inappropriate. I used the link only because it is the only link I could find that has this particular speech of PM Meles].

Conclusion

This thesis has attempted to explain Ethiopia's 2006 war with the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) in Somalia from the prism of its authoritarian domestic political system. Guided by an eclectically synthesised analytical framework on the democratic constraints and authoritarian triggers of conflict, it has identified four major mechanisms that explain how authoritarianism led Ethiopia to the war. One of them is by serving as the genesis of the threat in three ways. a) Despite Ethiopia's legitimate desire for a friendly government in Somalia, authoritarianism has left Ethiopia with no other viable political experience than exclusion and coercion to share with the TFG. Those groups whom the TFG excluded became its staunch rivals organized under the UIC. The TFG's narrow social base and related militarily weakness to defend itself demanded Ethiopia's protection. Incapable to confront a "bully" hegemon, the UIC allied with Ethiopia's adversaries and used Jihadist and irredentist rhetoric to force Ethiopia out of Somalia as the only way to defeat the TFG. b) EPRDF's adamancy in a one-party dominant system has sustained the unaccommodating political climate that created the rebels (ONLF and OLF), with which the UIC allied in exchange for sanctuary. c) EPRDF's minority nature dominated by elites from the Tigray region, which has age-long rivalry with Eritrean Kebetsa ruling elites across the border, has sustained and extended Ethiopia's proxy with Eritrea into Somalia.

Second, behind the scene politics and disregard to scholarly inputs and other ideas than those that confirm the government's views have stiffed the chance for accurately assessing the threat and opportunities. Ethiopia's swift victory controlling Somalia in less than a week period was, on the one hand, unambiguous display of its superior expeditionary power in the region. But, on the other had, it was a manifestation of its inflated image about UIC's (and its allies') military capability in realising its imprudent rhetoric. It was also based on inaccurate assessment of the TFG's rather weak ability to impose a "victor's peace" and expectation for a quick deployment of international peacekeeping force that Ethiopia determined the scale of its operation.

Third, the war had too enticing gains to back down in reconsolidating the EPRDF regime, whose interests are inseparably fused with the interests of the nation. Power reconsolidation in the aftermath of the 2005 election crisis relied mainly on coercion and

a costly project of increased party membership in exchange for government jobs. Given Western anxiety about UIC's possible link with al-Qaida and the absence of other capable and willing regional allies to address the threat, fighting the war became instrumental in silencing their criticism of rights violations and increasing their aid that they had withheld on such ground.

Last, but not least, authoritarianism has enabled the government to conduct the war in violation of the constitution and without significant institutional constraint. Though the government presented the issue to the parliament, it was to get the latter's approval of an adjournment motion that unconstitutionally granted the legislature's constitutional power on the declaration of war to the executive. Due to EPRDF's strong party discipline, its MPs, who held the absolute majority seat in the House, were too rubberstamped to ensure the constitutionality of the process. The absence of aggression and the preceding government heavy-handed post-election crackdown have made the public to negatively indifferent about the war – a deviation from the historical role of war as an instrument of cohesion in the Ethiopian society. Due to the absence of electoral accountability, the regime had little to worry about a possible audience cost that would have come from such negative and indifferent public opinion.

The findings support the theoretical discussion on the authoritarian triggers of conflict except the scapegoat (diversionary) theory, which argues that political elites can use a foreign war to divert public attention from internal social, economic and political problems (Levy, 1988: 665). EPRDF's inconsideration of public opinion, on the other hand, shows that authoritarian regional powers with the coercive power to effectively manage domestic crisis do not have the incentive to use war as a tactic of attention diversion. The involvement of various actors with various interests in the war mirrors the Horn of Africa's complex (in)security dynamics, which Berouk (2011) attempts to explain using Buzan's (1991)[7] Regional Security Complex Theory. Nevertheless, as the findings demonstrate, it is Ethiopia's own undemocratic political system in which the actors are grounded or to which they reacted or which bolstered their capacity to the extent of creating an exaggeratedly perceived combined threat and opportunities, based on which

[7] Barry Buzan and Ole Waever have later advanced the theory in their 2003 work, *Regions and Power: The Structure of International Security*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ethiopia conducted the war. It is the associated enticing gain of the war in reconsolidating this undemocratic system that further eroded the chance for restraint. It is also due to the compromisation of the formal politics, institutional checks and electoral accountability that it was possible to fight the war based on unsound justifications, inaccurately assessed threats and opportunities, in the interest of the regime and without concern for audience cost. This case study, therefore, manifests the domestic root of the (in)security complex in the Horn of Africa, where the boundary between intra- and inter-state conflicts is unidentifiably blurred (cf. Lyons, 2009; Sharamo & Berouk, 2011).

Positioned at the heart of the Horn of Africa, Ethiopia shares boundaries and ethnic groups with all countries in the region. So much as what happens in its neighbours immediately affects Ethiopia, its own internal dynamics affects all. The magnitude of Ethiopia's influence increases with its hegemonic position and its capacity to block developments that it considers as threats to its interests. Its 2006 war in Somalia in this regard manifests how this power is inappropriately used when the forces of undemocratic domestic political system drive it. The presence of a similar or more defective system in the rest Horn countries further dims the hope for sustainable peace in the region.

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List of official Interviews

In addition to the interviews listed below, there are a number of unrecorded situational conversations and observations I have made during my fieldwork and my stay in Ethiopia during and before the war. Their mention in the thesis is only as supplementary to other referable sources.

Abdeta Yadeta: Director of the Directorate of African Affairs, Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Interview, 13 February 2011, Addis Ababa.

Anonymous: former MP from one of EPRDF's affiliate party. Interview, 01 March 2011, Addis Ababa.

Asrat Tekalign: Acting Secretary of the Oromo People's Congress (OPC)/Medrek; former MP and member of the House Sub-Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Security. Recorded Interview, 24 February 2011, Addis Ababa.

Berouk Mesfin: Senior Researcher, Africa Conflict Prevention Program, Institute for Security Studies (ISS). Interview, 11 February 2011, Addis Ababa.

Beyene Petros (Prof.): Current Deputy Chairman & Public Relations, the opposition coalition *Medrek* [Forum for Democratic Dialogue in Ethiopia]; former Chairman of the defunct *Hibret &* MP (2000 – 2010). Recorded interview, 24 January 2011, Addis Ababa.

Bulcha Demeksa: former MP & Chairman of the Oromo Federalist Movement (OFM)/ Member of Medrek. Recorded interview, 29 January 2011.

Gebre Egziabher Alemseged (Colonel): Political Advisor to the Special Envoy, Office of the Facilitator for Somali Peace and National Reconciliation, Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD); staff in Ethiopia's Ministry of Defence & military and political coordinator of the war. Recorded interview, 27 March 2011, Addis Ababa.

Dawit Hagos (name changed): Associate Professor of Political Science, Addis Ababa University. Interview, 11 February 2011, Addis Ababa.

Elisabet Ekubay: Reporter for *Addis Neger* newspaper. Recorded interview, 28 February 2011, Addis Ababa.

Gebru Asrat: Chairman of *Arena Tigray* for Democracy and Sovereignty (ATDS); member of Medrek; former Tigray region President & TPLF Polit-bureau member. Recorded Interview, 28 February 2011, Addis Ababa.

Osman, Jibril Mohamed: Deputy Head of Mission/Consul at the Somalia Embassy in Ethiopia. Recorded interview, 07 March 2011, Addis Ababa.

Kambudzi, Admore M. (Ph.D): Secretary of AU Peace and Security Council, African Union Commission. Recorded interview, 22 March 2011.

Lidetu Ayalew: former President of EDEPA-Medhin & MP. Recorded Interview, 12 February 2011, Addis Ababa.

Melaku Demissie: Editor in Chief of ሪፖርተር (The Reporter, Amharic Edition). Recorded Interview, 22 February 2011, Addis Ababa.

Negasu Gidada (Ph.D). Current Chairman of *Andinet* (Unity for Democracy and Justice Party); indipenent MP during the war; former President of Ethiopia (1995 – 2001) & member of EPRDF Executive committee (1991 – 2001). Recorded Interview, 14 February 2011.

Osman, Jibril Mohamed: Deputy Head of Mission/Consul at the Somalia Embassy in Ethiopia. Recorded interview, 07 March 2011, Addis Ababa.

Sibhat Nega: Member of EPRDF Central Committee; co-founder of TPLF/EPRDF; Director of the Ethiopia International Institute for Peace and Development (EIIPD). Recorded interview, 13 March 2011, Addis Ababa.