

Southern Taiwan Model United Nations XVI 2024

Forum: Security Council 2

Issue: (201) Inaugurating peace and stability under the situation of the Somalia crisis

Student Officer: Katherine Lee (Kaohsiung American School)

Position: President

Introduction

The protracted civil war in Somalia has precipitated a severe humanitarian crisis, posing significant health and safety challenges to its citizens. Since the onset of the conflict, over 2.6 million people have been displaced, leading to widespread famine and exposing millions to severe malnutrition and diseases such as cholera and measles (Genocide Watch). Somalia's geographic susceptibility to natural disasters, including droughts, floods, and cyclones, has further exacerbated resource scarcity and intensified the crisis, overburdening the nation's already fragile healthcare system.

The roots of Somalia's civil war can be traced back to 1991, following the collapse of the central government. This power vacuum led to the emergence of multiple factions vying for control, among which the al-Shabaab militants and Dhulbahante clan-affiliated troops have been particularly prominent. Al-Shabaab, a terrorist group that pledged allegiance to al-Qaeda in 2012, has been engaged in a violent struggle against the Federal Government of Somalia, contributing to the country's ongoing instability.

The political instability has resulted in numerous massacres and large-scale civilian casualties. According to the World Report 2024, approximately 154,000 Somalis have fled to Ethiopia to escape the violence. Internally, the situation is equally dire, with the United Nations reporting that 1.5 million people are internally displaced. The conflict has also severely impacted the freedom and safety of journalists, who face harassment and arrests, as well as the general populace, who are subjected to increasing surveillance and attacks, often involving improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

The judicial system in Somalia has been equally affected, with many individuals facing unfair trials and executions, particularly those accused of spying for the government or foreign nations. This erosion of judicial integrity further compounds the humanitarian crisis, leaving citizens with little recourse for justice. The

combination of political instability, natural disasters, and systematic human rights abuses has created a dire situation in Somalia. The international community must prioritize addressing these issues to restore stability and provide much-needed humanitarian aid to the millions of affected Somali citizens.

Definition of Key Terms

Humanitarian Crisis

A humanitarian crisis refers to a severe and widespread disruption to the lives and well-being of its population, caused by prolonged conflict, political instability, natural disasters, and systemic human rights violations. This crisis has led to mass displacement, food insecurity, famine, and outbreaks of disease, affecting millions. The ongoing armed conflict, particularly with groups such as al-Shabaab, exacerbates these issues, making access to essential services and humanitarian aid extremely challenging. This prolonged state of emergency has devastated communities, strained resources, and perpetuated cycles of poverty and suffering across the nation.

Somali Armed Forces

The Somali Armed Forces (SAF) are the national military of Somalia, tasked with defending the country, maintaining internal security, and supporting humanitarian efforts. Comprising the army, navy, and air force, the SAF has been significantly involved in combating insurgent groups, notably al-Shabaab. Despite efforts to stabilize the nation, the SAF has faced challenges including inadequate funding, training, and resources, as well as internal corruption. Their involvement in the crisis is crucial, as they work alongside international forces to restore order and facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid, though their effectiveness is often hampered by the ongoing conflict and instability.

UNOSOM I and II

UNOSOM I (United Nations Operation in Somalia I) and UNOSOM II were UN peacekeeping missions established to address the humanitarian crisis and restore stability in Somalia during the early 1990s. UNOSOM I, launched in 1992, aimed to monitor the ceasefire in Mogadishu and facilitate humanitarian aid delivery amidst the civil war. However, due to escalating violence and limited mandate, it struggled to achieve its goals.

UNOSOM II, initiated in 1993, had a broader mandate to ensure security and rebuild the Somali state. Despite initial successes, including disarmament and aid distribution, it faced significant challenges from local militias, particularly during the infamous Battle of Mogadishu. Both missions highlighted the complexities of

peacekeeping in a conflict-ridden environment and underscored the need for comprehensive international cooperation to address the root causes of the Somali crisis.

UNITAF

UNITAF (Unified Task Force) was a multinational force led by the United States and authorized by the United Nations in December 1992. Its mission was to secure a safe environment for humanitarian operations in Somalia amidst the civil war and severe famine. UNITAF, operating under the mandate of UN Security Council Resolution 794, focused on securing key areas, protecting relief convoys, and ensuring the distribution of humanitarian aid.

With a stronger mandate and significant military resources, UNITAF successfully improved security and facilitated the delivery of aid, reducing the immediate humanitarian crisis. However, its temporary nature and limited political engagement meant that while it provided short-term relief, it did not address the underlying causes of Somalia's instability. UNITAF's efforts paved the way for the subsequent UNOSOM II mission, highlighting both the potential and limitations of military intervention in complex humanitarian emergencies.

Military junta

A military junta is a government led by a committee of military leaders who seize power, often through a coup d'état. In the context of the Somali crisis, military juntas have occasionally emerged, exacerbating political instability and undermining efforts to establish a stable, civilian-led government. These juntas typically prioritize military control over democratic processes, contributing to the ongoing conflict and human rights abuses. Their rule often leads to increased violence, suppression of dissent, and disruption of humanitarian aid, further deepening the crisis and prolonging the suffering of the civilian population.

Asylum seeker

An asylum seeker is an individual who flees their home country due to fear of persecution, violence, or conflict and seeks protection in another country. Asylum seekers from Somalia often escape the ongoing armed conflict, human rights abuses, and severe instability caused by groups like al-Shabaab and political turmoil. They apply for asylum to gain legal protection and the right to stay in a host country while their claims are reviewed. The influx of Somali asylum seekers presents challenges for host nations in terms of providing humanitarian support and processing applications amid a complex and protracted crisis. However, the complex processes and specific requirements set for asylum seekers to become recognized refugees often hinder their ability to secure protection, creating significant challenges for both the individuals involved and the host nations.

Background Information

Somali National Movement

The Somali National Movement (SNM) played a significant role in the origins of the Somali crisis. Established in the early 1980s, the SNM was a key opposition group that sought to overthrow the regime of Siad Barre, who had ruled Somalia since a military junta in 1969. The SNM, primarily composed of members from the Isaaq clan, opposed Barre's increasingly authoritarian rule, marked by human rights abuses, clan favoritism, and economic mismanagement. The movement gained momentum in the late 1980s, leading to armed clashes with Barre's government. The SNM's actions, along with growing discontent across Somalia, contributed to the weakening of the central government. By 1991, the escalating conflict and the SNM's successful military campaigns, particularly in northern Somalia, culminated in the collapse of Barre's regime, precipitating a full-scale civil war and the fragmentation of the country.

In response to the persistent threat posed by al-Shabaab, several military initiatives have been undertaken to restore stability in Somalia, particularly in the southern regions. Operation Linda Nchi, launched by Kenyan forces in 2011, aimed to secure border areas and disrupt al-Shabaab's operations. Following this, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) was established in 2007 to support the Somali government against al-Shabaab and has been instrumental in training Somali security forces. More recently, the African Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) was initiated in 2022, transitioning security responsibilities to Somali forces while maintaining a supportive presence. These operations illustrate the ongoing power struggles in Somalia and the international community's efforts to address the challenges posed by al-Shabaab.

Power Vacuum

The collapse of Somalia's central government in 1991 created a power vacuum that significantly contributed to the ongoing civil war. Without a central authority, various factions, warlords, and clan-based militias began vying for control over different regions of the country. This lack of governance led to widespread anarchy, with armed groups clashing over territory and resources. The power vacuum further exacerbated the crisis, as competing factions engaged in brutal conflicts, leading to massive displacement of civilians and severe humanitarian issues. The international community's attempts to intervene and stabilize the situation through peacekeeping missions faced numerous challenges due to the fragmented and volatile nature of the conflict. The absence of a unified government made it difficult to establish order and address the needs of the Somali people effectively.

Somaliland

The establishment of Somaliland in the early 1990s marked a significant development in Somalia's complex crisis. After the collapse of the central government, the northern region of Somalia, primarily inhabited by the Isaaq clan, declared independence and formed Somaliland in 1991. Somaliland sought to establish a stable, autonomous government separate from the chaos of southern Somalia. Despite its declaration of independence, Somaliland has not been internationally recognized as a sovereign state. However, it has managed to maintain relative stability and peace compared to the rest of Somalia. The creation of Somaliland and later Puntland, another autonomous region in the northeast, led to a reduction in the intensity of the conflict in these areas. While these regions achieved a degree of self-governance and stability, the overall situation in Somalia remained fraught with conflict and humanitarian challenges. International rescue efforts and peacekeeping missions have continued to be crucial in addressing the ongoing crisis and providing humanitarian assistance.

Puntland

Puntland, established in 1998, is another key factor in the evolution of Somalia's crisis. Like Somaliland, Puntland declared itself an autonomous region in response to the central government's collapse and the ensuing civil war. Located in the northeastern part of Somalia, Puntland aimed to create a stable governance structure and provide security amidst the broader chaos. To foster a safer environment and prevent further conflict, Puntland established a decentralized governance system, emphasized local security forces, and engaged in peacebuilding initiatives with neighboring regions. While Puntland has achieved relative stability and has managed to function with a degree of self-governance, it has faced its own set of challenges, including disputes over its borders and periodic conflicts with other factions. The establishment of Puntland, along with Somaliland, contributed to a reduction in fighting intensity in these regions but highlighted the continued fragmentation of Somalia as a whole. Both regions' relative stability contrasted sharply with the ongoing violence in southern Somalia, underscoring the complexities of the Somali crisis and the challenges of achieving nationwide peace and stability.

Key Issues

Humanitarian Crisis

The humanitarian crisis in Somalia is both severe and complex, driven by persistent conflict, political instability, and natural disasters. Since the collapse of the central government in 1991, the country has faced widespread famine, with millions displaced and suffering from severe malnutrition due to the instability of food sources; war regions usually struggle with importing goods from foreign nations, and the war regions are actively in armed conflicts, inhibiting agricultural development. Frequent droughts and floods exacerbate food and water

shortages, and the health system is critically underdeveloped, with limited access to medical care and essential services. Outbreaks of diseases like cholera and measles are common, and the lack of adequate healthcare infrastructure further complicates relief efforts.

Mental health services are also severely limited, leaving many individuals with prolonged psychological trauma due to the ongoing violence and displacement, which continues today. Arbitrary taxation by armed groups and warlords adds further strain on the population. International efforts to address these issues include emergency food aid, medical assistance, and mental health support, but logistical difficulties, limited infrastructures, corruption and mismanagement often hinder these efforts. The combination of famine, health crises, and inadequate mental health services underscores the urgent need for a coordinated international response to alleviate the suffering of the Somali people.

Lack of freedom of expression and reformation

In Somalia, the lack of freedom of expression is a significant issue, with severe restrictions placed on journalists and media outlets. Reporting on the conflict and government activities often results in harassment, threats, and imprisonment, stifling dissent and limiting access to information. Journalists face constant danger from both government forces and militant groups like al-Shabaab, leading to self-censorship and a lack of transparency. The suppression of free speech not only hinders the public's access to critical information but also impedes efforts to address human rights abuses and corruption. The absence of a free press exacerbates the overall crisis, making it difficult for both local and international communities to understand and respond effectively to the situation.

In recent years, the lack of freedom of expression in Somalia has manifested through alarming incidents targeting journalists and activists. For example, in April 2021, prominent journalist Hassan Ghedi Santur was arrested and detained for several days after reporting on corruption within the Somali government, illustrating the risks faced by those who attempt to expose wrongdoing. Furthermore, in February 2022, the Somali authorities shut down the independent media outlet Goobjoog after it aired a documentary that criticized government policies, demonstrating the government's intolerance of dissenting views. These actions reflect a broader pattern of repression, where individuals speaking out against government actions or armed group violence face intimidation, threats, and imprisonment. Such a hostile environment not only stifles public discourse but also perpetuates a culture of fear that hinders efforts to promote accountability and transparency in governance.

Currently, the official courts in Somalia take years to reach decisions and face significant issues with corruption and favoritism. As a result, many residents turn to armed groups, such as al-Shabaab, for justice, highlighting a

profound lack of fair judicial processes for the people. This reliance on alternative justice systems underscores the failures of the formal legal system in addressing the needs of the Somali population (Al Jazeera).

Challenges caused by natural disasters

Natural disasters have compounded the crisis in Somalia, exacerbating the suffering of its population. Frequent droughts and floods have led to severe food and water shortages, further straining an already fragile humanitarian situation. These disasters contribute to widespread famine, displace communities, and destroy infrastructure, making it even more difficult for humanitarian organizations to provide aid. The frequent occurrence of these natural events, combined with ongoing conflict, creates a cycle of crisis that is challenging to break. Effective disaster response and preparedness are critical but often undermined by the ongoing violence and lack of resources.

Sexual and gender based violence

Sexual and gender-based violence is a grave issue in Somalia, deeply rooted in the conflict and societal instability. Women and girls are particularly vulnerable to abuse, including rape, forced marriages, and domestic violence due to the lack of security (and the inability to carry out self-defense due to the lack of resources). The breakdown of law and order has led to widespread impunity for perpetrators, leaving survivors with limited access to justice and support services. The lack of comprehensive mental health services further exacerbates the trauma experienced by survivors. Efforts to address these issues include advocacy and support from international organizations, but challenges remain in providing effective protection and rehabilitation due to the ongoing conflict and resource constraints.

Child Abuse

Child abuse is a severe concern in Somalia, with children being exploited and subjected to various forms of violence. Many children are forcibly recruited by militant groups, subjected to physical abuse, or used as child soldiers. The conflict has disrupted education and protection services, leaving children more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. Additionally, the prolonged crisis has led to widespread psychological trauma among children, with limited access to mental health support and protective services. International organizations and local NGOs work to address these issues, but the ongoing conflict and lack of resources significantly hinder efforts to protect and support Somali children.

Major Parties Involved and Their Positions

European Union (EU)

Since 2014, the European Union has provided over 3.5 billion pounds to Somalia. The EU has been actively involved in addressing the Somali crisis through humanitarian aid, development programs, and diplomatic efforts. The EU provides substantial financial assistance aimed at alleviating famine, supporting health care, and funding education and infrastructure projects. It also engages in political dialogue to promote stability and governance in Somalia. The EU has supported various initiatives, including peacekeeping missions and efforts to strengthen Somali institutions. However, the effectiveness of EU interventions is often challenged by ongoing conflict and logistical issues. While the EU's efforts are intended to stabilize and rebuild Somalia, the persistent violence and instability can complicate and sometimes undermine these efforts.

USSR

The USSR, prior to its dissolution in 1991, had historical ties with Somalia, including military and economic support during the Cold War. Soviet support helped to strengthen the Somali military under Siad Barre's regime, but this relationship ended with the collapse of the central government. After the dissolution of the USSR, Russia inherited some of these relations but has been less directly involved in the Somali crisis compared to other international actors. The Soviet-era support contributed to the power dynamics that led to the eventual collapse of the Somali government. The legacy of this relationship is still reflected in some aspects of Somali military infrastructure and political dynamics.

International Rescue Committee (IRC)

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) plays a crucial role in addressing the humanitarian crisis in Somalia. The IRC mainly assists with the geographical region in Somalia such as Bay, Gedo, and Banadir. The IRC provides emergency assistance, including food, water, and medical care, and supports programs for education and protection, particularly for vulnerable groups such as women and children. The organization's work is vital in regions heavily affected by conflict and famine. However, IRC operations can be hampered by the ongoing violence and instability, which affects the delivery of aid and the safety of staff. Despite these challenges, the IRC's presence offers significant relief and support to those in need, helping to mitigate some of the worst effects of the crisis.

China

China's involvement in the Somali crisis is primarily through diplomatic and economic channels. China provides humanitarian aid and has been involved in various development projects aimed at rebuilding infrastructure and improving living conditions. China's approach includes investment in Somali port facilities and other critical infrastructure, which can aid economic recovery. However, China's involvement is often viewed

through the lens of its broader strategic interests in the region, including securing trade routes and natural resources. While China's contributions help in some areas, there are concerns about the focus on economic interests over immediate humanitarian needs and the potential influence on local dynamics.

The Somalia Country Fund

The Somalia Country Fund is a financial mechanism established to support development and humanitarian efforts in Somalia. Managed by various international donors, including governments and organizations, the fund aims to provide targeted assistance to address key needs such as food security, health care, and education. By pooling resources, the fund enables more coordinated and efficient aid distribution. However, challenges such as political instability and logistical difficulties can affect the effectiveness of the fund's initiatives. The fund's success largely depends on effective coordination among donors and the ability to navigate the complex political and security landscape in Somalia.

United States of America

The United States has been a major actor in the Somali crisis, providing extensive humanitarian aid, funding peacekeeping missions, and supporting counter-terrorism efforts. The U.S. has contributed to alleviating famine and improving health care through various aid programs. Additionally, American military operations have aimed to stabilize the region and combat militant groups like al-Shabaab. However, U.S. involvement has sometimes been criticized for prioritizing security interests over comprehensive humanitarian needs, and its interventions have faced challenges due to the complex political and security environment in Somalia.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
1991	Barre is ousted from power by a coalition of armed opposition groups, leading to the collapse of the central government and the onset of a brutal civil war.
1995	UN peacekeeping forces withdraw after suffering heavy casualties, leaving Somalia without a central governing authority and plunging it further into chaos.

December 2004	A new Transitional Federal Government (TFG) is formed, but it faces opposition from various warlords and militant groups, including al-Shabaab.
September 2006	The rise of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), which temporarily gains control of Mogadishu and imposes sharia law, further complicates the conflict.
2007	The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) is launched to support the TFG and combat al-Shabaab, marking an increased international military presence in the country.
2012	The Somali Federal Government is formally established, replacing the TFG, but challenges with security and governance persist.

Relevant UN Resolutions, Treaties, and Events

- Extends the authorisation for the AU Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS), 15 August 2024, **S/RED/2748**

This resolution extends the authorisation for the AU Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) until 31 December, and requests the Secretary-General, jointly with the AU Commission Chairperson and in consultations with Somalia and international stakeholders, to report on the overall mission design for the proposed successor mission by 15 November.

- Security Council Resolution on the Arms Embargo, 1 December 2023 (**S/RES/2741**)

This resolution lifted the arms embargo on the Somali government, which was established by resolution 733 of 23 January 1992 and amended through subsequent resolutions.

Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) has been actively involved in addressing the humanitarian crisis in Somalia by providing food assistance to those affected by famine and conflict, which has provided support for to around 4.7 people in total in Somalia. The WFP's efforts include distributing emergency food aid, supporting nutrition programs, and implementing food-for-work initiatives. While these programs have alleviated some immediate suffering and provided crucial support to displaced and malnourished populations, their success has been limited by ongoing security issues and logistical challenges. The WFP's operations are often hampered by attacks on aid convoys and infrastructure by oppositions, and the persistent conflict complicates efforts to reach all those in need. Overall, while the WFP's contributions are vital, their impact is constrained by the unstable and dangerous environment in Somalia.

United States's support towards Somalia's National Troop

The United States has supported Somalia's National Troops through training, equipment, and financial aid aimed at strengthening the country's military capabilities. This support is intended to enhance the effectiveness of Somali forces in combating militant groups like al-Shabaab and stabilizing the region. While this assistance has helped improve the operational capacity of Somali troops, its success has been mixed. Challenges include issues with corruption, limited control over regions, and the complex political dynamics that often undermine military effectiveness. Additionally, U.S. support has sometimes been criticized for focusing on military solutions rather than addressing the broader political and humanitarian aspects of the crisis. Consequently, while the support has bolstered the Somali military to some extent, it has not been able to fully resolve the underlying issues contributing to the ongoing conflict and instability.

Possible Solutions

Expanding Humanitarian and Development Aid

Increase and diversify humanitarian and development aid by focusing on long-term development projects in addition to immediate relief. This could include funding for infrastructure, education, and healthcare, as well as programs aimed at building local capacity and economic opportunities. Expanding aid can address both immediate needs and contribute to long-term stability by improving living conditions and economic opportunities. Development projects can help rebuild infrastructure and support sustainable growth. However, aid effectiveness is often limited by ongoing conflict, corruption, and logistical challenges. Ensuring aid reaches intended recipients and contributes to meaningful change requires strong monitoring and coordination with local actors.

Enhancing Security Sector Reform

Implement a comprehensive security sector reform (SSR) program aimed at rebuilding and professionalizing Somalia's military and police forces. This reform should focus on training, equipping, and integrating Somali security forces to improve their effectiveness and accountability. Additionally, SSR should include establishing oversight mechanisms to ensure transparency and reduce corruption. Enhancing security sector reform can help create a more capable and reliable security infrastructure, essential for stabilizing the country and addressing threats from militant groups. Well-trained and accountable security forces are better equipped to protect civilians and maintain order. However, the success of SSR depends on effective implementation, including overcoming challenges related to corruption, political interference, and factionalism. Long-term success also requires continuous support and monitoring by international partners to ensure that reforms are sustained and adapted to evolving needs.

Bibliography

"Somalia: Genocide and Famine Warning." Genocide Watch, 2024,

<https://www.genocidewatch.com/single-post/somalia-genocide-and-famine-warning>.

"Somalia." World Report 2024, Human Rights Watch, 2024,

<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2024/country-chapters/somalia#:~:text=Displacement%20and%20Access%20to%20Humanitarian%20Assistance,-The%20humanitarian%20situation&text=The%20UN%20predicted%20that%20between,heavily%20dependent%20on%20food%20imports>.

"Hunger Set to Worsen in Somalia as La Niña Drought Looms." World Food Programme, 2023,

<https://www.wfp.org/news/hunger-set-worsen-somalia-la-nina-drought-looms#:~:text=MOGADISHU%20%E2%80%93%20Millions%20of%20Somalis%20are, recent%20gains%20in%20food%20security>.

"In Somalia, Citizens Turn to Al-Shabaab's 'Justice' System." Al Jazeera, 14 Sept. 2022,

<https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2022/9/14/in-somalia-citizens-eal-shabaabs-justice-system-to-the-state>.

"Somalia Crisis." World Health Organization, 2024, <https://www.who.int/emergencies/situations/somalia-crisis>.

United Nations Security Council. "On the Dire Humanitarian Situation in Somalia." UN Press, 2024,

<https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15741.doc.htm#:~:text=On%20the%20dire%20humanitarian%20situation,3.8%20million%20people%20are%20displaced>.

"Clan Politics in Somalia." Third World Network, 2011,

<https://www.twn.my/title2/resurgence/2011/251-252/cover04.htm#:~:text=Politicised%20clan%20identity%2C%20availability%20of,the%20failure%20of%20these%20efforts>.

"Somalia." European Commission - International Partnerships, 2024,

https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/countries/somalia_en.

"Somalia." World Report 2024, Human Rights Watch, 2024,
<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2024/country-chapters/somalia>.

