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- 1 The Horn of Africa is one of the least known regions of the globe and receives media attention over fighting in or near Mogadisho, piracy or terrorism. The image of Somalia as failed state does not fit the reality that there are areas which carry on their lives—like African communities have done for thousands of years—under traditional local authority without state institutions. In Northern Somalia, Somaliland and Puntland have since 1990, emerged as two states, with the former acting independently from Somalia and Mogadisho since 1991.
- 2 Bradbury has accompanied democratic processes in Somaliland since the civil war as worker for international NGOs, and more recently as election observer. As such he brings a different perspective than diplomats, journalists or academics, and demonstrates thorough knowledge of clan and sub-clan relations, alliances or conflicts, political actors, and the constitutional and electoral processes. For him Somaliland is a *de facto* state which exercises control over (most of) its borders, has its own currency, levies taxes and sports state symbols such as flag and national anthem. More importantly, it has reached a higher degree of civil liberties, economic freedom and democratically elected government than any other country in the region. With its refusal to recognize Somali-land the international community is applying double standards, since it has acted swiftly to recognize breakaway Yugoslavian or Soviet Republics (e.g. Kosovo within a few days). Its recognition and costly funding of the Transitional Federal Government as only representative of all Somalis seems, after 15 failed peace conferences, rather unrealistic.

- 3 In the historical overview, Bradbury shows Muslim groups from Yemen gradually developing into six major clans : Issaq and Gadabursi in the Northwest, Warsangeli and Durbahante in the North-East, and Darod and Hawiye in the South, mixing with Ethiopians (Oromo) and Arab traders colonizing Africa's East coast since the 1st Millenium BC at least. Through treaty with Issaq Sultan in 1827 Britain established a Protectorate to secure the shipping lanes from Aden into the Red Sea—but relied on self-rule by elders and sheikhs. British Somaliland gained independence in 1960 but joined Somalia Italiana, which became independent four days later in the general euphoria for Pan-Africanism. An act of union was not yet ready and could only be approved by Somalia's parliament a year later—therefore Somaliland today contests the validity of the union, since never approved by its then territorial legislature.
- 4 First national elections made Northern Somalis realize to be in minority gaining only 25 % of parliamentary seats and four cabinet posts. Eventually, their representative Mohammed Ibrahim Egal became prime minister in 1967, but the first president and prime minister (Adan Abdallah Osman and Ali Rashid Shamarke) were southerners. Already in 1961 the former British protectorate rejected a constitutional referendum, and British-trained junior officers even attempted a coup ; a charge of treason was dismissed on the grounds that Somalia had no jurisdiction over Somaliland without a Union Act. The North remained backward and underdeveloped, while the South had attained modest degrees of modernization under post-World War II UN mandate in the Italian colony, with a growing urban and rural working class under Italian private enterprise.
- 5 First President Adan Abdallah was assassinated in 1969 and the army seized power under Major Siyad Barre. He suspended the constitution and established a one-party dictatorship under a Supreme Revolutionary Council and a Socialist Party with Soviet assistance—as in Afghanistan and Nasser's Egypt. The state sought to control the entire economy cancelling customary rights, nationalising range lands, and enclosing vast pasturelands for state ranches which blocked herd movements. These experiments in cooperative agriculture and ranches failed miserably, so that when Saudi Arabia banned livestock imports in 1983/1984, export revenues declined so much that Somalia became insolvent and third largest aid recipient in Africa. A forced IMF liberalization drive had the further consequence that state functionaries seized former clan and now state assets to become "businessmen" or "land owners".
- 6 Barre, counting on Soviet support, invaded Ethiopia in 1977 hoping to recover the Ogaden region. Instead of him, the Soviets supported Mariam Mengistu who had overthrown Haile Selassie and pushed out Somalia's army which withdrew to Hargeisa. In 1981, Northern officers formed the Somali National Movement (SNM), which operated from refugee camps for Ogaden Somalis assisted by Western aid organizations inside Ethiopia.
- 7 The North, marginalised by the central government received only 7 % of its development budget compared with 41 % for Mogadisho alone, was treated especially hard by the army which imposed import and currency restrictions on Isaaq livestock merchants, confiscated their goods from the Gulf and destroyed *qat* fields, *berkeds* and rangeland by mines. Somaliland has presented evidence to the International Criminal Court that a special army brigade was formed for Isaaq liquidation, rape, killings and extortion of Isaaq clan members.

- 8 The “Hargeisa group” of professionals returned from the Gulf States around 1978 to rehabilitate the Hargeisa hospital was so successful that it was chosen by elders as representative to denounce Southern discrimination. The government sent them to court but widespread demonstrations disrupted the trial on 20 feb., 1982, which were crushed by the army, with arrests and killings of several students, while the 15 member group was sentenced to ten years of maximum security prison.
- 9 The SNM attacked Hargeisa and Bur’ao shortly later, achieving further defections from army officers, and in 1983 stormed the Berbera prison. In 1988 Ethiopia concluded peace with Siad Barre and closed SNM sanctuaries. Now began an offensive against Hargeisa and Bur’o, which government countered with air strikes. It also armed Gadabursi, Warsangeli, and Dhurbahante as part of its counter-offensive against the Isaaq. Now SNM began to support insurgent movements in the south (USC, SPM, SSDF and Aideed), as it did not participate in the battle for Mogadisho which overthrew Barre on Jan. 27, 1991, but sent weapons. Shortly afterwards it captured Berbera and Hargeisa, Bur’o, Borama and Erigavo. Though it also clashed with Gadabursi and Warsangeli, and made the Dhulbahante evacuate Aynabo, it opted for a reconciliation process steered by the elders and initially did not contemplate secession.
- 10 When rumours circulated that SNM wanted to negotiate with Southern factions people surrounded its headquarters in Hargeisa on 15 May, 1991 shouting “no more Mogadisho”, and asked SNM’s central committee to establish a separate Somaliland Republic. Reconciliation meetings with Warsangeli elders were held in Sanaag, and with Dhulbahante. Both declared their support for Somali-land and mandated SNM to govern for two years as sole party, under its chairman Abdi-Rahman Ali “Tuur”.
- 11 In January 1992 fighting broke out in Bur’ao between Habar Jal’o and Habar Yunis over arms control ; and in Berbera in March 1992 (sheep wars) over control of the port by the “Ise Musa” who had expropriated revenues from livestock exports.
- 12 When forty elders and religious leaders from the Gadabursi, Isaaq and Dhulbahante brokered a cease-fire at the Sheik conference, reaffirming the public status of the port thus giving government revenue for rebuilding, this group of elders, called *Guurti*, became the upper house of the future parliament, which has functioned till today. The temporary administration of 1991-93 failed in its goal to establish security. Though it tried to case militias in barracks, forbade the carrying of arms and established regional police posts, some demobilized SNM units resorted to banditism and looting. It also failed in setting up new administrative structures—simply translating the SNM central committee, chairman and vice-chairman into “parliament”, President and Vice-President. In 1993 Dhulbahante elders from the Sanaag, Sool and Haud created their own administrative council for Sool, and the Gadabursi in Erigavo also created a council but authorized its governor to negotiate with the SNM.
- 13 Mohammed Egal was given the task to form the first Somaliland Government (1993-1997). His father was a merchant and property owner from the Habar Awal and his mother from the Habar Yunis. Educated in British Somali-land, Sudan and England, he became General Secretary, *i.e.* First Minister in the British colony, and first president of independent Somaliland. Under Barre he was detained until 1975, later appointed ambassador, then detained again until 1982, when he was appointed Chamber of Commerce chairman till 1991. Selected as co-chairmen of the Djibouti reconciliation conference (1991) he was deemed capable of reconciling the Isaaq, and did succeed with SNM demobilization. He re-built the private economy based on livestock exports,

customs and transit fees from Berbera. But support from the other clans was weak, however, and only Aideed's death in Mogadisho ended their support for federalism, and brought their consent for independence. A national conference at Hargeisa (oct. 1996 to feb. 1997) ended the civil war, oversaw disengagement of forces, ended remaining conflicts and negotiated the return of property.

- 14 Though he had not elaborated a constitution or democratic reforms, Egal was selected for another term (1997-2002), stability since 1993 had favored growth from livestock exports, and led to a budget surplus from civil service reform and infrastructure investments. TOTAL SA rehabilitated Berbera's oil storage and rented it to Ethiopia which favored Berbera over Djibouti as its importexport hub.
- 15 Yet new challenges on the international scene came with the creation of Puntland and TNG (transitional national government): after 12 failed peace conferences, veteran SSDF leader Abdulay Yusuf decided to become president of autonomous Puntland (undoubtedly after contracts with CONOCO for oil prospection), based "upon a notion of Darod/Harty unity which includes the Majeerteen of Mudug, Nugal and Bari regions, the Dhulbahante of Sool and the Warsengeli of eastern Sanaag". Yusuf used this base for increasing his role in the TNG formed at Djibouti in 2000, and effectively became president of the TFG (transitional federal government) in 2004. However, the TFG in Jowhar, and later Baidoa, was at the mercy of war lords, which were only eliminated by the Islamic Courts Union in 2006. While from 2002-2006 conflict in Southern Somalia was more widespread than ever, peace and stability reigned in Somaliland.
- 16 Egal, however, took time to present a draft constitution—because parliament resisted his idea of a powerful executive and requested supervision of finance, ministerial appointments and human rights violations. A referendum of 31 May, 2001—boycotted in parts of Sanaag, Sool and Awdal—accepted the constitution, which was called "illegal" by TNG. This constitution stipulated that president, legislature and district councils were to be elected by secret popular vote, based on party lines, rather than by appointed elders. Women also could vote and hold office. By 2001 seven parties had registered, but during election campaign, Egal narrowly survived a parliamentary impeachment vote over revenues from Berbera Port Authority and from contracts with Total. He suddenly died on 3 May, 2002 during surgery in South Africa and his Vice-President Kahin Riyale had to complete his term.
- 17 As Somaliland's constitution advocated transition from selected to elected representation, the process began with district elections followed by presidential and finally parliamentary elections. Though neither National Electoral Commission nor parties had experience with election organisation, or held a census for voter registration, they went ahead and were judged by international observers to have done a job conform to the international norms. District elections took place 15 dec., 2002, in 19 out of 23 districts, Eastern Sanaag and Sool not including, when 440,000 voters elected 332 local council members. The parties UDUB, Kulmiye and UCID were deemed qualified to contest the presidential elections of 2003 and parliamentary elections in 2005. Vice-President Riyale was elected president, and UDUB became the largest party in 2005, without having a controlling majority in parliament, faced by a strong opposition from the other two.
- 18 Bradbury sees the following challenges face Somaliland: insufficient funding for the administration due to lack of international recognition and access to international banking or aid, and thus party and government dependence on private merchants and

remittances from the diaspora, making corruption and the shadow economy a threat to security, rule of law and an independent judiciary. Though the upper house is to check executive abuse, the rules for its selection and funding remain unclear. On the other hand *Sharia* and IUC in the South, with unsecured borders, are real threats to security and rule of law, making entry by Islamic radicals relatively easy for perpetrating attacks on individuals or government infrastructure. Finally the eastern clans still view independence as an Isaaq project and may prefer to work with Puntland and the TFG. Yet Somaliland's majority stands solidly behind independence.