

PART V SOMALILAND: PEACE-BUILDING

1 SECESSION AND CESSATION

On 26 June 1960, Somaliland obtained independence from Britain. Six days later, on 1 July, under the premiership of Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, Somaliland united with the former Italian Somalia to form the sovereign Somali Republic. In May 1991, following the overthrow of Siad Barre, the Somali National Movement (SNM) declared the secession of the northern regions to form the independent 'Republic of Somaliland', the territory of which corresponds to that of the former British Somaliland Protectorate. In May 1993, Mohamed Ibrahim Egal was elected President of Somaliland.

The people of Somaliland are of the Issaq, Gadabursi and Ciise (Dir), and Dolbahunte and Warsengeli clan-families. The latter two belong to the Darod confederation of clans. The Issaq, which formed the backbone of the SNM, are the most populous clan in Somaliland.

The declaration of Somaliland secession went against the previously stated policies of the SNM, who had insisted that they sought only to change the Barre regime. The decision to declare independence at the Grand Shir ('gathering') of northern clans in Burco, in May 1991, resulted from a popular expression of opposition to further rule from Mogadishu. This was an understandable reaction to the suffering inflicted on the Issaq people by the Barre regime during three years of war, and to the manner in which Ali Mahadi's USC assumed power in Mogadishu.

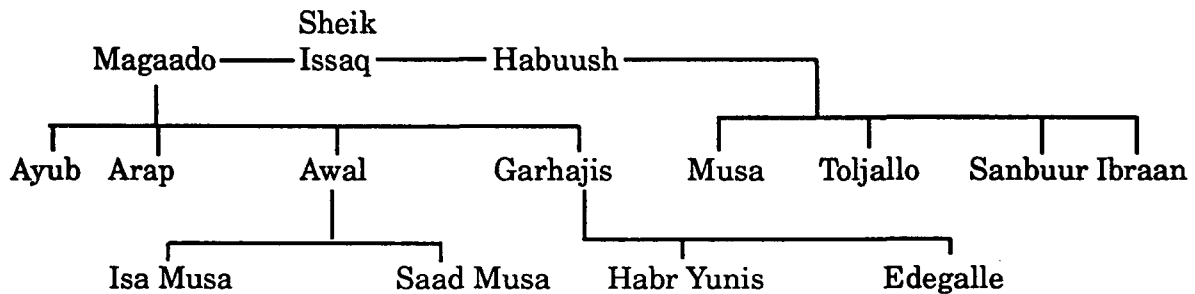
Reinforcing this decision may have been a realisation that the original goal which led Somaliland into unity with the south was no longer tenable. The decision in 1960 to unite with Somalia was driven by nationalistic aspirations to join all the five Somali territories into a Greater Somalia. In that Greater Somalia, the Issaqs stood to re-establish direct control over the Haud grazing areas, which were ceded by the British to Ethiopia in 1954, and which are vital to the pastoral economy of the northern clans. The defeat suffered by the Somali army in the Ogaden war of 1977 destroyed any pretence of achieving that goal. Years of operating a guerrilla campaign from within Ethiopia and the mass movement of Issaqs into refugee camps in the Haud in 1988 may have persuaded people that the needs of the northern pastoralists for unhindered access to the Haud grazing lands can be better achieved through cooperation with Ethiopia rather than unity with the south. It may not be wholly coincidental that, prior to Burco 1991, the last Grand Shir of the northern clans occurred in 1954, in response to the British decision to cede the Haud to Ethiopia.

The restoration of Somaliland sovereignty brought an end to three years of war. Abdulrahman Ali 'Tuur', Chairman of the SNM, was elected President of an interim Somaliland government, with a two-year mandate.

The transition from war to peace was not easy. Given the traumatic experience of the Somali people and the schismatic nature of Somali political culture, it is not surprising that conflict returned to Somaliland. The initial euphoria of independence was shattered by an outbreak of fighting in Berbera in December 1991 and Burco in

January 1992. The conflict, which stemmed partly from a struggle over the control of Berbera port and its revenues and partly from old rifts within the SNM, lasted for some eight months. It was eventually concluded through a political settlement on 7 October 1992, at the town of Sheik, brokered by the Somaliland elders. In May 1993, the Somaliland national committee of elders (the Somaliland National *Guurti*) went on to conclude a Conference on National Reconciliation in Boroma, at which a new President for Somaliland, Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, was elected.

Diagram 12: Primary Issaq Clans



11 Towards A More Stable Environment

Despite the conflict and insecurity in 1992, the situation in Somaliland, compared with the south, has been very stable. The reason why Somaliland did not dissolve into the military quagmire and famine of the south is explained by a number of factors:²⁹

a) Extent of the War

During the three years of war, the SNM guerrilla campaign was largely restricted to the Issaq territories in the regions of Waqoyi Galbeed, Togdheer and Sanaag. Areas inhabited by the Gadabursi (Awdal), Dolbahunte (Sool) and Warsengeli (Badhan) remained largely free from fighting, and today the towns of Boroma, Las Anod and Badhan remain relatively undamaged. While Hargeisa and Burco were extensively damaged, it meant that killing and destruction of property between the northern clans was limited. In contrast to the south, there was little retribution by the Issaq against the Hawiye, Ogaden, Oromo, Dolbahunte and Gadabursi soldiers who made up the remnants of the Somali army in the north. This helped to prevent a cycle of revenge between the clans, once Barre was defeated.

b) Common Values

For the SNM to be able to convene a conference in Burco between clans who two months previously had been at war assumes the existence of a certain amount of common understanding and trust between the different clans. In Somaliland there is not the same heterogeneity of clans and social organisations as in southern Somalia. Clan territory is more easily defined in the north. The social and cultural values and economic and political interests are closer among the northern clans than in the south.

Some Somalis suggest that the indigenous social institutions in Somaliland were less affected by British colonialism than they were in the south by the Italian

administration.³⁰ Urbanisation was much greater in the south than the north, and new forms of habitation, integration and education had an impact on social institutions. Thus, they suggest that the north has retained its indigenous institutions, customs and value systems, which include peace-making, to a greater degree than the south.

The northern clans, Issaq, Gadabursi, Dolbahunte and Warsengeli, are inter-married and have a long history of interaction, including cooperation and competition (hostility and hospitality). As a result the clans and sub-clan have evolved common *xeer*. Elders have commented that during the war in Somaliland certain basic rules of behaviour (*xeer*) were adhered to between the northern clans.³¹ These included the protection of women, children and prisoners. The retention of such values helped later in resolving conflicts.³²

Although the SNM was primarily an Issaq organisation, it was able to attract individuals from other clans. Of particular importance is Abdulrahman Aw Ali (Gadabursi), now Vice President to Egal. He was able to mediate between the SNM and Gadabursi and prevent further fighting between the Issaq and Gadabursi in 1991.

Also important is the Dolbahunte Garaad Abdulgani. From 1989, in defiance of Siad Barre and Dolbahunte supporters of Barre, Garaad Abdulgani sought a relationship with the SNM, to prevent an escalation of conflict between the Issaq and the Dolbahunte. Thus local-level diplomacy and peace-making was happening even during the war. This helped to prevent retribution and revenge and an escalation of conflict once the SNM had defeated Barre's army.

c) Common Interests

As the Issaq have benefited from access to the Haud, so too have the other northern clans. The Dolbahunte and Warsengeli have investments in the northern towns of Berbera, Burco and Hargeisa. There is therefore an incentive for peaceful cooperation.

d) Military Sanction

Another important factor is that the SNM effectively won the war in Somaliland. The Issaq are the largest single clan and, having won the war, militarily were the most powerful clan. In Somali pastoral society, military strength, as Lewis (1961) has written, is a final sanction in any relationship. The victors were therefore able to sue for peace from a position of strength.

e) Indigenous Institutions

In marked contrast to the ideology of the former regime, under which 'tribalism' was banned, the SNM constitution recognises the significance of the clan system and, within this, the role of the elders as peace-makers and mediators. The elders have therefore played an important role in reconciliation between the clans.

f) Different Resources

Service infrastructure, industry and agriculture were more developed in the south than in the north. Between 1987 and 1989, some 41 per cent of development aid to

Somalia was concentrated in the south. Somalia's main agricultural resources were in the south. The south therefore presented a wealthy resource-base to fight over. From 1991 onwards this was supplemented by relief aid. Mogadishu itself, as the capital and therefore 'centre of power', psychologically, is a prize to fight for. Through the act of secession, the Issaqs made a psychological break with Mogadishu and the south. Mogadishu was no longer an object to fight over. After Hargeisa and Burco were destroyed in the north and much of the wealth had been plundered, there was little else left for people to fight over. Ironically, the conflict in Berbera was sparked off by the resumption of relief aid to Somaliland.

A significant proportion of the southern population depends on agriculture for its livelihood. The destruction of the agricultural infrastructure and disruption to cropping cycles by the war quickly left a large destitute population. The pastoral economy of the north, which is more mobile, was less vulnerable to the ravages of war. The refugees in Ethiopia also provided a food chain for Somaliland which helped to stave off starvation.

At the same time there was in the south a larger population of urban destitute, alienated by years of economic stagnation. They provided ready recruits for the warlords — especially the large number of destitute street kids in Mogadishu in 1990. In the south there was also a greater stockpile of weapons to fuel the fighting.

1.2 The Elders and Peace-making

One distinction which many Somalis (northerners and southerners) make between the north and south is that 'traditions' are more embedded in the northern culture than in the south. The SNM constitution recognised the importance of the clan system in Somali society and, within this, the role of the elders. The SNM constitution, therefore, sets out a bicameral legislature with an upper house of elders and a parliament of directly elected politicians. In Somaliland it is the elders who have taken a leading role in restoring peace to the region. The example of the Somaliland elders bringing a chaotic situation under control provides an alternative model for the peace and reconciliation process attempted by the UN in Somalia to date, and is thus worth commenting on.

The institution of elders (sing. *oday*; pl. *odayaal*; as council *odayasha*) and their role in Somali society can be confusing to a non-Somali. It is often not clear who is an elder, when he (it is always 'he') is an elder, how he becomes an elder, and what authority he possesses.

Somali pastoral society has no hierarchy of political units or political and administrative offices. Investing an individual with power goes against the egalitarian nature of Somali society. It is only at the level of the clan that one finds a post approximating to a leader or chief, known as a Sultan (among the Issaq), Garaad (meaning 'wisdom', among the Darod), and Ugaas or Boqor (among the Darod).

The position of Sultan is hereditary, although it is not always the first-born son who inherits that position. Not all clans have them, nor are they indispensable; in 1992 the Habr Yunis Sultan was killed in a house of disrepute in Hargeisa. Where they exist, they are a symbol of the unity of the clan over its constituent lineages. This

symbolic role is reflected in the inauguration of a new Sultan, which should always take place in the rainy season, a time of prosperity. A Sultan enjoys respect, but not reverence. His personal qualities are as important as his position in determining his authority. At the same time his structural position, above sectional lineage differences, enables him to function as an arbiter and peace-maker, mediating relations with other clans, and settling disputes within his own clan. His authority, however, is often symbolic. In a peace meeting (*shir nabadeedka*) it is the elders who undertake the negotiations, while the Sultan approves the results, in his position as head of the clan.

Unlike Sultans, elders are found at all levels of lineage segmentation. A father is, for example, the elder of a nuclear family. All adult males at every level of segmentation can be elders, with a right to speak in council (*shir*). In principle all can have an equal say. In practice some elders are more influential than others.

The position of an elder is not hereditary. Over time it may become hereditary, as people may prefer elders of one lineage to play a leading role in lineage affairs, for fear of upsetting relations. The *akil* (from the Arabic *wakil*, 'deputy'), for example, or elder of a *diya*-paying group, often passes from father to son. Sheik Ibrahim, Chairman of the Somaliland National Council of Elders (*guurti*), comes from a long line of elders, the founders of Hargeisa, guardians of the Sheik's tomb, and is respected for his religious knowledge.

Elders are sometimes described as 'chiefs'. It is misleading to call elders chiefs, for it suggests a traditional position of authority which does not exist. They achieve their positions through a variety of attributes, of which age, wealth, wisdom, religious knowledge and piety, political acumen, powers of oratory, or a combination, are important. However, in this acephalous Somali society, an elder is a representative, who receives delegated authority, rather than assuming it. In council meetings they are delegates or emissaries of and for their clans, whom they represent and by whom they are supported.

An elder's authority is the reflection of a number of different qualities or skills. Different elders will have different roles in different situations. Certain elders have greater knowledge of, for example, genealogy, *xeer*, or politics than others. These skills will be better used in some circumstances than others. For example, when two clans are to meet to discuss peace, they will send to each other lists of delegates for the meeting. Each side will know whether the other is for peace or not by the names of the delegates, because their character, kinship and political leanings will be known.

Elders operate, not secretly, but in open councils (*shir*), which all adult males, or their representatives, may attend. A *shir* can be summoned at every order of segmentation, as required. They are called to discuss relations between groups, to work out *xeer* contracts, to settle disputes, or to decide upon war or peace. Elders are professional negotiators and mediators in all clan matters and it is from this position that they have been able to assert their authority in Somaliland.

Other people in Somali society who have a role in peace-making are the *wadaad*, or Sheiks, the men of religion. They play no role in lineage politics, having only spiritual authority. Owing no allegiance to clan interests, they are ideal mediators. However,

they do not settle disputes themselves, judge or make judgements. The role of the *wadaad*, or sheik, is to add sanction and the seal of religion to the proceedings.

It is also misleading to talk about 'traditional elders', for this suggests an institution. One of the powerful attributes of Somali society is its dynamism and ability to adapt to change. Since the arrival of the colonialists the system of elders has been changing. The colonial administration in Somaliland changed the role of Akils by paying them stipends to act as go-betweens, between the administration and the clans. Under Barre, the government appointed *nabadoon* (peace-makers), to replace the role of the elders and represent the interests of the government.

During the early SNM guerrilla campaigns, the prestige and influence of the elders was eroded, because the movement was spearheaded by the politicians and military. Elders initially cautioned restraint to avoid bloodshed. It was only after the outbreak of full-scale war in 1988 that elders took an active role, and a council of elders was formed in exile. The elders then became instrumental in organising recruits for the SNM *jabhad* (guerrillas).

After the fall of Barre, with no functional government or security, people looked to the elders to reassert some control. Their peace-keeping role was a difficult one to carry out, given the numerous young militia and proliferation of heavy weapons in the country. The elders themselves, to whom some of the militia owed some allegiance, were not without their own vested interests.

Elders are chosen not just for their age, but for their ability to negotiate or influence a situation in favour of their clan. That 'ability' can include a number of characteristics, as described above. However, influence can also arise from wealth (and hospitality is a characteristic looked for in elders) or the military strength of the clan. One therefore often hears elders described as 'the biggest *deydey* (bandits)'. Equally, it can be difficult to make a direct distinction between elders and politicians, as they support each other. A distinction might be that elders deal with 'clan politics', while politicians deal with politics of the state. The dividing line, however, is thin.

It is wrong therefore to regard elders as people who are above day-to-day happenings and intrigues. Indeed, the knowledge of elders is drawn from their day-to-day involvement in matters of the clan. Rather than talking about the traditional institutions of elders, it may be more appropriate to think of elders as representatives, maintaining the 'traditions' of the clan.

In 1992, as the initial unity of independence disintegrated into anarchy, elders were called upon to take some control of the situation. In January 1992, as Habr Yunis and Habr Toljallo militia fought in Burco, elders physically stepped between the parties to stop the fighting. At the same time elders in Sanaag region formed a regional *guurti* of elders to begin a process of reconciliation. In October 1992, a national *guurti* of elders stepped in to mediate in the conflict over Berbera. The Sheik conference (known as 'Tawfiq') marked a turning point in the reconciliation process in Somaliland, and led directly to the Boroma National Reconciliation Conference, January — May 1993.

As representatives of their clans, the elders have been able to achieve what they have

done in Somaliland only because they were invested with the authority to do so by the people. There was thus, I suggest, a change in 'collective consciousness' in Somaliland during 1992 which enabled people to pull the country back from the brink of a dangerous civil war. In looking to the elders to restore stability, people turned back to their 'traditions' as a source of knowledge and experience for solving their problems.³³

The point is that the peace-making role of elders cannot happen without other people, forces and factors to help them. One section of the population who appear to have played a significant role is women.

1.3 Women and Peace-making

There is little understanding of the role that women have played both during and after the war in Somaliland and Somalia. Little has been written about this to date. And yet it is clear that women have played a significant role in a number of ways.

During the famine in the south, women ran food kitchens and food distribution. As one Somali man said, 'During the war, while the youth destroyed, women saved the families'. Since the end of the famine, women have adopted many of the orphaned children.

In Somaliland, women were an invisible front for the SNM, working as nurses and medics. They were a lifeline for the family, taking relatives out of the country. As refugees in Europe they were able to bring out other members of the family and transfer money back to the country. Able to travel more freely than men, they established channels of communication and were extremely important as traders. In the Ethiopian refugee camps, Issaq women established trading networks that involved sending ghee to Djibouti and the Gulf, cloth from Djibouti to Mogadishu, and Somali shillings from Mogadishu to the refugee camps. Some of these networks still exist. Since then, women have been among the main providers of family income, as petty traders selling tea, *kat*, gold and other items.

In some instances, women have also played a pro-active role in the war.³⁴ Women were active in demonstrations with children in Hargeisa before and in the early days of the war. Most recently in Mogadishu, women have been prominent in the anti-UN/US demonstrations of Aideed supporters. Women poets and singers have also actively supported the different factions in the south.³⁵

In Somaliland women have returned from the war with a greater economic independence and stronger role as decision makers, while men have returned chewing even more *kat* than before. Many of the most active Somali NGOs in Somaliland are headed by women, such as Al Amil, the Somaliland Women's Association, and SOMRA. In Erigavo, one of the most active NGOs is the Women's Family Life Institute. In Mogadishu Idda is a powerful women's NGO. Many women are also active in the new Islamic movements.

Some women express discomfort with this role.³⁶ They were brought up as unequal, but now are forced to take on greater responsibility as bread winners for the family and extended family. As a result they are unable to give as much time to the household or to take their children to the mother-and-child health clinics.

On 7 January 1993 five women were stoned to death in Hargeisa by followers of a Sheik. It is not clear why this happened. Some women believe it was an attempt to undermine the influence of women on the eve of the Boroma conference. Others believe it was a ploy by the government then to silence the Sheik, who had been openly critical of the government. The Sheik was subsequently jailed. While women believe it is unlikely to happen again, it demonstrated to them their vulnerability in this new situation. It is one reason why some women's NGOs would like to see the *kat* trade reduced. Women have always been involved in the *kat* trade as petty traders. It is reported that in some cases men encourage their wives to take it up, because it is lucrative. However, it is also a role that is looked down upon. Equally there is concern at the relatively high level of prostitution in Hargeisa among women forced into the trade by lack of other sources of income. One NGO has identified a particular group of teenage women who grew up during the war and became companions of the fighters. They have become ostracised from their families. There is a fear among women that the religious movements may begin to target women involved in *kat* and prostitution.³⁷

It is clear that women have played a significant role in supporting peace and reconciliation in Somaliland. Some women claim that it was largely as a result of pressure exerted by women that the elders became active in the reconciliation process over Berbera. During the negotiations the Somaliland Women's Organisation organised demonstrations in Hargeisa in support of peace. They were also the only group to openly petition the government of Abdulrahman Tuur to sue for peace. At Sheik they were active in providing the logistics for that meeting, and it is said that some women gave financial support to the *guurti*. Women have also been supportive of the police in Hargeisa.

Although men are the public face at peace meetings, women claim to be able to influence things, both publicly and in domestic settings. Women will often listen in on meetings, and interject if necessary. Through marriage, women can also be an important channel of communication between conflicting parties. As such they can act to influence both sides in a conflict and may be used as emissaries. Symbolically this female role finds expression in the *diya* (blood compensation) paid for homicide, which is paid in the form of female camels.

The Somaliland *guurti* have recognised in their speeches at peace meetings the role played by women. A women poet was, unusually, given the opportunity to recite peace poems at the Boroma conference.³⁸ And in recognition of the role of women should play in Somaliland, in September 1993 Egal appointed a woman as a Minister of State to the Presidency.

The importance that women can have in peace-making is recognised in the following Somali proverb:

Dumarka kolbay kay raacaan baa reeya.
Those whom women cheer for surely win.

2 THE BOROMA CONFERENCE

The Boroma Grand Conference on National Reconciliation has been described as a 'make or break event' in the creation of the Somaliland nation, a process which was severely set back by the conflicts in Somaliland during 1992.

The conference was opened on 24 January 1993. It is significant that Boroma, a Gadabursi town, was chosen as the site for the conference. The Gadabursi had helped to mediate in the conflict within the Issaq in 1992. Boroma provided a relatively secure environment away from Hargeisa, Berbera, and Burco, where security was still fragile. It was also a non-Issaq town, which gave non-Issaqs a more active role in determining the future of Somaliland. Boroma also had an active police force to provide security for the conference.

The conference was attended by 150 voting delegates, comprising elders from all clans in Somaliland. They were accompanied by a further 150 observers and advisers. During the four-month conference an estimated 2,000 people participated in the meeting at different stages.

The strength of the Boroma Conference arises from the fact that it was largely financed by communities in Somaliland, with additional support from external sources, including Community Aid Abroad, the Mennonites, Life and Peace Institute, Somali communities abroad, and the French and US embassies in Djibouti. The conference was also well supported by Somali NGOs. UNOSOM provided no support.

The Boroma conference lasted nearly four months. Given the Somali penchant for oratory, and the jealously guarded right of all *not* to remain silent, and given the issues discussed, it is not surprising that it should have taken so long. One observer commented, 'It was nothing compared with your Maastricht debate'.

Peace-making is a long, painstaking process. The Boroma conference was the culmination of previous peace meetings at Hargeisa and Sheikh in 1992. The Boroma conference succeeded, to the extent that it did, because time was allowed for issues to be thoroughly debated and for flashpoints to be dealt with on the way in order that consensus could be achieved.

The conference had two agenda items: reconciliation and security; and state formation.

2.1 The National Peace Charter

The outcome of the deliberations on reconciliation and security was the formulation of a National Peace Charter (Axdiga Nabadgalyada ee Beelaha Soomaaliland). The Peace Charter, as stated, is an attempt to 'rectify past mistakes' that led to a situation of insecurity and ineffectual government and 'to promote the strengthening of security and stability [and the] peaceful co-existence among all the communities of Somaliland.'

This Charter establishes a national security framework. It details the mechanisms for the registration and storage of weapons, the demobilisation of militia, the disarming of bandits, the formation of local police forces and judicial institutions, and the securing of roads. The Charter also defines the responsibility of elders in ensuring that these security arrangements are put in place. The Peace Charter requires every community to take 'a solemn oath not to attack another community', and defines the responsibilities of elders in mediating and settling outstanding disputes and any conflicts that might occur in the future.

The Peace Charter sets out a *code of conduct* for the people of Somaliland, in 'accordance with our traditions and along the principles of Islam'.³⁹ In effect, the peace charter represents a national *xeer*.

2.2 National Charter

The discussions on state formation produced a decision on the structure of national government enshrined in a National Charter, which will be the constitution of the Somaliland government for a two-year period. The government is charged with drafting a full national constitution to be ratified by referendum within two years. The National Charter was signed by 150 delegates.

The National Charter reaffirms the independence and sovereignty of Somaliland, as obtained on 26 June 1990, and 're-possessed' on 18 May 1991. The Charter sets out the transitional structure of government for the following two years. This will consist of:

- The Council of Elders (Upper House)
- The Elected Council (Constituent Assembly)
- The Executive Council (Cabinet)

The Charter also defines the functions of those councils, and the qualifications for election. Significantly, the Charter defines the role of the elders, 'to encourage and safeguard peace [and] creating new or enforcing existing Code of Conduct [*xeer*] among the clans', thus institutionalising their role as peace-makers. The authority of the elders is also confirmed in their right to appoint the members of the Constituent Assembly.

According to the Chairman of the national *guurti*, Sheik Ibrahim Sheik Yusuf Sheik Madar, the elders are confident of being able to keep the situation in Somaliland secure, because 'we have our eyes on the politicians ... we have the constitutional right to dismiss them'.

The charter also separates the judiciary, Auditor General, and Central Bank as independent agencies from the government.

2.3 Councils of Elders

The Boroma conference is an impressive example of an indigenous Somali reconciliation process in practice, in which the responsibilities of the function of elders as mediators in the internal affairs of the communities are clearly displayed. One commentator described it as 'a triumph of discourse over armed conflict' (Omar 1993).

There has been much debate on the future role of elders in Somaliland and whether they have the ability to play a constructive role in modern government. There is a concern among intellectuals and politicians that the continued presence of elders always brings things back to clans, and that a modern government needs to overcome those divisions to be effective.

The authority of the elders arose from the failure of the first SNM government and a

country paralysed by the conflict in Berbera. In the absence of credible government, elder committees became active in all regions of the country in resolving disputes and establishing nascent administrations; in Boroma in July 1991 a permanent *Guurti* of 21 elders was established by the Gadabursi; in Burco a committee of elders was established in January 1992; in Erigavo a regional *guurti* of Issaq was established in January 1992; in February 1993 a regional administration (called the Khussusi⁴⁰) was established by Dolbahunte elders in Sool region.

Interestingly, many of these councils have been formed in response to a particular crisis: the Boroma *guurti* in the face of retaliation from the SNM; in Burco as a result of the conflict in that town; in Erigavo to prevent conflict spreading from Burco; in Las Anod following several security incidents over foreign aid; in Sheikh in response to the Berbera conflict. The Somaliland National *guurti* has its origins in the 1988-1991 war, when elders were responsible for supporting the SNM militias. Sheik Ibrahim, now Chairman of the National *Guurti*, was also instrumental in organising the evacuation of Issaq from Hargeisa to Ethiopia in 1988. The origins of these committees are therefore firmly rooted in conflict-resolution. The question arises as to whether they have any further role than that.

In recognition of their contribution and the continuing need for their skills, the National *Guurti* was written into the first constitution of Somaliland. With the National Charter their role is much more clearly defined. The separation of the elders and politicians into two houses explicitly recognises the division between domestic clan politics and national and international politics. It implicitly recognises 'clanism' as a source of potential conflict, particularly in this post-war period, and the need to have an institutionalised mechanism to deal with potential conflict. The elders do not see themselves as having an administrative role in government. As Sheik Ibrahim has remarked, 'Our task is to ensure security and reconciliation. The government's responsibility is management, administration and development ...' (Omar 1993). At the same time, they explicitly recognise the realities of the stressful environment in which they live, and the need to work with that in order to form a stable government.

3 POST-BOROMA

On 5 May 1993 the Boroma Conference elected Mohamed H. Ibrahim Egal as the new President of Somaliland. Abdulrahman Aw Ali was elected Vice President. The election of Egal, first Prime Minister of Somaliland in 1960, and an experienced politician and diplomat, was met with general approval. He was welcomed into Hargeisa on 16 May by a crowd of 10,000, anticipating a new beginning for Somaliland.

Things, however, did not start well. When he announced his first cabinet in June, two out of the 13 ministers appointed — one Habr Yunis and one Warsengeli — refused their posts. The Habr Yunis, and to a lesser extent the Warsengeli, have since emerged as vocal critics of Egal. Other critics initially included the Arap and the Edegalle. The Arap appear to have settled their differences and have thrown their support behind Egal. In July the Habr Yunis held a conference in Burco (the Liiban Congress), at which they announced their decision not to take up their seats when the Constituent Assembly and Upper House met on 31 July. They went on to state that they would not be bound by the laws passed in the current session of parliament, and accused Egal of forming his government from a 'single political wing'.

The grievances of the Habr Yunis are two-fold. Firstly they believe that the system used at the Boroma Conference for the distribution of seats for the Constituent Assembly and the Upper House was unjust. The Habr Yunis are divided into four sections: Hargeisa, Burco, Berbera and Erigavo. They believe that they are the largest of the Issaq clans and that the four seats allotted to them for the Constituent Assembly and the Upper House are insufficient. They complain that this compares unfavourably with the Ayub, for example, who are smaller in number and were allotted three seats. They claim that seats were allotted on a clan basis rather than by proportional representation, and refer back to 1960 and the Burco conference of 1991, when they had a greater share of seats. They have called for another national conference to resolve the issue.

Their second complaint concerns Egal's first choice of cabinet ministers. Among those ministers Egal has appointed some of the most aggressive opponents of the government of the former president Abdulrahman Ali 'Tuur' (Habr Yunis). These include Musa Bihi (Minister of Interior),⁴¹ Suleiman Gaal (Minister of Education), and Dayib Gure (Minister of Commerce). All these were members of a faction within the SNM known as the 'Red Flag', who had supported the opposition to Tuur in the conflict in Berbera in 1992. The Habr Yunis accuse Egal of opening old rifts within the SNM, which were supposed to have been settled at the Sheikh conference. The impression given is that those who openly fought against the Tuur administration won the war.

Egal has some room for manoeuvre. He can change his cabinet, and there are some unfilled ministerial posts with which to appease the Habr Yunis; as of September 1993 Foreign Affairs, Defence, Planning and Reconstruction, and Religious Affairs were vacant. It is unlikely, however, that the elders will accept another long conference to debate the parliamentary structure again.

Some observers feel that the dispute between the Habr Yunis and the Egal administration is not too serious. Egal's mother is Habr Yunis, as was his paternal grandmother. Both these sub-clans of the Habr Yunis are said to be supportive of him. To date the Habr Yunis have been conciliatory in their opposition. While publicly critical of Egal, they have made it clear that they are prepared for dialogue. In September their elders were in discussion with the administration.

The Warsengelis' position is less clear. They are divided in their attitude towards Somaliland, with a minority favouring a closer association with Somalia, in particular Bosasso (see below). Their lack of participation in Egal's government is probably more influenced by their relationship with the Habr Yunis of Sanaag than by any major differences with Egal.

The Gadabursi and Dolbahunte appear supportive of the Egal administration, content with their Parliamentary seats and cabinet posts. The only woman (Deeqa Cooljool) appointed to the government, as a Minister of State to the Presidency, is Dolbahunte from Erigavo. The Commissioner of the Police Abdi 'Depot' is also Dolbahunte. Since the Boroma Conference, however, several senior Dolbahunte statesmen, who were members of the Dolbahunte Khussusi, have taken up parliamentary and cabinet posts. It is said that their seats in the Khussusi have been filled by Dolbahunte with southern leanings. Some Dolbahunte and Warsengeli were represented by the USP at the Addis Ababa conference in March. The USP has been campaigning with UNOSOM against the Somaliland secession. However, their

credibility, even among those Dolbahunte and Warsengeli in Somaliland who are opposed to secession, is smaller than UNOSOM have given them credit for.

Among the Gadabursi, there remains a small section who are still opposed to Somaliland secession. These come from the Rer Nur sub-clan from Dilla, a town which was destroyed by the SNM at the end of the war. This faction was represented at the Addis Ababa Conference in March by the SDA. The credibility of the SDA among the Gadabursi, like the USP, is minimal.

Despite the four months of meetings, political divisions remain to divide people in Somaliland. Such divisions are nothing new. To date the debates are public. Even the fiercest critics of Egal, such as Jama Mohamed Qalib (Edegalle), have their opinions published in the Hargeisa newspapers. As one Somali in Mogadishu pointed out, in the south he would have been shot. There is no indication of a return to the conflict and insecurity experienced in 1992. The question is the extent to which these divisions will again bedevil attempts to develop effective government. Central to this is the issue of regional government.

3.1 Decentralisation

Article 21 of the Somaliland National Charter states that 'the principle of decentralisation' will be applied to administration in the regions and districts, through the creation of regional and district councils. The Charter further states that the relationship between the regions and the central administration will be determined by a parliamentary decree. For debate is the extent to which central government will determine the form which that relationship will take.

Since 1991 regional councils have been established in Awdal and Sool, and one is in the process of formation in Sanaag region. It is clear from discussions in Erigavo that there will be some resistance from the regions to a central government making political appointments, like governors, to the regions. Some in Hargeisa, however, insist that the administration should make such appointments. It was a common practice under Barre. Abdulrahman Tuur attempted to do this and failed. After years of centralised government, people are protective of a new-found autonomy. What is being debated is more than clanism or territoriality. It is a political issue about governance, about how people want to see the country run, and how they want to manage their lives. The way in which decentralisation is handled will be critical to the success of the Egal administration.

3.2 UNOSOM

Another problem facing the Egal administration is that of Somaliland's relationship with the UN. This came to a head on 13 September 1993, when Egal asked UNOSOM personnel to cease operations in Somaliland and to leave the country.

Somaliland's relationship with the UN has never been good. The UN and the international community continue to entertain no possibility of recognising Somaliland's declaration of independence.⁴² In the year since the UN opened offices in Hargeisa (in June 1992), they have failed to provide any meaningful assistance for rehabilitation and development.

The dramatic decision of Egal to expel UNOSOM arises from two sources. Firstly, his government is bitterly frustrated with the lack of support that UNOSOM have provided, despite many promises. And secondly, there is a very deep suspicion among the population in Somaliland of UNOSOM's intentions for that area.

On 27 May 1993 Admiral Howe visited Hargeisa for the first time as the new SRSG. During his meeting with Egal he made commitments to support the Hargeisa police and the demobilisation of the militia. On 3 July Dr Omar Halim (Director of UNOSOM Policy and Planning Group) visited Hargeisa and, after discussions with the administration, made a detailed proposal to UNOSOM for assistance for the police and demobilisation. While some assistance was secured for the police (500 uniforms and food provided from EC funds), no assistance was received for demobilisation. At the beginning of September, with government plans for demobilisation about to be completed, the need for that assistance became critical. The condition for this assistance, however, appears to be agreement by the Somaliland administration to allow UNOSOM to have more control over the process. In UNOSOM's eyes this would mean the deployment of some troops. Although in May Egal had indicated a willingness to accept troops to help with the demobilisation programme and infrastructural rehabilitation, events in Mogadishu had warned people against this.

The deployment of UNOSOM troops in Somaliland is a very sensitive issue. UNOSOM II is mandated to deploy its peace-keeping forces throughout Somalia and Somaliland. However, even at the height of the conflict in Berbera, this idea was rejected by Tuur's government and the opposition. There remains a very deep suspicion among the population at large of the intentions of the UN to reunify Somaliland with Somalia. UNOSOM II, they say, has 'II agendas', one of which is reunification. An announcement by Boutros-Ghali on 3 March 1993 that UNOSOM troops would be deployed throughout the region, including Somaliland, met with a sharp response from the Somaliland elders meeting in Boroma. They considered 'the arbitrary dispatch of [UN] troops into our country as an alien invasion, which we will resist with our utmost resolve'. Since the outbreak of conflict between UNOSOM and Aideed in Mogadishu, the people in Somaliland are even more adamant that they do not want the deployment of UN troops.

In an atmosphere charged with suspicion, a dispute arose between Egal and UNOSOM over a number of diplomatic blunders by UNOSOM. In August UNOSOM personnel made two visits to Erigavo. The first was by the US envoy Gosende and the US Ambassador to Djibouti. The second was by the Deputy SRSG, Kouyate. Gosende also went to Badhan, where he reported that he met with the Warsengeli Garaad and was told that the Warsengeli did not support Somaliland. In August the Deputy SRSG Kouyate also visited Erigavo, during the peace conference, taking with him the north-east Zone Director from Bosasso. He is also reported to have held a meeting in Las Anod. The impression given was that UNOSOM was taking heed of an open letter from the USP (as representing Warsengeli and Dolbahunte) to Admiral Howe, stating their opposition to Somaliland. It was further rumoured that UNOSOM planned to open sub-offices in Erigavo and Las Anod which would report to Mogadishu. The visit was interpreted by Egal as an infringement of Somaliland's integrity and the authority of the Egal administration. In response, Kouyate is reported to have stated that under UNOSOM's mandate he was free to travel where he wished.

At the root of this conflict is the UN resolution, which does not recognise Somaliland's independence, and gives its representatives the authority to make decisions, without necessarily consulting local authorities. Through this action, the UN ignored the four months of meetings in Boroma at which people reaffirmed their belief in the sovereignty of Somaliland. This rift with UNOSOM is a gamble for Egal. It could be used as a reason by his critics for why Somaliland did not receive external support. On the other hand, one effect of this rift is that Egal has now formally submitted a request to the UN for recognition. Allegedly, this was never done by the Tuur administration.

The attitude of UNOSOM Hargeisa could not be more different from UNOSOM in the south. Their position, as stated by the Zone Director in August, was that in Somaliland there was a 'partner' with whom they could work. Their policy was that there would be no deployment of troops without an invitation. Their brief was 'listening and watching and not interfering, demobilisation and to support the police'.⁴³ They appear, however, to have failed to convince UNOSOM in Mogadishu of the same and to provide the resources with which to work. In September 1993 resources were desperately needed to support the demobilisation programme that was underway.

4 DEMOBILISATION

4.1 Introduction

Prior to May 1988, the SNM were estimated to have had some 3,000 trained fighters. In 1988, when the war escalated and the Barre government took fierce reprisals against the Issaq, there was a general mobilisation of the male Issaq population. Like other political factions in Somalia, the SNM was based upon a coalition of allied clans and sub-clans. The SNM military was recruited along clan lines and fought in small clan-based units (*jabhad*), supported by their clans. Since the ending of the war, many of the SNM guerrillas have laid down their arms and returned to civilian life. Many have remained together as military units with a clear command structure. The current figure used by the Somaliland government for numbers of armed militia in Somaliland is between 40,000 and 50,000. Others have turned to banditry in order survive.

In Somaliland people now make a distinction between the SNM *mujahid* and the *deydey* or *budhcad*. The *mujahid* are the proper long-term SNM fighters, some of whom had been fighting with the SNM since 1981. They are also known more generally as *mana gaaho*, taking their name from a road called *gaaho*, in Ethiopia, behind which the SNM had its rear bases. Another category of *mujahid* are the *jama rah* ('went on Friday'): those who joined the SNM on the Friday in May 1988 when the SNM first attacked Burco.

The *deydey*⁴⁴ or *budhcad* are the armed bandits. The word *deydey* means 'searching' and originates from the idea of 'the lost ones', that is those who got separated during the war and whose parents are looking for them. It has now come to have a second meaning of 'those who do the searching', meaning the looting. In a situation where there are few employment opportunities, war-hardened youths have resorted to banditry to survive. Indeed, a common explanation given in Somaliland is that *deydey* are a 'disease born of poverty'. Another common name used to describe the *deydey* is

malin dagal, 'million a day', the idea being that they need to make a million shillings a day in order to pay for ammunition, alcohol, women, and *kat*. Another name used to describe the bandits is *hadaba marido*, 'those who start shooting now', that is those who picked up arms after the war. Many of these *deydey* know no other life.

Attitudes towards these *deydey* are ambiguous, for one clan's 'army' can be another clan's *deydey*. Like the SNM *mujahid*, a group of *deydey* will generally come from the same clan. In a conflict these gangs can be your means of protection, and are therefore your 'army' or 'militia'. At the same time, the concept of corporate responsibility means that your clan can be held accountable for the activities of your *deydey*. The *deydey* can therefore be a threat to your own security. In some places where *deydey* have become a threat to their own clan's interests, elders have taken extreme measures and killed them.

It is suggested that probably 25 per cent of the militia fall into the category of *deydey*. In principle, people say it is the *mujahid* who should be helped first. However, it is the *deydey* who continue to cause much of the insecurity. Any demobilisation programme needs to address ways of disarming these gangs and re-integrating them into society.

4.2 A Framework for Security

After the war the first government of Abdulrahman Ali Tuur made a cursory attempt to integrate the militia into a unified army. This failed, and energy was squandered on factional disputes among politicians and military officers, which led to an outbreak of fighting in Burco and Berbera.

The Peace Charter, adopted by the elders at the Boroma Conference in March 1993, sets out to rectify the mistakes of the previous government by establishing a framework for future security in Somaliland. The Charter recognises that lack of security was the single most important factor that led to the failure of the previous Somaliland administration. The Charter also recognises that the militarisation of society continues to cause destruction of assets, undermines peaceful co-existence of communities and commercial enterprise, encourages banditry, disrupts humanitarian, rehabilitation and developmental activities, and leaves the population in a state of perpetual fear and insecurity. The Charter therefore seeks to address this by setting out the principles on which security of the individual, community and nation should be based, and the responsibilities incumbent on each community to ensure such security.

The future stability and economic recovery of Somaliland will depend on the ability of the new administration to carry out a comprehensive programme of demobilisation and disarmament, coupled with the formation of a police force and a judiciary. Through the Peace Charter the elders made it incumbent upon the Egal administration to formulate a plan for demobilisation and disarmament.

4.3 Plan for Demobilisation

In contrast to the former administration, the policy of Egal's government and the military commanders is that there should not be a national army. The commanders

say that they do not have the resources to build an effective army that could prevent an invasion. They are now convinced that disarmament is an important step for Somaliland towards achieving autonomy. Without disarmament, they contend that there will be no peace, and without peace Somaliland cannot maintain its independence. Their best security, they assert, is therefore in disarmament. Next time the clans quarrel, it must be in Parliament.⁴⁵

By 31 July 1993 Egal had reached had reached an agreement with the militia commanders and elders on a plan for the collection of militia in cantonment sites. The government would provide rations for ten days, and the militia would leave their arms with the clan elders and move to camps to commence separate training programmes. This was to be the first step in the demobilisation programme.

The disarmament and demobilisation programme comes under the responsibility of a Ministerial Committee on Security and Demobilisation, comprising the Vice President, Ministers of Interior, Defence, Education, Finance and Information. The planning and implementation of the programme will be carried out by a 12-member Technical Committee, comprising both military and civilians in cooperation with regional Security Committees.

The programme will involve the demobilisation of 50,000 militia.⁴⁶ Estimates of militia by region are: Awdal 8,500, North West 24,450, Togdheer 7,400, Sanaag 5,400 and Sool 4,250. From these, 9,000 will be trained as police, 3,000 as border guards, 5,000 as coastal guards, and 1,000 as prison warders. It is envisaged that the remaining 42,000, who include 10,000 disabled men, will be trained in farming, fishing and vocational training programmes to last from three to six months.

In August, two Zimbabwean consultants (Paul Nyathi of the Zimbabwe Project and Jeremy Brickhill, a former ZIPRA officer and former member of Oxfam UK/I's Africa Advisory Committee) were seconded by UNDP-OPS to the Egal administration to advise the administration and UNOSOM on planning a programme for the disarmament and demobilisation of the militias. At the beginning of September, consultations produced an outline plan for demobilisation and re-integration of the militias.

The demobilisation plan envisages the training of police forces from all six regions in Mandera Camp, between Berbera and Hargeisa. The police, as envisaged, will comprise:

regional police	1950
special police force	1407
striking force	260
mobile force	850
traffic police	107
finance guards	190

4.4 International Response

In drawing up the plan for demobilisation, Egal had anticipated that assistance would be forthcoming from UNOSOM for its implementation. When SRSG Howe

visited Hargeisa in May 1993, he had promised assistance from UNOSOM for demobilisation. In early July the UNOSOM Director of Policy and Planning, Omar Halim, visited Hargeisa and agreed that, once procedures had been finalised, UNOSOM would provide the wherewithal for the establishment and maintenance of assembly camps. Halim reported to UNOSOM in Mogadishu that the disarmament programme in Somaliland was voluntary and should be accorded the 'highest priority'. Furthermore, he stated that the assistance which the Egal administration was requesting for demobilisation, the police, and judicial system was consistent with UN resolution 814 (1993), and affordable within UNOSOM's \$18 million budget for demobilisation. The attitude of UNOSOM Zone Office in Hargeisa was equally supportive of the proposed plans.

Some support had been secured from UNOSOM for the police in Hargeisa (500 uniforms, rations and equipment). UNICEF were installing water for the prisons. Under the auspices of UNOSOM, a Dutch and Canadian police adviser had been seconded to the Hargeisa police and two British police advisers were expected in September. UNOSOM had also assisted in transporting some ICRC food from Djibouti to Mandera police training camp. World Food Programme, USAID, UNOSOM and the Ministry of Planning had discussed a further \$1.5 million worth of food vouchers, to provide food for some 9,000 militia for six months.

Other agencies were also involved. UNDP-OPS seconded two consultants to the demobilisation Technical Committee (see above). Rimfire were proposing to hire a further 800 militia to train for the mine-clearance programme. CARE had supported Sooyaal, the SNM veterans' association, to build a vocational training centre for ex-combatants.

Events moved more quickly than planned. In mid-August 1993 there were some 200 militia from Berbera in Mandera camp undergoing police training. By 4 September the number had increased to 800, and by the 7th to between 2,000 and 3,000. It was expected to increase to 5,000. With insufficient shelter, food, water or medical facilities for the 5,000 militia, the situation was potentially explosive. The sudden rush of militia to the camp had arisen because the clans were anxious not to miss out on the benefits of retraining and employment in the new security forces.

On 31 July, when Egal wrote to UNOSOM Zone Director in Hargeisa, informing him that his government had reached an agreement with the militia leaders and clan elders on the cantonment of militia, he requested assurance from UNOSOM that assistance would be available. By the end of August UNOSOM had given no indication that the promised assistance would be forthcoming. Angry at their failure to respond, Egal sent a letter to UNOSOM on 9 September, requesting them to cease their operations and leave Somaliland.

The immediate reason for Egal's action had been a diplomatic incident involving the Deputy SRSK Kouyate (see 3.2 above). However, Egal has largely staked his presidency and the success of the government on being able to disarm the militia. While UNOSOM Hargeisa stated that the demobilisation programme had the full support of UNOSOM Mogadishu, there was little material evidence of this. Without the promised resources, the demobilisation programme would be difficult to implement.

At the time Egal made this request for assistance, UNOSOM's attention was focused on the conflict in Mogadishu. This undoubtedly restricted its ability to respond with any speed. It is suggested, however, that UNOSOM is unwilling to provide the resources asked for unless they are able to exert some control over the process. In this respect, they have continued to insist on the need to send uniformed and protected (armed) advisers to Somaliland if they are going to support the process. The most cynical critics suspect that UNOSOM assume that without their support the demobilisation programme will fail, and this will justify a military intervention.

The extension of UNOSOM military operations to Somaliland would be disastrous. Although Howe and UNOSOM Hargeisa have publicly stated several times that they will not deploy troops unless invited, this has not quelled fears among the population. The disregard shown to the authorities in Hargeisa by Kouyate has not helped in that matter. Even if UNOSOM were to extend their military operations to Somaliland for purely humanitarian purposes, there is little confidence that they would be able to handle a demobilisation programme in a sensitive manner, especially given their recent actions in Mogadishu. Such is the concern that the military commanders in Somaliland say they would be forced to resist militarily if UNOSOM attempted to deploy troops.

4.5 Recommendations for the Support of Demobilisation

Security — stable central and regional government and the successful demobilisation of armed militias — has been identified as the key to the rehabilitation and development needs in Somaliland. As agencies' programmes change from relief to development, the emerging emphasis of the programmes will also change. There are two groups on which programmes should, for the mean time, have a strategic focus: refugee returnees and demobilised militia. The latter is a recognition that insecurity is an inhibition to economic development in Somaliland. There is a strong argument for agencies to develop a further 'sectoral' activity that focuses exclusively on demobilisation.

Demobilisation should be seen as a long-term process, requiring a substantial commitment of resources. Such a programme, if supported by agencies, should be placed firmly within the framework of a comprehensive plan initiated by the Somaliland government and implemented, as much as possible, through local non-governmental or community-based organisations. Given their previous experience in this field, Oxfam and others could make a major contribution to such a programme.

The Somaliland Peace Charter clearly identifies demobilisation and disarmament as a fundamental building block for peace and stability in Somaliland. Assistance with demobilisation therefore provides agencies with a clear opportunity to support peace-building in Somaliland. The following are some recommendations on how they might support demobilisation and disarmament in Somaliland.

Planning and Preparation: Agencies should be prepared to make an immediate provision of resources to the Technical Committee, to enable it to gather the data needed to prepare a plan for demobilisation.

Advocacy: Demobilisation has been identified as the priority issue by the Egal administration. The administration is convinced that voluntary demobilisation is preferable to assisted (or forced) demobilisation by UNOSOM, and that UNOSOM should not take control of the process. The administration needs support for this strategy. Agencies should make it an essential part of their strategies to lobby their governments to fund this process, and to put pressure on UNOSOM to refrain from acting other than as funders or monitors.

Agencies might explore, with their governments, acceptable ways of monitoring and verifying the process. This would not only be useful for advocacy purposes, but it might also help internally to have an independent body for verification. If it was acceptable to the government, agencies might consider funding an appropriate international body to visit Somaliland on a regular basis to do this. A team might be combined with elders and local NGOs.

Publicity Campaign: Public communication, civic mobilisation, confidence building, and cultural activities will be key to the success of the demobilisation process. The rehabilitation of Hargeisa Radio could be an essential contribution to this.

Peace-Building/Conflict-Resolution Training: Somaliland women have played an important role in the peace process in Somaliland as a community pressure group. Organisations of women (Somaliland Women's Organisation, Committee of Concerned Somalis, Somaliland Women's Development Organisation) have all mobilised women at peace conferences. Agencies might help to strengthen this work, where appropriate, by supporting a series of training workshops and seminars for women extensionists/mobilisers.

Agencies should consider commissioning a Somali women's NGO to look at what role women might play in assisting with demobilisation, and the possible effects on women of the process.

Agencies should look for ways to ensure that elders are fully involved and consulted in the demobilisation process. Community support for the programme will be critical to its success. Their authority, as well as their skills in mediation and trouble shooting, should be fully utilised.

Vocational Training: Some agencies have developed proposals to support the establishment of a Technical Training Institute in Hargeisa with the Ministry of Education. This might provide training opportunities for demobilised militia, and should be pursued. Agencies might also consider funding the Ministry to design and undertake education programmes for the ex-combatants while in the camps, such as basic literacy, numeracy, and Koranic education. This would also provide increased training opportunities for unemployed teachers. Agencies might also consider ways of supporting education development in the region, to assist in general rehabilitation and development to fulfil the huge need for education provision.

Agencies should also consider contracting local, private training institutions in Hargeisa to provide training for the militia, as required. They might consider contracting these institutions to consult with the militias and government to identify their training needs. This would have the advantage of both developing the capacity of the training institutes and providing the required training.

Trauma: The Somali psychiatrist, Dr Omar Duhod, estimates that as many as 5 per cent of the ex-combatants will be in need of psychiatric counselling. Agencies should consider ways in which they can support the reintegration of ex-combatants into society through counselling programmes. Agencies might consider consulting agencies such as the Medical Foundation for the Victims of Torture, or consultants such as Dr Derek Summerfield, Dr Twi, and Dr Duhod.

Cultural Programmes: Agencies should also consider funding cultural activities — bands, artists, poets, etc. — to provide entertainment both for the ex-combatants, as part of their psychological rehabilitation, and also more generally in Somaliland. This would probably require identifying Somali artists outside the country and sending them on tour.

Disabled War Veterans: Agencies might consider commissioning Action on Disability and Development, or others, to assess ways of strengthening the formation of an association for disabled veterans.

International Media: Agencies should use their resources to generate international media interest in the demobilisation process in Somaliland.

Disarmament 'Think Tank': Agencies should consider ways of integrating/linking this work with that of the Conrad Grebel College, Canada, and its 'think tank' on disarmament in the Horn.

Demobilisation Fund: Agencies should consider contributing to a demobilisation fund for Somaliland, for an initial two-year period. It would be used to employ on a full-time basis an individual (expatriate or Somali) to coordinate agencies' work in this field, and be used for funding any or all of the above activities. A sum of approximately 500,000 would probably be needed.

5 SHIR NABADEEDKA EE SANAAG: 'The Sanaag Grand Peace and Reconciliation Conference'

5.1 Introduction

The introduction to this report suggests that conflict is inherent in all human societies, 'a universal part of the way that humans organise and mediate individual and group relations'. If conflict is part of everyday life, then mechanisms must also exist within society to manage or resolve those conflicts. Mediation, peace conferences, peace-keeping, peace-enforcement, monitoring, military intervention, safe havens, humanitarian aid, and legal and judiciary procedures are just some of the overt and obvious mechanisms.

The response of humanitarian aid agencies to conflict tends to focus on the appalling impact of conflict and the provision of external solutions, or 'interventions'. There is, perhaps, an assumption that because a society is in conflict, local mechanisms for resolving conflicts no longer exist, or have ceased to function. Recent studies by NGOs on conflict (such as Duffield, 1990) have tended to look at the causes of conflict. While the understanding which these studies provide is essential to reorientate our thinking, perhaps there is a need to place more emphasis on looking at solutions.

By concentrating on the causes of conflict rather than the solutions to it, perhaps we fail to look for, and see, those indigenous processes or mechanisms which exist to bring about resolution or peace. Lewis (1961) has commented on Somali society that 'hostility and hospitality are important social parameters between pastoral groups'. In Somalia, to date, the emphasis of analysis has been on 'hostility', and perhaps we now need to look at closer at 'hospitality'. When we look at solutions, we should remember that, from our experience, the best development projects are those that utilise and build upon local knowledge and experience, where communities have a control over the process. It is for this reason that I present this brief case study of the 'Sanaag Grand Peace and Reconciliation Conference'.⁴⁷

5.2 Sanaag Region

Sanaag, in the north-east of Somaliland is a semi-arid, mountainous and semi-desert region. The livelihood of people in the region is based on pastoral nomadism and small-scale sedentary agriculture, practised in the valleys of the Gollis mountains. Erigavo is the regional capital and largest town.

Historically, Sanaag is important to the Somali people as the place where many of the eponymous ancestors of the clan-families lived and are buried. Several of the tombs of the ancestors are important pilgrimage sites, in particular the tomb of Sheik Issaq in Mait. Sanaag is also the only region in Somaliland where Issaq (Habr Yunis and Habr Toljallo) and Darod (Warsengeli and Dolbahunte) live together and share (and compete over) common resources of grazing and water. The division of the region into three districts broadly reflects the demographic division of resources. The Habr Toljallo mainly inhabit Eil Afweyne district to the west, the Habr Yunis and Dolbahunte live in Erigavo district in the centre, and the Warsengeli are in Badhan district to the east. Inter-marriage between Issaq and Darod, however, is more common in Sanaag than other regions of the country.

A number of minority clans also live in the region. These include the Jibrahiil, Minsale, Magadle and Gaheyle, as well as lineages of the 'sab' (outcast) clans, the Tumale, Yibr, and Midgan. Most of these are bonded to the Issaq or Darod clans. The Gaheyle, however, claim genealogical attachment to the Majeerteen (Darod).

With pastoralists competing over diminishing grazing and water resources, Sanaag region has always experienced tensions among its population. During Barre's government, the Darod clans in Sanaag (Dolbahunte and Warsengeli) gained access to resources, such as land and property, within areas traditionally considered to be Issaq. They were able to retain control over these through the power of the state. The civil war, as experienced in Sanaag, was therefore partly fought by the Issaq, under the banner of the SNM, to regain control over those grazing and water resources.

Prior to the war the populations in the main towns of Erigavo and Eil Afweyne were a cosmopolitan mix of clans. However, the war led to a large displacement of people and changed the composition of many settlements. When the SNM 'liberated' Erigavo, the Darod left the town, the Warsengeli going east to Badhan and the Dolbahunte south to Las Anod. Other groups such as the Gaheyle and the 'sab' clans who had taken up arms on the side of Siad Barre were also displaced from the Issaq areas. In 1992 Erigavo's population was less than half its pre-war size.

Under the terms of a cease-fire concluded in 1991 after the war, the Issaq, Warsengeli and Dolbahunte agreed to remain within their traditional borders. Clan territories became 'safe havens' for Darod fleeing both from SNM 'liberated' areas and from the war in southern Somalia. Contact between the Issaq, Warsengeli and Dolbahunte was limited to the radio and to trading at market places along the borders. Only women were able to cross the borders.

This process of creating 'safe havens' during war, where lineages acquire a territorial reality, is described by Lewis (1961): 'Opposed groups ... withdraw from each other, leaving an area of neutral or no-man's-land, along the fringes of which guards (*kojoog-ka*) are posted.'

5.3 Restoring Peace

Although the SNM united the Issaq in their opposition to Siad Barre, the movement was constituted on a political alliance of clans who, in 'peaceful times', would themselves fight over resources. During the war there were conflicts in Sanaag between sub-clans of the Issaq. After Erigavo was captured by the SNM in February 1991, the town was initially occupied mainly by the Habr Yunis clan, with only a limited presence of Habr Toljallo. A Habr Yunis militia commander assumed the position of 'Acting Governor'. As the Habr Toljallo owned property in the town, this situation was clearly untenable, and a process of reconciliation was started to enable other Issaq to return to Erigavo.

The reconciliation process was led by two prominent elders from Eil Afweyne, who are closely related; their two sub-clans are known as 'Habr Labada' (the 'two Habr', or 'twins'). As a result of their efforts, a committee of 43 elders (*guurti*), representing the Issaq clans in the region, was formed in January 1992 to settle inter-clan disputes, restore stability, and appoint a regional administration.

The regional *guurti* initially reaffirmed the position of the 'Acting Governor' to head up an interim administration. However, after a series of security incidents in August 1992, the Acting Governor was asked to resign by the elders. The administration was disbanded and the elders assumed authority through a number of committees. The *guurti* also decided that there should be no regional administration until such time as all the clans in the region, both Issaq and Darod, had reconciled their differences. This assertion of authority by the elders took place at the same time that the Somaliland National *guurti* intervened to stop the conflict in Berbera.

5.4 The Peace Conference

The 'Sanaag Grand Peace and Reconciliation Conference', between the Habr Yunis and Habr Toljallo (Issaq), and Warsengeli and Dolbahunte (Darod), opened in Erigavo on 19 August 1993. The meeting was opened with the reading of the Koran by Sheik

Ahmed Edleh, one of the two Issaq elders who had helped to form the Issaq regional *guurti*.

The Sanaag Conference is an impressive example of an indigenous Somali peace and reconciliation process. Much time and thought was expended on the structure, process and organisation of the meeting. It stands in marked contrast to that initiated by the international community through the United Nations, and it is useful for the purposes of this report to draw out the main characteristics of the meeting and the process that led to it.

5.5 Peace-making from the Grass Roots

The Somali saying *nabad iyo caano* ('peace and milk') stresses the important relationship between peace and prosperity. Plentiful milk means healthy livestock and good grazing. 'Good grazing' refers not only to the quality of the pasture, but also to access to it. Access to pasture and water is assured through peaceful cooperation. Another Somali proverb, *nabad iyo rob* ('peace and rain'), complements that and stands in opposition to the proverb *ol iyo abaar* ('conflict and drought').

In the introduction to this report, I commented that there are two theories of how peace-making can work in Somalia: one a top-down process that recognises the political legitimacy of the 'warlords'/politicians, and the other a bottom-up approach where people rebuild their relations of trust and cooperation from the grassroots. The model in use in Sanaag region is the latter. The process is neatly described in the story that is now used to explain the beginning of the peace process in Sanaag.

It is said that in late 1991, the Banadde and Karaman plains around Eil Afweyne in western Sanaag received good rains, while to the south-east around Buhodle the rains failed. Pastoral families of the Dolbahunte, from the east, who needed access to the pastures used by the Issaq in the west, sent women envoys to the Issaq to ask if they could have access to their grazing areas (*degaan*). In order for this to happen, the Dolbahunte and Habr Toljallo needed to establish an agreement or 'contract' (*xeer*). The new *xeer* needed to involve the elders of each clan, and it is from this point that the peace process has been built.

5.6 A Long-Term Process

The peace and reconciliation process has been very protracted, and all sections of society have had the right to participate. Peace-making demands that people at every level of clan segmentation should reconcile their differences before they are able to meet as a larger body.⁴⁸ The process is necessarily slow, in order to be inclusive, rather than exclusive.

Between August 1992 and June 1993, seven peace meetings were concluded between sub-clans of the Issaq and Darod in Sanaag region: August 1992, between the Habr Toljallo, Warsengeli and Dolbahunte at Shimbiraale; November 1992, between the Habr Yunis and Warsengeli at Jidalle; November 1992, between the Habr Toljallo, Warsengeli and Dolbahunte at Garadag; January 1993, between the Habr Yunis and Dolbahunte at Dararweyne. Further meetings took place at Yobe and Armale, between the Habr Yunis, Warsengeli and Dolbahunte.

While the details of the meetings differed, depending on the nature of the conflict (e.g. a dispute over a water point, grazing land, or personal property), the general conclusions were the same, namely:

- ‘to establish peace in the region’;
- ‘to establish the means through which outstanding conflicts between clans can be resolved’;
- ‘to enable the free trade and movement of people’.

With a view to establishing peace in the region, it was also determined that a final meeting of all clans should take place in Erigavo in 1993.

5.7 Preparatory Meetings

The regional peace meeting in Erigavo was originally scheduled to start in early 1993. However, the opening was delayed by the convening of the Boroma conference in January 1993, which ended in May, and separate meetings among the Dolbahunte at Boame in February, among the Warsengeli at Hadaftimo in July, and among the Habr Yunis in Burco in July.

Potentially the Boame, Hadaftimo and Burco meetings could have upset the peace process in Sanaag. In particular, the Warsengeli meeting in Hadaftimo (when divisions within the Warsengeli over their relationship to Somaliland came to the fore) could have resulted in the Warsengeli pulling out of the Erigavo Conference.

The Warsengeli are divided into two. One group in eastern Badhan are more closely associated with the Majeerteen, having economic links with Bosasso. The majority Rer Nooh Omar, to the west of Badhan, are inter-married with the Musa Ismael (Habr Yunis) of Erigavo and have economic links and property with the town. They are supportive of the Sanaag meeting and links with Somaliland.

The Warsengeli Garaad, Sultan Abdisalam Sultan Mohamed, is old and bedridden in Hadaftimo. His representative, his brother Ismael Sultan, who participated in some 41 meetings in Somaliland (including Burco and Boroma), issued a communiqué at Hadaftimo in support of Somali unity and of UNOSOM activities in Somalia. Although the communiqué supported the promotion of peace talks in Sanaag, he refused to attend the Erigavo meeting. As a result, the Warsengeli Garaad had no representative at Erigavo. However, the Garaad himself is said to be supportive of the meeting, because the meeting was able to proceed.⁴⁹

There was also a last-minute hitch with the Gahayleh. The Gahayleh are a small clan, but are considered to be one of the original clans of Sanaag. They are thought to be related to the Habr Magadle, whose daughter Sheik Issaq married. Before the war they used to live among the Rer Abdi Hamud of the Musa Ismael (Habr Yunis), in Sanaag. However, they are what is known as a *sheegad* (‘pretending’; claiming to belong to a lineage to which one does not belong by birth), and declare a genealogical affiliation to the Majeerteen. During the war they sided with the Darod against the Habr Yunis. When the SNM gained control, the Gahayleh fled en masse to Garowe and Bosasso. As a result they have lost their farms and frankincense trees.

Just before the Sanaag Conference was due to open, the Gahayleh requested a place in the meeting. They were refused, because they had not taken part in any previous preparatory meetings. The consensus was that they should solve their problems with the Musa Ismael before they could take part in the meeting. The Musa Ismael offered them the opportunity to meet after the peace conference at Yobe, but they have apparently refused this.

The Sanaag Conference is therefore a culmination of a series of peace meetings that had taken place over a twelve-month period. The long-term nature of this process is essential to the success and sustainability of any agreement reached at Erigavo.

5.8 Peace-making to Peace-Building

Somali society is essentially a democratic society in which individual (male) opinions and the right to participate in decision-making are jealously guarded. The authority of the elders who negotiate at the peace meetings is not inherent, but is delegated to them by their clans.

All opinions have to be canvassed, and different interest groups which cut across clan alliances have to be co-opted into the process. In Somaliland, for example, the Issaq people categorise themselves into the *mana-gaaho*, *mana-festo*, and *mana-seer*. The *mana-gaaho* are those who fought in the bush against the regime; the *mana-festo* (associated with the Manifesto Group⁵⁰) are those who stayed on in Mogadishu; and the *mana-seer* ('who drink sweet drinks') are those who fled abroad. These groups represent different ideas and interests. In addition there are the 'politicians', 'intellectuals', 'army', 'religious groups' and the '*deydey*'. In a country where 'few among the population would admit to being unsuitable for Presidency' (Drysdale, 1992), everybody's opinion has to be taken into account.

The long-term nature of the reconciliation process was necessary to ensure that the different clans of the region participated and supported the process. The dismissal of the acting regional administration by the Issaq *guurti* in August 1992 was a clear recognition that a narrowly based administration could have no authority and that the reconciliation process needed to be inclusive rather than exclusive.

Given the length and intensity of the conflict, it would be impossible in a single meeting to deal with the vast range of grievances that stand between the different clans. The advantage of the series of preliminary meetings meant that many issues had been dealt with along the way. The implementation of decisions of the previous meetings, such as the return of property, helped to strengthen ties and reinforce final decisions reached in Erigavo. In essence this is 'peace-building'.

The Erigavo meeting was therefore seen by participants as the formal confirmation of a long-term peace and reconciliation process. In the words of one delegate, 'Now everyone is purely for peace ... everyone has tasted war and peace and has chosen peace.'

5.9 Common Objectives

The protracted process also meant that it was possible to define the objectives of the

Erigavo meeting clearly, and agree a common goal. There were only two items on the conference agenda:

- 1 Confirming Peace.
- 2 Establishing a regional administration.

Participants and observers in Erigavo firmly stressed that the primary objective was to establish peace between the clans that would allow for the return of the Darod to Erigavo, the settling of all disputes, and the return of all property. The fact that many Warsengeli and Dolbahunte returned to Erigavo at the start of the meeting was an indication of the confidence which people placed in a successful outcome.

5.10 Equal Representation

Each of the four clans participating in the meeting had equal representation in all the committees of the meeting, despite the fact that not all of the Warsengeli were present (see diagram 13).

5.11 Structure of Meeting

The organisation of the meeting was impressive. There were over 400 delegates, security personnel and labourers.

- 8 Sultans/Garaads
- 7 religious leaders
- 8 members of the Chairing Committee
- 200 delegates
- 22 on the Preparatory committee
- 130 police (100) and (30) prison staff
- 50 workers in the hotels and conference venue.

All representatives to the meeting were identified by official cards and had clearly defined roles and functions.

i) *Guurti* Suldaan\Garaad — Council of Sultans and Garaads

The Council of Sultans consisted of seven Sultans and Garaads:

Dolbahunte	- Garaad Abdelgani
	- Garaad Ismael
	- Sultan Suleiban
Habr Toljallo	- Sultan Abdillahi Ali (Garadag)
Habr Yunis	- Sultan Esa (Burco)
	- Sultan Saed (Erigavo)
Edegalle	- Sultan Mohamed (Hargeisa)
Warsengeli	- Garaad (not in attendance)

The Garaad of the Warsengeli was too old to attend the meeting. The Edegalle Sultan was present, because the Edegalle come from the same clan (Garhajis) as the Habr Yunis.

The Sultan and Garaad is the focus for the moral and ethnic solidarity of the clan. He therefore carries responsibility for the clan in a religious and political sense. The traditional function of Garaads and Sultans is as mediators. Their authority primarily derives from their expertise in mediation and problem-solving. They stand above the narrow divisions of the clan interests and 'can see beyond the fight'. The mechanism of mediation in Somali society is therefore institutionalised through the office of the Sultan or Garaad. At the beginning of the meeting the Sultans and Garaads let it be known that they were ready to sign an agreement, on completion of the conference. Thus they indicated that the meeting should conclude in peace.

ii) Sheiks

There were seven religious Sheiks attending the Sanaag Conference. Somali law combines both customary law and Islamic sharia. Religious leaders (*wadaad*) have an important role alongside elders at peace meetings, providing religious sanction to decisions. The religious leaders can influence the meetings, by reference to the Koran, by reminding participants what the Koran has to say about certain actions and behaviour.

iii) *Shir guurti* — Chairing Committee

The Chairing Committee consisted of eight members, two from each clan, one Chair, two Vice Chairs, and four secretariat:

Ali Warsame (Chair)	- HY
Saed Mohamed Nur	- HY
Mohamed Ali Shire	- DH
Mohamed Ahmed Abdulle	- DH
Mohamed Haji Ducale	- HT
Hassan Haji Ducale (Hassan Sheik)	- HY
Mohamed 'Borasab'	- WG
Mohamed ?	- WG

The Chair, Ali Warsame, was a wealthy businessman who left Mogadishu as late as 1992. It is not clear why he had been chosen to act as the Chair, but it is likely that he was able to provide some resources for the conference. He may also have had plans to invest in the region and therefore had a commitment to the success of the conference.

iv) *Shir Ergo* — Council of Delegates

The main council of elders involved 200 delegates (*ergo* — 'emissaries'), 50 from each clan. Thirty members from each clan were official voting members, with a further 20 (*murti sheraf*) in observance. The function of the Ergo was to review the agreements signed previously and to decide on the resolutions to the meeting. All the delegates were elders who had the authority to make decisions on behalf of the clans. According to informants, the elders and the members of the chairing committee are selected according to their 'ability' rather than the strength or size of their clan or sub-clan. Thus while 'politicians' were strictly excluded from the conference (although some MPs were present in Erigavo), some of the elders were businessmen.⁵¹

v) Conference Preparatory Committee

This had 20 members, five from each clan, with various responsibilities for finance, logistics, and reception of VIPs. The preparatory committee was also responsible for organisation of police and labourers. The Committee was chaired by Ismael Haji Nur, a Habr Yunis businessman and elder from Erigavo.

vi) Clan Preparatory Committees

Each clan had its own preparatory committee, with responsibility for preparing the clan's agenda for the meetings and logistics.

5.12 The 'Intellectuals'

Somali Development and Relief Association (SDRA) is a Warsengeli NGO, with strong links in the USA. One of its members, Mohamoud Jama, is a member of the US Ergada (Somali Peace and Consultation Committee). Another important member is Mohamed Abdi Ali 'Bayer', one of the few Warsengeli members of the SNM, and a Minister of Planning in the first Somaliland government.⁵² He was also a member of the Somali Intellectuals for Peace and Democracy who, with the Ergada, the Somali Peace and Development Society, the Somali Peace Initiative, and Somalis in UNOSOM, formed an *ad hoc* peace coalition of Somalis at the Addis Ababa meeting in March.

The SDRA has had an influential role in the Sanaag peace process, particularly between the Issaq and Dolbahunte. Mohamoud Jama, as early as September 1992, wrote to the UN for assistance to fund a meeting in Sanaag, and was one of the first to record the meetings. They have been proactive in the cause of peace and have been the channel for funds from the Life and Peace Institute for the Sanaag Peace meeting.

SDRA formed one of the groups of 'intellectuals', observing and supporting the peace conference in Sanaag. Other (though less well-defined groups) existed among the other clans.

It can be seen from this that the conference involved a wide range of different interest groups.

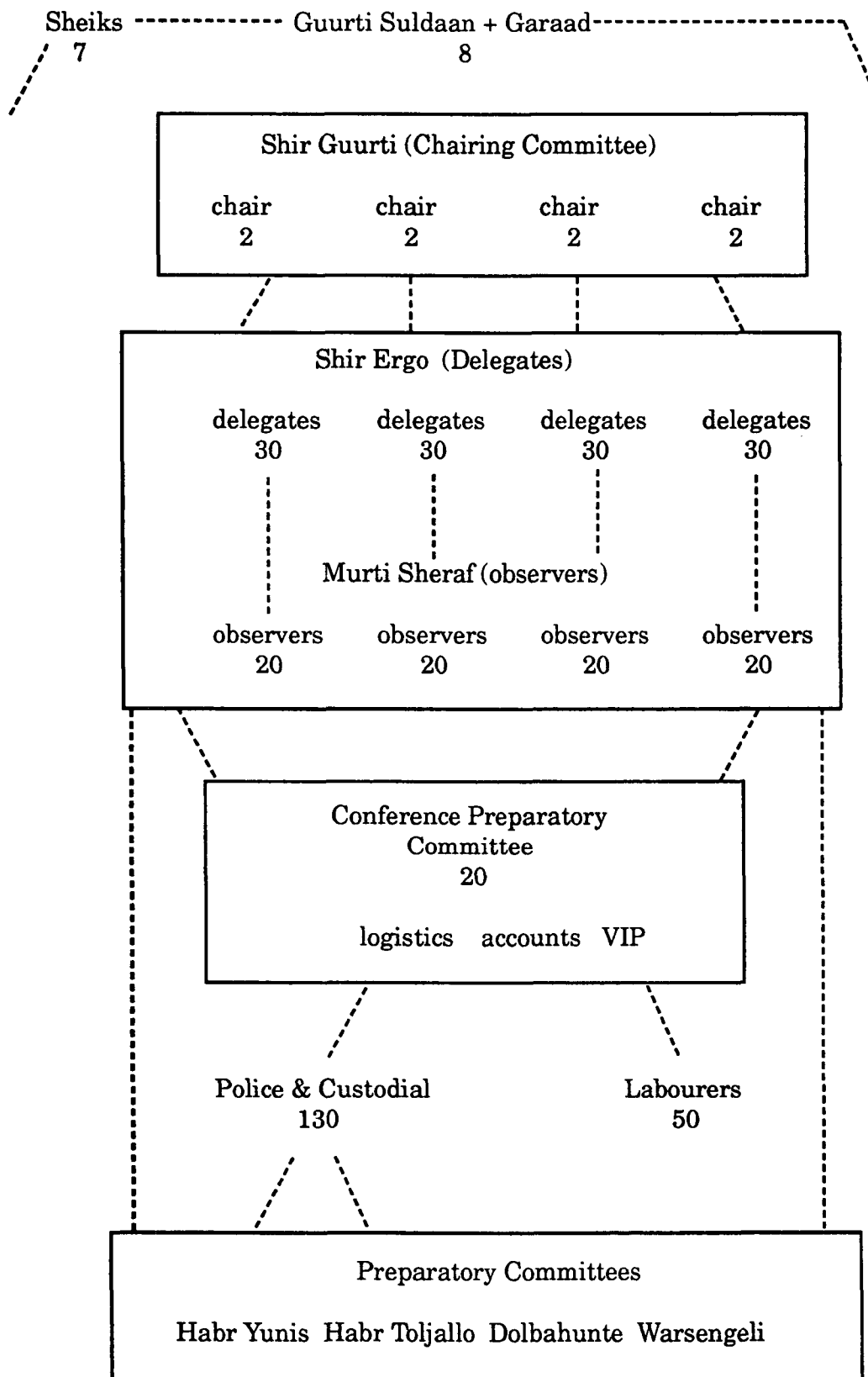
5.13 Consensus Decision-Making

A fundamental principle of the conference is that all decisions should be achieved by consensus, rather than through voting. It is believed that voting, even if only one person is in disagreement, can leave a grievance. A consensus decision results in a 'win-win' situation and is considered more sustainable.

5.14 Problem-Solving

An important feature of the way that elders work at problem-solving is their ability to deconstruct a problem and solve first those issues which are deemed solvable. As

Diagram 13: Shir Nabadeedka ee Sanaag



described above, the whole reconciliation process itself from the beginning was constructed around that principle, so that through a series of preparatory meetings problems were dealt with along the way.

The first week of the Sanaag conference was spent reading over the agreements that had been reached by the preceding meetings, electing a chair, and agreeing on the agenda and the rules for the meeting. The second week was set aside for the individual clans to hold their meetings and to solve any outstanding issues that had not been solved during their previous meetings, or that had arisen since.

The meeting was structured in a way that recognised the different relationships and grievances between the clans and the need for these to be dealt with separately. For example, the Habr Yunis have a different relationship with the Dolbahunte and Warsengeli than with the Habr Toljallo. The Habr Yunis share common boundaries with the Dolbahunte and Warsengeli and a different set of rules (*xeer*) thus governs their relationships than those with the Habr Toljallo. The Habr Yunis have intermarried more with the Warsengeli than the Habr Toljallo have. Within the Habr Yunis there are also different relationships. The Musa Arreh, for example, who live in Mait, share no common borders with the Darod, so the rules which govern their relationship are different from those of the Musa Ismael.

As indicated above, competition over the ownership and usage of land and resources was a driving force behind the war. The various clans who share boundaries will have different land issues to resolve. For example, the Masagan valley was developed for farming by the Dolbahunte prior to the war, having previously been grazing land used by the Musa Ismael (Habr Yunis). The Musa Ismael recaptured it from the Dolbahunte during the war. Who the land now belongs to must be sorted out by the Musa Ismael and Dolbahunte themselves. Other clans would not intervene unless asked to.

The Habr Yunis and the Warsengeli similarly have specific problems to resolve. The Habr Yunis and Warsengeli own the largest numbers of houses in Erigavo. Return of property was therefore a big issue for these two clans. In contrast, the Dolbahunte and Warsengeli do not share a common border and there were fewer contentious issues to resolve.

The elders understand that different problems exist between different groups. During the war the *xeer* which governed those relationships was broken. It is much more traumatic to be in conflict with a neighbour than with a stranger. Repairing that relationship is likely to be much harder. Time was therefore set aside for the clans to discuss their problems in separate meetings, and more time was given to those clans with a greater number of more difficult problems to solve. For example, the Dolbahunte and Habr Toljallo took two days to reconfirm their previous agreements, while the Habr Yunis and Warsengeli were given four days.

Interestingly, it was said that the Issaq (Habr Yunis and Habr Toljallo) had not settled their own problems before the meeting, and it had been agreed to deal with them once the meeting was concluded. The reason for this was not clear. In 1991, they made a list of their grievances and demands (*diya* blood payments, return of looted items, etc.). It was perhaps felt that solving the larger problems between the Issaq

and Darod would help them to solve their internal differences. Moreover, the issues within the Issaq were perhaps clearer and could be more easily settled within the existing rules of *xeer*.

The elders are pragmatic in dealing with problems. It is understood that there are things that can be settled, and there are others that cannot. For example, it was possible to list the grievances between the Habr Yunis and Habr Toljallo, but the grievances between the Issaq and Darod were too many. What happened between the Issaq and Darod therefore had to be dealt with in a different manner. While assets (houses, vehicles, land) can be returned, the norm has been in all such meetings in Somaliland to draw a line under the past and to declare that any homicide that took place before the cease-fire has to be forgotten. Incidents from that time on will be dealt with through joint committees. The principle is to avoid things that will create further problems: a recognition of the limits of law.

From an outsider's perspective, this insistence on forgetting and hiding grievances (institutional amnesia and amnesty) makes it difficult to understand whether trauma is in fact an issue and, if so, how it can be dealt with. It makes it difficult to address issues of war crimes and human rights abuse. History is important in Somali society and feuds can last generations, so it is difficult to see how crimes can be truly forgotten. Perhaps there is in such an agreement a recognition of common guilt.

5.15 Mediation

The primary function of the conference was to provide a forum in which the clans could solve their differences. The conference offered a forum for facilitation rather than mediation. The clans were expected to solve their own problems. At the same time the meeting did provide a structure for mediation. The clans were expected to reaffirm their agreements at the main conference. If they were unable to do this, the *ergo* were given the opportunity to mediate. If they were unable to solve the problem, it went to the Chairing Committee, and if they also were unable to solve it, it passed to the Sultans. The Sultans would if necessary be the final mediators and final decision-makers. However, they prefer to approve decisions, rather than enforce them.

Having an equal number of delegates in each committee was essential for mediation. In Somali society mediators have to be equal in number in order to represent equally the interests of the different parties.

5.16 Resources

The meeting was largely funded by the communities in Sanaag. Some support has been received from ActionAid and the Life and Peace Institute through SDRA. UNOSOM promised to transport 30 tonnes of food for the meeting, donated by the American Embassy in Djibouti, but at the time of the visit this had not been forthcoming.

The funds from the LPI has been used for food, blankets and utensils. Each delegation contributed 75 head of goats, and some fuel. The cost of keeping over 400 delegates was in the region of So.Sh 680,000 (\$200) per day. By the end of the second week of meeting they were said to be 60,000,000 (\$20,000) in debt.

5.17 Security

By common agreement, all militia were kept away from Erigavo for the duration of the conference. 100 policemen were recruited from the Habr Yunis (50) and Habr Toljallo (50) for the meeting. They were identified by red arm bands. They were the only people allowed to carry guns during the conference. It is significant that the security police were provided by the Habr Yunis and Habr Toljallo. Erigavo is traditionally an Issaq town, primarily Habr Yunis. It is customary in Somali society that hosts are responsible for the security of their guests. In providing the security, the Habr Yunis were therefore confirming their role as hosts.

5.18 Defining the Peace

The conference in Erigavo was first and foremost a peace meeting between the clans. However, if peace is merely defined as an absence of armed conflict, then peace could be said to have been established by the cease-fire agreed between the clans in 1991. However, a cease-fire is only the first part, a precursor to peaceful cooperation. Peace has to be built upon and institutionalised. The series of peace meetings that were concluded prior to the Erigavo conference laid down the parameters for sustaining new relations and peaceful cooperation, namely the rights to:

- freedom of movement
- freedom of trade
- access to common grazing areas
- access to common water sources
- return of property.

5.19 Property Issues

It has been assumed that sorting out issues of property and land rights will be problematic in any peace process in Somalia. In Erigavo, this appears to have been less of an issue than one might assume. In principle it is an issue open to negotiation. In Erigavo it was consistently stressed that people who live (or lived) together know who owns what. People distinguish between private and common property, in the same way that pastoralists distinguish between common and private wells. For example, in Sanaag on the Guban coastal plain where water is abundant, no specific rights are exerted over wells; on the Ogo plateau small lineage groups exert some ownership rights; in the dry Haud individuals exert rights over wells.

Houses and movable property such as animals and vehicles are relatively easy to deal with. The owners are known. The issue, once the principle is agreed that property should be returned, is partly a private matter. For example, a person whose house has been captured or squatted in by another may negotiate for its return and agree to pay some money to the squatters for 'looking after' the property. Other property may have been protected by affinal relatives, in which case the return of that property is easy. By the start of the peace meeting many people had already begun to exchange property — animals and movable assets.

A more problematic issue is land. As described above, some of the valleys of Sanaag had been expropriated by others prior to the war for farming land, and the war had

been partly fought over this issue. In Sanaag a major issue will be the farms and grazing areas which the Habr Yunis have declared as rightfully theirs and which used to be farmed by the Darod. The significance of the land issue was made clear by the fact that fencing of enclosures was going on in Erigavo town even during the conference. Equally significant will be the lands of (23) former cooperatives and reserve areas which were declared open at the Dararweyne meeting. Closures and enclosures will ultimately damage the interests of the pastoralists, and affect their coping strategies, by restricting their movement.

Somali pastoralism is a highly developed system of range management that utilises resources which other modes of production may not be able to utilise so effectively. The conflict in Sanaag has had an effect on the relationship between different interest groups and how they perceive the management of resources in the future. The changing population and market forces will bring new investment strategies and changes in the use of rangeland resources. One is likely to see greater 'opportunistic' development or exploitation of resources by wealthy people wanting to invest in the region, now they can no longer invest in the south. The extent to which the meeting in Erigavo, and any peace meeting, is able to address these long-term issues will be crucial for future peace in the region.

5.20 Commonality of Interests

Why, after all the years of repression, death and mistrust, should people in Sanaag want to restore peace? What are the common interests among people that motivate the desire for peace?

Because the war has been fought along clan lines, analysis of the conflict to date has tended to emphasise the agnatic relationships and conflict-prone nature of the segmentary clan system. We tend to look at the clan system vertically. However, clans segment through marriage and demographic growth. Too much emphasis on the agnatic links means that we forget the affinal links. Some Somalis have joked that 'Habr' ('mother', e.g. Habr Toljallo, Habr Yunis, Habr Awal) is the problem. While this recognises the problem of the segmentation of clans, it is perhaps also a comment on the fact that it is difficult to be hostile to someone to whom one is related. What was consistently stressed at the Erigavo conference was the affinal links and the high level of inter-marriage between the clans. The Issaq and Darod clans in Sanaag are closely linked through marriage. The Habr Yunis in particular are intermarried with the Warsengeli and Dolbahunte.

Another motivation for the conference was economic, and had to do with trade, access to grazing lands, and access to water. In a sense the conference was a business meeting. The Issaq need to cooperate with the Dolbahunte and Warsengeli in order for business, trade, economic recovery, rehabilitation and development to happen and be sustained. The Habr Yunis also need the freedom to move southwards through Dolbahunte territory to their grazing lands in the Haud.

One of the effects of war is to undermine people's 'coping mechanisms' or 'survival strategies'. 'Low-intensity' warfare, which typifies much of the armed conflicts in the world today, in which 90 per cent of deaths are civilians, aims to destroy the social fabric of communities and cooperation — the first level of coping strategies. In the

harsh post-war environment in Sanaag region, peaceful cooperation, which allows for the resumption of trade and sharing of resources, is in itself a survival strategy.

5.21 Local Government

The second item on the agenda of the conference was the establishment of a regional administration. What kind of administration will emerge was not clear and was up for debate. The most likely structure will be one that mirrors the one developed for central government, with a council of elders and an executive administrative body.

The challenge for NGOs working in Sanaag is going to be how to work with any new administration that is formed. The elders kept the 'politicians' out of the peace meetings, because making peace was not their 'job'. Now it will be the job of the politicians to run the administration, and the elders are likely to point the NGOs towards supporting the administration in order to build upon or strengthen the peace. As the situation in Somaliland changes, NGOs will have to adapt their practices from one in which there was no functional government, to one in which there is a representative government starting to function.

Sanaag may offer a way of dealing with this change. In addition to the regional administration, the innovative addition that was being considered in Erigavo was the formation of a 'Development Committee', or 'intellectuals committee'. The function of this committee would be to act as advisers to the elders and the administration, to gather data on the needs of the region, and seek funding for regional development. It was been proposed that each clan would pay the salary of one graduate for one year to represent them on this committee. The name being proposed by SDRA was the 'Peace, Planning and Economic Committee'.

5.22 Peace and Development

In Sanaag region a process is underway to rebuild a community damaged by war. The model suggested by the Sanaag Conference is that peace and stability can only grow by building peace from the grassroots. The model suggests that a locally initiated process is likely to be most sustainable. It also suggests that efforts by NGOs in Somaliland should be directed towards supporting these processes at the periphery.

For the purpose of this report, what is perhaps most striking when looking at the peace meeting in Sanaag is that processes used in peace-making, or peace-building are similar to those we look for in a sustainable development projects: a long-term process, community participation, community support, legitimate representation, traditional (indigenous) ways of doing things, common goals, and community ownership of the process. In this sense the NGO approach to self-reliant sustainable development is not so far removed from peace-making or peace-building. The goals of justice and development are surely common to both. Once this is understood, it does not require too great a leap of imagination to begin to look at ways in which NGOs can both support and learn from peace-making activities in Somaliland.

6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this report was to help to strengthen agencies' analysis of the situation in Somalia and Somaliland and to identify options for them to consider in supporting peace and reconciliation. With regard to the first task, I hope that the report will, if not strengthen, then at least widen their framework of analysis and understanding. The second task is more problematical.

From an anthropological perspective, Somali society works on a system of balanced oppositions between groups, orchestrated through, and institutionalised in, a segmentary kinship system and traditional laws and procedures laid down in a 'social contract' (*xeer*). This system is inherently unstable and therefore prone to conflict. If peace is thought to exist where there is an equitable balance, anything which upsets the balance will continue the conflict. The danger inherent in any 'intervention', be it foreign military or humanitarian aid, or externally initiated peace conferences, is that they can upset that balance. Agencies need to be conscious of this when supporting peace-making processes.⁵³

A response to conflict depends on how one defines peace-making and peace. It is unlikely that 'peace', in the sense of a total absence of conflict, can exist in Somalia or Somaliland, or for that matter in other societies. How then does one define 'peace' and 'peace-making'?

6.1 What is Peace?

The following definitions of 'peace' were recorded by participants in Oxfam's workshop on Conflict and Peace in Hargeisa:

a) Types of Peace

badbaado	- safety
amaan	- security
degganaansho	- stability
samaan	- well-being
ladnaan	- well-being
xasi llooni	- stability
gallad	- blessing
salaamad	- peace
naruuro	- prosperity
nasteexo	- prosperity
badhaadho	- prosperity
barwaaqo	- prosperity
nabad-raadin	- peace-making
nabad-doon	- peace-maker
nabad-ilaalin	- peace-keeping
isafgarad	- understanding
heshiis	- agreement

b) The characteristics of peace and conflict

Nabad (Peace)	Colaad (Conflict)
Plentiful food	Famine
Milk	Drought
Rest	Poverty
Rain	War widows
Prosperity	Orphans
Helping	Displacement
Marriage	Divorce
High productivity	Refugees
Dances	Death
Harmony	Dispersal of family
Dialogue	Disability
Exports	Looting
Songs	Poor economy
Festivals	Hate
Conflict resolution	Lack of trust
Happiness	Destruction
Health	Lower birth rate
Imports	More weapons
Sound body and mind	No education
Tourists	No health
Schools	No accountability
Education	Disorder
Money	Chaos
Telephones	
No foreign troops	
Family reunions	
Free movement	
Ghee	
Lots of camels and sheep	
Livestock trading	
Less killing of livestock	

It was clear for those participants of the workshop that 'peace' involved more than an absence of conflict, as the Somali saying *nabad iyo caano* (peace and milk, i.e prosperity) implies.

6.2 What is Peace-Making?

If Somali society is said to be conflict-prone, then mechanisms also exist within Somali society to mitigate and resolve conflicts. Dialogue, the mediation of elders, religious sanctions, compensation, and indeed military strength are all traditional means for resolving conflicts. It is clear from the previous section that these means are currently in use in Somaliland. It would be wrong to think of these 'traditional' means of conflict-resolution as reactionary. They are dynamic, being updated and adapted to current needs. The people who understand this best are Somalis. Indeed, Somalis are as experienced at peace-making and conflict-resolution as they are at

making war. The models of Boroma and Sanaag suggest that reconciliation will be achieved only through a process which is 'bottom-up', that is one which is initiated and controlled by the participants. Again this was expressed clearly by the participants of the workshop in Hargeisa, when they contrasted the characteristics of a Somali peace meeting (*shir Somali*) with that of a UN peace meeting (*shir UN*):

Shir Somaali

- Involves legitimate representatives
- Uses traditional methods of problem-solving
- Uses experienced mediators (e.g. elders)
- Elders chosen by the community
- Involves the 'real actors'
- Community has confidence in representatives
- Elders have authority
- Held inside the country
- Common agenda/goal: peace
- Limited agenda
- Common rules, values (*xeer*)
- Ability of elders to enforce/ensure implementation of agreements
- Meetings structured to separate problems
- Consensus decision-making
- Equal representation by parties
- Community support, shared expenses
- Open time-table
- Traditional role of hosts and guests

Shir UN

- Lack of confidence in representatives
- Held outside the country
- Involves politicians, not elders
- Unequal representation
- Lack of understanding of the problem(s)
- External, rather than internal, support
- Lack of confidence in organisers/facilitators
- Lack of common *xeer*
- Short time-table

While the Addis Ababa meeting involved a broad range of representatives (religious leaders, elders, women, intellectuals), those who made decisions and signed the agreements were the politicians, or 'warlords'. Such people were consciously excluded from the peace meetings in Somaliland. On the other hand, the Addis Ababa conference did receive international recognition and therefore the possibility of international support, while the Boroma conference was not accorded international recognition, and therefore Somaliland is unlikely to receive the same level of international support for rehabilitation and recovery.

6.3 Options for Agencies Working in Somalia/Somaliland

The spectrum of peace-making is wide, and can range from physical to social rehabilitation. Relief work, if it helps to promote a return to a stable environment, can be considered part of a peace-making process. If relief becomes a source of conflict, then it is not contributing towards a peaceful and stable situation. It is a premise of this report that peace and stability, a return to constructive relationships, is a pre-requisite for long-term sustainable development. This also seems to be the understanding of the elders at Boroma and in Sanaag.

The question for relief and development agencies is to identify the level or levels at which they can support peace-making. The analysis in this report of efforts at peace-making in Somalia and Somaliland suggests that the most sustained and successful efforts at peace and reconciliation are those where people have been able to rebuild their relations of trust from the bottom upwards, as in Somaliland. It is a slow process. The aim should be to support, promote, or build upon local initiatives, working at the periphery to restore and empower the indigenous forms of peace-making and conflict-resolution.

In conclusion, the answer perhaps is to approach conflict-resolution and peace-making in the same way that one approaches development: in a style that is 'bottom-up' and 'participatory', allowing a relatively long time scale, and enabling participants themselves to control the process. In this sense agencies could usefully begin by assessing all their work in Somalia and Somaliland in terms of the extent to which they are helping to strengthen local institutions and promote a peaceful environment. Peace-building, rather than peace-making, is perhaps the level at which agencies should be working.

6.4 Recommendations

Demobilisation: As proposed above, the agencies present in Somaliland should make a substantial commitment to supporting the demobilisation process there.

Somaliland Programmes: The political, economic and military situation in Somaliland is different from that in Somalia. Somalia and Somaliland should be treated separately. Agencies should invest in strengthening their programmes in Somaliland and the capacity of their staff there to respond to the needs in Somaliland.

Advocacy: One advantage of UN peace-making efforts over indigenous ones is that they receive international support. Agencies should advocate international acceptance of the legitimacy of indigenous peace processes. They might consider commissioning further research, such as that initiated by ActionAid in Sanaag, on indigenous peace-making processes in Somalia, and feeding back the findings to UNOSOM and the international community.

Consultations: Agencies should consider supporting further 'peace workshops' in Somaliland, specifically for Somali staff of international NGOs and Somali NGOs as a means of strengthening the capacity of these NGOs and promoting dialogue and an exchange of ideas throughout Somaliland.

Agencies might also consider supporting a workshop for Somali women, from Somalia and Somaliland. This might best be done as a workshop for Women of the Horn of Africa and might aim to identify broad issues affecting women throughout the Horn. Extending the scope to 'Women of the Horn' might help it to deflect some internal conflict.

Agencies might consider holding a Peace Workshop on Somalia, at which current research on and experiences of doing peace-work in Somalia and Somaliland could be presented. It might help to develop a framework and rationale for future NGO peace work in Somalia and Somaliland. It would also help to promote a more positive image of Somalia. As much work has been done, both practical and academic, by Somalis, the workshop should concentrate on their work. One could usefully consider bringing people in from other conflict situations, to share experiences.

The workshops might form part of the consultation process suggested for Somalia. Conversations with Somaliland elders suggested that they might be prepared to assist in consultations with groups in the south. This would depend, however, on the extent to which they felt they have solved their own problems.

Cultural Activities: Poetry and songs are extremely powerful media of communication in Somali society. Poetry in particular can greatly influence attitudes and situations. The peace conferences in Boroma and Sanaag both utilised poets. Agencies might consider sponsoring a Somali peace poetry competition, with the best entries broadcast over the radio, BBC Somali Service, and Addis Ababa Voice of Peace. This could be a high-profile media peace initiative. As with poetry at peace meetings, it could help to influence the situation psychologically. Ergada, the editors of *Hal Abuur* magazine, and Zeinab Jama have expressed an interest in such an exercise.

The agencies should consider promoting other Somali cultural activities, such as songs, music and theatre, both within Somalia and Somaliland and outside. Magazines such as *Hal-Abuur* should also be supported. Such activities can help to promote a more positive image of Somalia.