

SOMALIA: EXPANDING CRISIS IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

JOINT HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HUMAN
RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS

AND THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM AND
NONPROLIFERATION

OF THE

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SOMALIA: EXPANDING CRISIS IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

THURSDAY, JUNE 29, 2006

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS
AND INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS, AND
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM
AND NONPROLIFERATION,
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The Subcommittees met, pursuant to notice, at 2:03 p.m. in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Christopher H. Smith (Chairman of the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights and International Operations) presiding.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. The Subcommittees will come to order. Good afternoon, everyone.

Since the fall of the last government in Somalia in 1991, this beleaguered nation has become synonymous with chaos. It is considered a classic failed state with no effective government and violence as its daily environment. Now an Islamic Union containing elements of the several jihadist groups, many with ties to al-Qaeda, has ousted the secular warlords in Mogadishu, raising even more troubling questions about the future of this state and its threat to the United States, its immediate neighbors and the world, as a haven for terrorists.

Our purpose in convening today's hearing is to examine the situation in Somalia, review our options and work to devise a United States policy that will help neutralize the growing danger posed by an unstable Somalia.

According to a UN Security Council report, there are terrorist training bases in Somalia and terrorists who allegedly took part in the attacks on the *USS Cole* and the U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. The terrorist threat in Somalia is quite real, and the continuing violence endangers the already fragile Horn of Africa.

Six people were killed only yesterday in renewed fighting just outside Somalia's capital. Over the past 15 years, many people have fled into an unsafe capital when the outlying areas were made even more dangerous. The constant violence and the growing incidence of piracy has exacerbated the existing humanitarian crisis, which was the reason the United States reengaged in Somalia more than a decade ago.

The humanitarian pipeline into southern Somalia has been virtually shut down due to violence and piracy, leaving more than 2 million people in need of humanitarian assistance and protection.

The need to improve stocks of emergency drugs and supplies is critical at this point. Moreover, in a time of drought, especially in southern Somalia, supplies of water must be provided immediately in sufficient amounts. However, with the fighting and the piracy still ongoing, can the needs of so many Somali people be met?

Over the years there have been 14 attempts to establish a government, but none of them succeeded, not even the most recent attempt, which created a transitional government that was inaugurated 2 years ago. Somalia's bloodthirsty warlords could only agree that none of them would be allowed to manage a coherent government. Despite the selection by 21 militias of fellow warlord Ali Mohammed Ghedi as the Prime Minister, the other warlords refused to fully accept his authority and continued to make life a living hell for Somalians.

Earlier this year, the capital city of Mogadishu was rocked by the worst violence in a decade as scores of people were killed and hundreds more were injured during fierce fighting between rival militias.

A rudimentary system of Islamic courts was funded several years ago by a group of Somali businessmen, hoping to create at least some semblance of law and order. This group of Islamic courts established a union, and it is this group that has spearheaded the effort that resulted in the overthrow of the Somali warlords a few weeks ago.

Unfortunately, turning over power to this group is clearly not the answer. The international community and many in Somalia have grave concerns about the Islamic Courts Union's seizure of power in Somalia. There are several reasons for this concern.

As I mentioned earlier, the attacks on the U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania are believed to have been planned and launched from Somalia, and individuals and groups responsible for those attacks are now in power. Sheik Hassan Dahir Aweys, the leader of the Council of Islamic Courts, is considered a terrorist with possible ties to al-Qaeda.

Several of the factions which make up the Islamic Courts Union embrace global jihad, desire to establish Sharia law, and have declared their intent to make Somalia an Islamist state. The Union includes foreign fighters from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria and other Arab States and has been supported by Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

Despite an international arms embargo, weapons are an easy commodity to buy in Mogadishu. Somali warlords and bandits have been reported to be operating in eastern Ethiopia and northern Kenya.

Finally, the last Government of Somalia launched an attack on Ethiopia to recover territory it claimed in the Ogaden region, and there is concern that a renewed effort to reclaim territory in Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti could be rekindled by an expansionist Islamist government.

The growing alarm over the violence in Somalia is contrasted with the relative peace and order in the northeast area known as Somaliland. One must ask how it is that this area is able to establish effective governance while the other part of Somalia has not. And we will look at that in today's hearing as well.

Finally, our failure since 1991 to create a successful Somalia policy must not be continued. In October 1993, we all remember with horror that two American helicopters were shot down and 18 Army Rangers were killed in 17 hours of intense fighting in the Somali capital. The sight of American servicemen dragged through the streets of the capital seemed to diminish the national will for intervening in Somalia. Yet the expanding crisis in Somalia and its potentially disastrous impact on the Horn of Africa requires that we rethink our approach on these matters.

The creation of the International Somalia Contact Group seems to be a step in the right direction. The first meeting of the group, co-chaired by Assistant Secretary of State Jendayi Frazer, and we welcome her to the hearing today, met on June 15 in New York and will meet again in Sweden on July 7, and I look forward to hearing from the Assistant Secretary how this group might positively impact upon the crisis.

In the interest of time, I would like to now ask that my full statement be made part of the record and yield to Mr. Payne for any opening comments.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Smith follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS

Since the fall of the last government in Somalia in 1991, this nation has become synonymous with chaos. It is considered a classic failed state with no effective government and violence as its daily environment. Now an Islamist union containing elements of several jihadist groups, many with ties to al-Qaeda, has ousted the secular warlords in Mogadishu, raising even more troubling questions about the future of this state and its threat to the United States, its immediate neighbors and the world as a haven for terrorists.

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Six people were killed only yesterday in renewed fighting just outside Somalia's capital. Over the past 15 years, many people have fled into an unsafe capital when the outlying areas were made even more dangerous. The constant violence and the growing incidence of piracy has exacerbated the existing humanitarian crisis, which was the reason the United State reengaged in Somalia more than a decade ago.

The humanitarian pipeline into southern Somalia has been virtually shut down due to violence and piracy, leaving more than two million people in need of humanitarian assistance and protection. The need to improve stocks of emergency drugs and supplies is critical at this point. Moreover, in a time of drought, especially in southern Somalia, supplies of water must be provided immediately in sufficient amounts. However, can the fighting and the piracy be stopped so that the needs of so many Somali people can be met?

Over the years, there have been 14 attempts to establish a government, but none of them succeeded—not even the most recent attempt, which created a transitional government that was inaugurated two years ago. Somalia's bloodthirsty warlords could only agree that none of them would be allowed to manage a coherent government. Despite the selection by 21 militias of fellow warlord, Ali Mohammed Ghedi, as Prime Minister, the other warlords refused to fully accept his authority and continued to make life a living hell for Somalians.

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This group of Islamic courts established a union, and it is this group that spearheaded the effort that resulted in the overthrow of the lawless Somali warlords a few weeks ago.

Unfortunately, turning over power to this group is clearly not the answer. The international community and many in Somalia have grave concerns about the Islamic Courts Union's seizure of power in Somalia. There are several reasons for this concern:

- The attacks on the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania are believed to have been planned and launched from Somalia, and individuals and groups responsible for those attacks are now in power.
- Sheik Hassan Dahir Aweys, the leader of the Council of Islamic courts, is considered a terrorist with possible ties to al-Qaeda.
- Several of the factions which make up the Islamic Courts Union embrace global jihad, desire to establish sharia law, and have declared their intent to make Somalia an Islamist state.
- The Union includes foreign fighters from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria, and other Arab states, and has been supported by Saudi Arabia and Yemen.
- Despite an international arms embargo, weapons are an easy commodity to buy in Mogadishu.
- Somali warlords and bandits have been reported to be operating in eastern Ethiopia and northern Kenya.
- Finally, the last government of Somalia launched an attack on Ethiopia to recover territory it claimed in the Ogaden region, and there is concern that a renewed effort to reclaim territory in Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti could be rekindled by an expansionist Islamist government.

The growing alarm over the violence in Somalia is contrasted with the relative peace and order in the northeastern area known as Somaliland. One must ask how it is that this area is able to establish effective governance while the other part of Somalia has not. This question raises issues that must be examined by our entire government in devising a new, more successful policy toward Somalia.

Our failure since 1991 to create a successful Somalia policy must not be continued. In October 1993, two American helicopters were shot down and 18 Army Rangers were killed in 17 hours of intense fighting in the Somali capital. The sight of American servicemen dragged through the streets of the capital seemed to diminish the national will to intervene in Somalia. Yet the expanding crisis in Somalia and its potentially disastrous impact on the Horn of Africa requires that we rethink our approach on these matters.

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It is my hope that today's hearing will provide us with ideas that can be discussed and debated by the Administration and Congress with the objective of creating a new, more successful Somalia policy that will bring stability and peace to this country and its neighbors.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much. And let me commend you for calling this hearing. We have been talking some time, and I even had the opportunity to ask Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice at our last hearing when she appeared several months ago, maybe 4 or 5 months ago, 6 months ago, about Somalia and felt that we needed to have a little more attention given to this, as I had been requesting even from Secretary of State Colin Powell during his tenure. But let me commend the Chairman for calling this hearing, and I commend you for having this hearing to assess the crisis that we have in Somalia.

As I have indicated, I have been following Somalia for many, many years, traveled there on a number of occasions, and actually was the last Member of Congress to visit Somalia. Back during the crisis, we were able to even assist the Somalis in a \$3 million pharmaceutical drive from New Jersey Pharmaceutical Corporation that

contributed certain drugs that we flew over to Somalia and actually watched the distribution to specific places, and many of the New Jersey pharmaceutical companies were very pleased at that time with that activity.

I have been following the condition there for some time, as I mentioned, and while traveling in the region last August, I had planned to go to Hargeisa in northern region of Somaliland, but was unable to go because of security concerns by the State Department. I will continue to try to go to Somalia and Somaliland because I do think it is important for United States officials to see the situation with our own eyes. We cannot allow Somalia to be forgotten, nor can we simply sit back and say that it is not our problem. We can no longer allow the situation to succumb by neglect.

What happens in Somalia should be of utmost concern to us in the United States. As we know, the United States-Somali relations has no doubt seen terrible trouble, as mentioned by the Chairman. After the death of 18 United States Rangers in Somalia in 1993, critics have said that the American people have lost hope for Somalia and retracted any concern that they may have for this nation, and so we have seen the interest in Somalia sour for sure after that tragic incident.

Somalia needs stability and needs to have support from the international community, and I think that the United States could serve a useful role in establishing a state with a functioning government that can meet the humanitarian needs of its people. It is extremely more costly to have United States ships in the waters surrounding Somalia, extremely costly to watch for piracy and other issues that happen when there is no functioning government, and so if we could invest something into trying to see about a stable government, then we could certainly save a tremendous amount of funds by virtue of having the reverse policy.

Somalia has been without a functioning government for the past 15 years. In that time, as has been indicated, there were 14 different peace conferences, all of which failed to bring about lasting peace. Warring factions have vied for power, undermining the legitimacy of the interim government, and warlords have wreaked havoc on the Somali people, often causing senseless deaths and human suffering.

I have made a point of meeting with members of the transitional government. I have met with the parliamentarians, I have met with the President, I have met with the Prime Minister, and have attended several meetings with the IGAD negotiations in Nairobi. As a matter of fact, just 3 months ago, I met with parliamentarians in February just prior to the conference, the meeting that was supposed to be held in Somalia where the government was going to actually go into Somalia. I met with several of their leaders a week before that occurred, but as we know, there was an outbreak of fighting, and that particular meeting of the Parliament was cancelled. I was there, and I heard consistently that the United States was not there in a strong way,

Now, the transitional government is fractured with some of its members in Mogadishu, others in Nairobi, others in Jawhar, which makes it very difficult to function, that is for sure. We could have made a difference earlier by playing a more active role in the peace

negotiations and by helping to set up the transitional government instead of getting mixed up with the warlords. Accusations of the U.S., backing warlords have flooded the media and once again has called into question our Government's role in the Horn. These same brutal warlords then supposedly, from press accounts, had become the allies; and I just question the solutions that we are looking at in Somalia.

We do not want Somalia to become a terrorist safe haven. The best way to accomplish this is to aid the transitional government. The Administration talks about its support for democracy around the world when Somalia is another place it has chosen to ignore the democratization process in favor of other activities, very difficult process. But it was attempting—and I believe that some support would have gone much further than the situation that we are getting to be confronted with.

Let us not forget the humanity that is at stake in this issue. The paralyzed government is not Somalia's only problem. Extreme poverty is rampant, and according to the UNDP, Somalia is consistently ranked among the poorest countries in the world. About 43 percent of the Somali population are estimated to be under extreme poverty, 23 percent in the urban and 54 percent in the rural and nomadic areas, with the per capita income in Somalia less than \$1 a day, amongst the lowest per capita income of anyplace in the world.

Millions of Somali youth have grown up as a generation lost in chaos and conflict. For children, violence, chaos, disorder and poverty are everyday realities. Lack of schools, lack of health, lack of recreation has really created a very difficult population to deal with. We cannot ignore a whole generation of Somalis who have spent their childhood in abject poverty and neglect, without schools, sometimes without food, and consistently without hope for their own future. In a world where terrorism has a certain allure for the hopeless, the more we make the Somali young people feel hopeless, the more difficult it will be to bring that country back in line, and so we cannot allow this to continue any longer.

There are certainly no easy solutions, that is for sure. That is probably the understatement of the afternoon. But we must support Somalia, and we must find a way to finally try to get an experience with peace.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Thank you.

Chairman Royce.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you very much, Chairman Smith, and, Ms. Secretary Frazer, good to see you again. Welcome back to the Committee.

I think that all of us are very concerned about the unsecured borders of Somalia, the political instability that has existed there for a great deal of time, and the unfortunate geographical proximity of Somalia to the Arabian Peninsula really have provided a transit point for terrorists, and it has gotten to the point where Somalia is a safe haven for terrorists. And so if we go back to the *9/11 Commission Report*, they identified Somalia as one of six areas of the world as a potential or current terrorist sanctuary.

Despite the increased attention given to failed states since the 9/11 report came out, Somalia really has, in my view, escaped the closer scrutiny, and that is why I am glad we are doing this hearing today. It escaped the type of scrutiny that many regions of the world got, and this is going to have to change.

As the United States and as our allies continue to exert pressure on al-Qaeda, terrorists are seeking refuge there. In the recently released Country Reports on Terrorism, the State Department said a small number of al-Qaeda terrorists responsible themselves for the 1998 bombings of the U.S. Embassies in Kenya and in Tanzania continue to operate in Somalia, and that they are assisted there by elements within the complicated Somali clan structure.

Responding to the dynamic in the region, the United States now leads an international effort through the Combined Joint Task Force Horn of Africa, and the mission of that is to detect, disrupt, and defeat international terrorist groups.

Well, we have got a little problem here because the Union of Islamic Courts which have now gotten control of the capital itself and other parts of the country just days ago appointed a known associate of al-Qaeda with visions of an Islamic state to be its leader.

The events unfolding in Mogadishu mark an important point in our struggle against Islamist terrorism. If Islamists take control of the country, al-Qaeda and its affiliates gain a potential physical base, and they gain a great psychological boost as well. The obvious goal here is a stable and responsible Somalia. Assistant Secretary Frazer will note correctly that this is a daunting—possibly daunting goal, but it is the goal.

Nation building is hard, as we have seen in Afghanistan, and as we have seen in Iraq. There are no cookie-cutter approaches for a country with deep divisions and a country which, if we are honest, we know little about. But wishing away Somalia isn't an option. We are living in a time where threats from far away can hit home. Afghanistan is the lesson here.

Regarding Somalia, I remember those who said that the Taliban offered stability in a deeply divided country. I remember debating them then. We know where that got us in terms of ignoring that problem. We can't ignore this one. So I look forward to the testimony, and, again, it is good to see Assistant Secretary Frazer.

Dr. Frazer, I am glad you are here today working with us.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. We will take a short recess. There are four votes on the Floor of the House. We have about a minute and a half to make the first one. Two 5-minute votes, and then we will vote immediately and come right back. So I would say in about 20 minutes. I apologize, Secretary Frazer, and to all of our witnesses, for the delay, but we will resume immediately after that fourth vote.

[Recess.]

Mr. ROYCE [presiding]. Assistant Secretary Frazer, if you would like to give us your testimony at this time. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF JENDAYI E. FRAZER, PH.D., ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BUREAU OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Ms. FRAZER. Thank you, Chairman Royce, thank you, Members, for bringing attention to the important issue of Somalia and the expanding crisis in the Horn of Africa. With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I would like to submit my written testimony for the record.

Mr. ROYCE. Without objection.

Ms. FRAZER. Thank you.

The events in Somalia today represent a sea of change in the country's and the region's politics. Key U.S. interests are at stake. Regional stability, preventing the region from becoming a haven for terrorists and a humanitarian nightmare for the local populations, our efforts for more good governance and peaceful relations with all our neighbors are also threatened.

Events within Somalia's borders have tremendous consequences for its numerous neighbors and can negatively impact the entire Horn of Africa region. The international community has chosen to be proactive and develop a broad-based coordinated response.

Towards that end, the United States with Norway has set up a working group of international policymakers. On June 15 I co-chaired the first meeting of the International Somalia Contact Group in New York along with the Norwegian representative. The goal of this international contact group is to develop and form a coalition to share information and to coordinate policies. We want to encourage stability and movement in a positive direction. The international community is united by shared concerns about the local and regional ripple effects of Somalia's internal dynamics.

This past Monday I also returned from East Africa. Secretary Rice had asked me to visit the region and meet with stakeholders in an effort to gather relevant information and properly advise her about the issues at hand, given the current dynamics in Somalia. I met with leaders from Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti, Somalia's neighbors and members of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, IGAD. Collectively all four stops contributed toward fuller understanding of the contact group's recent communique and follow-on efforts to determine the best way forward on Somalia. In each country the message remained the same. The United States has certain goals with regard to Somalia, and, while counterterrorism is a priority issue, it is not the only issue. The United States is additionally focused on governance and institution building, humanitarian assistance for the Somali people and improving regional security and stabilities. These issues are, of course, interconnected and also provide support for our counterterrorism efforts.

The message I would like to bring here today and share with an American audiences is this: It is important for the United States to demonstrate support for Somalia's Transitional Federal Charter and institutions. American leaders must work with existing institutions and work together in order to effect peace, development and hope for the people of Somalia. Through diplomatic action, the United States has the power to convey that the Transitional Fed-

eral Government in Baidoa offers the only legitimate framework for governance in Somalia at this time.

All of this said, the security situation in Somalia remains fluid. The Department of State remains supportive of the arms embargo on Somalia as we consult further with the IGAD countries as well as within the context of the international Somali group. The Department also supports the ongoing search for notorious terrorists who have found safe haven amid this discord in Somalia.

As we look ahead, our best hope for moving toward—forward would be the Transitional Federal Charter and Transitional Federal Institutions which came out of the Somali National Reconciliation Conference in Kenya from 2002 and 2004. To charter any institutions reflects consensus views of Somali's people and thereby offer a legitimate and viable world map for restoring legitimate and effective governance in Somalia.

In the weeks ahead I anticipate further discussions both at the Department of State within the U.S. Government and with international partners. To conclude, I think that those discussions will focus particularly in three areas. One is to affirm our policy interests, which are to counter the threat of terrorism, support effective governance, address humanitarian needs of the Somali people and improve regional stability. I hope that our approach will continue the approach that we have launched, which is to build international consensus, to build regional cooperation and consensus for concerted action against the threat which is posed by the current dynamics in Somalia, and I believe that we will work to develop a two-prong strategy within the United States Government, clearly as stated both by the International Somalia Contact Group, by the IGAD countries and their communique, as well as by the African Union and its communique, pushing for providing space for an internal dialogue amongst Somali stakeholders whether that be the Transitional Federal Government, the civil society, business leaders, Islamic Court Unions; and pushing for dialogue and mediation, particularly between the TFG and the Islamic Courts.

We also, of course, have to be prudent and look at ensuring that a state does not come up in Somalia that is against all of our interests, that being a Jihadist Islamist state which provides a haven and base for terrorist operations throughout the region.

I think that we are united in our goals. We are united in our purpose, and we are working to develop a strategy that will meet our common concerns and prevent what is indeed probably the region's most serious threat in many decades.

Thank you again for inviting me to testify today, and now I would be happy to take any questions that you may have.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you very much, Dr. Frazer.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Frazer follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JENDAYI E. FRAZER, PH.D., ASSISTANT SECRETARY,
BUREAU OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

INTRODUCTION

Thank you, Chairman Royce and Chairman Smith for calling today's hearing. Somalia is an African nation that raises a series of concerns for those who are interested in the continent specifically, and those who are interested in security and counter-terrorism efforts globally. In 2001, President George W. Bush instructed his foreign policy staff that their primary goal would be to make the world "safer, freer,

better.” In subsequent years, this has continued to be the guiding principle of the Administration’s Africa policy.

When considering the Africa policy of this Administration it is worth noting that this credo has two implications; the United States is contributing generously toward improved democratic governance, health and economic growth in Africa, and the United States is also actively engaged in denying safe haven to terrorists with the help of African partners. Africa finds itself involved in the Global War on Terror, and Somalia is a critical element of our broader efforts to fight global terrorism. The continued absence of a central government, functioning as such, has allowed the East African nation to serve as a safe haven for terrorists and a humanitarian nightmare for the local population. Given the nature of the chaos within Somalia’s borders and its numerous neighbors, this negative charge has impacted the Horn of Africa more generally.

On June 15, I co-chaired with Norway the first meeting of the International Somalia Contact Group in New York. This group includes representatives of: the African Union (AU), the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), the United States, Sweden, Norway, Italy, Tanzania, and others. The group has invited the Arab League and Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to participate in future discussions.

The goal of the International Somalia Contact Group’s ongoing discussions is to form a coalition that can engage the parties in Somalia and encourage stability and movement in a constructive and positive direction. The international community is united by shared concerns about the local and regional ripple effects of Somalia’s internal dynamics.

The group is focused on supporting the Somali people who have suffered for the last decade, as well as how their situation has been used to benefit others. We remain deeply troubled by the foreign-born terrorists who have found safe haven in Somalia in recent years. Counter-terrorism is only one among several issues that American policy makers should consider in examining Somalia and the East African region.

ENGAGING THE HORN OF AFRICA

On Monday, I returned from East Africa. Secretary Rice requested that I visit the region and meet with stakeholders, in an effort to gather relevant information and properly advise the Secretary about the issues at hand. I visited with leaders from Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Djibouti—Somalia’s neighbors and members of IGAD. Collectively, all four stops contributed toward a fuller understanding of the Contact Group’s recent communiqué and follow-on efforts to determine the best way forward in Somalia.

In each country, the message remained the same. The United States has certain goals with regard to Somalia. While counter-terrorism is an important issue, it is not the only issue. The United States is additionally focused on: governance and institution building, humanitarian assistance for the Somali people, and improving regional security and stability. These issues are, of course, interconnected and also provide support for our counter-terrorism efforts.

While visiting Kenya, I had the opportunity to meet with the leadership of the Transitional Federal Institutions (TFIs), including the Speaker of Parliament Shariff Hassan Sheikh Adan, President Abdullah Yusuf, and Prime Minister Ali Mohamed Gedi. The core message of that meeting was the overwhelming support of the international community for the Transitional Federal Institutions and the Transitional Federal Charter, which serves as the guiding framework for the various components of the Transitional Federal Institutions. The participants plan to mobilize resources and support for the Transitional Federal Institutions, as well as the people of Somalia.

After I met with them, these three Somali officials traveled to Khartoum to meet with a delegation of the Union of Islamic Courts, which was subsequently renamed the Somali Supreme Islamic Courts Council (SSICC). That the three officials traveled together was encouraging; it signaled their seriousness of purpose and their interest in returning peace and stability to their nation. The situation in the region is incredibly dynamic. There is a great deal of movement and potential for change. While the outcomes from the meeting in Khartoum represented a positive first step, follow-on actions must demonstrate both sides’ commitment to working together within the framework of the Transitional Federal Charter to support the reestablishment of effective governance in Somalia. The next meeting is scheduled to take place in Khartoum on July 15 and will provide a clear indication of both parties’ willingness to engage in constructive dialogue.

The goals for United States policy are clear. American leaders must work within the existing framework to demonstrate support for the Transitional Federal Charter and Institutions, and work together, in order to affect peace, development, and hope for the people of Somalia. Through diplomatic action and by example, the United States can convey to the rest of the world that the Transitional Federal Institutions in Baidoa offers the only legitimate framework for governance in Somalia and encourage the inclusive dialogue needed to support further progress within that framework. The scope of this dialogue should include engagement with broader elements of Somali society, including civil society, the business community, and leaders of marginalized sub-clans, in an effort to form a more inclusive political process.

These are sizable, and possibly daunting, goals. The formation of the International Somalia Contact Group, as a means of greater policy coordination among members of the international community, is a positive step in and of itself. This Contact Group will capably support and encourage positive political developments in Somalia. The next meeting of the International Somalia Contact Group will be held in Sweden on July 7, in an effort to build upon successes from the first meeting and create sustained momentum.

CONCERNS ABOUT TERRORISM

In pursuing the United States' three key policy goals—namely, addressing terrorism, supporting the reestablishment of effective governance and political stability, and responding to the humanitarian needs of the Somali people—the Department of State remains cognizant of the challenges the United States government faces in Somalia.

Not only have international terrorists found a safe haven in the nation, but Somalia also constitutes a general security risk for the broader region. There has been an increase in arms trading; the ease with which weapons move in and out of Somalia is troubling. We are working with our partners in the International Somalia Contact Group to develop a common response to address these concerns. For example, members of the International Somalia Contact Group discussed mechanisms for strengthening the capacity of the TFG's security forces in a way that will promote the formation of an effective, inclusive security force. These issues will be discussed further at the next Contact Group meeting on July 7.

This reality compels American policymakers to consider a regional approach to engagement; no approach can succeed without accounting for Somalia's neighbors. Toward that end, the Department of State is continuing to work with East African countries to build their capacity to counter terrorism and criminality that originates in Somalia. This effort should promote increased stability and safety within the Horn of Africa through the development of specific follow on measures to the President's East Africa Counter-terrorism Initiative (EACTI), which was announced in 2003.

Of course, security challenges remain. Several violent terrorists have taken refuge in Somalia, including some of the individuals who perpetrated the 1998 bombings of two United States embassies in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and Nairobi, Kenya, as well as the 2002 attacks against an Israeli airliner and hotel in Mombasa, Kenya. These individuals—Abu Talha al Sudani, Fazul Abdullah Mohamed, and Saleh Ali Saleh Nabhan—pose an immediate threat to both Somali and international interests in the Horn of Africa. American counter-terrorism concerns are directly related to the presence of these foreign terrorists and individuals willing to offer them safe haven within Somalia. We must therefore take strong measures to deny terrorists safe haven in Somalia—we must deny them the ability to plan and operate.

While the broad policy goals outlined above will remain constant, we are constantly reviewing and updating our approach to reflect the fluid dynamics inside Somalia.

The United States government remains committed to neutralizing the threat that al Qaeda poses to all Americans, Somalis, and citizens in neighboring Horn of Africa countries. Somalia cannot serve as a safe harbor for terrorists. The United States government will continue working with Somalis, regardless of clan, religious, or secular affiliation. Consistent with United States policy globally, there has been an effort to reach out and develop relationships with individuals who can provide useful data with regard to locating terrorists. The primary, guiding imperative for all of these interactions is combating terrorism.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

In addition to the immediate concerns regarding terrorism, the situation in Somalia raises a host of challenges. Concerns remain about humanitarian and socio-economic

conomic conditions in Somalia, as well as governance structures, human rights, domestic security, and regional stability.

The international community is now galvanized and has begun working toward an acceptable solution, as demonstrated by the formation of the International Somalia Contact Group. This is not an exclusive grouping. Rather, the focus is on sharing information, coordinating our common policy objectives, and forging workable solutions. For that reason, the group was receptive when the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) reached out and indicated their intention to work positively toward a better future for Somalia. UIC representatives indicated that they do not intend to be a replacement government. Our understanding at the time was that the UIC had no plans to threaten the Transitional Federal Government. As a result, Contact Group participants agreed that there was an immediate need for dialogue between the UIC and Transitional Federal Government. The Contact Group additionally called on all parties to end fighting and the growth of militia movements. By coordinating common policy objectives and sharing information on political developments in Somalia, the International Somalia Contact Group will become a vehicle to encourage positive developments, while offering support for the implementation of the Somalia Transitional Federal Charter and Transitional Federal Institutions.

THE WAY FORWARD

The Transitional Federal Charter and Transitional Federal Institutions offer Somalia a way forward, following the Somalia National Reconciliation Conference in Kenya from 2002–2004. The Charter and Institutions provide a framework for progress that the Somali people support. Both reflect consensus and thereby offer a legitimate and viable roadmap for rebuilding legitimate and effective governance in Somalia.

The existence of the Charter and Institutions does not obviate the need for inclusive political dialogue. Ideally, the dialogue in Khartoum between the UIC and TFG would be only the beginning; while it is a positive start, it should expand to include the broader elements of Somali society, including civil society leaders, business leaders, clan elders, and other key stakeholder groups. The UIC, which was recently renamed as the SSICC, should also stay put. Continuing to expand into Somalia would be an inflammatory mistake because such movement calls the group's intentions into question and sparks concerns among neighboring states. Given all of the current instability, the SSICC should stop any expansion, so as to signal the absence of aggressive plans.

Although the situation inside Somalia remains fluid, previous statements from the Union of Islamic Courts, including an open letter to the international community, which indicated that the group remained open and flexible, encourages us. We hope to receive similar statements from the recently formed SSICC, and we encourage the SSICC to continue the dialogue with the Transitional Federal Institutions in Khartoum.

The SSICC must also follow through with concerted action, including the eviction of foreign terrorist operatives from Somalia. Such affirmative steps would heighten security and supplement efforts to stabilize the region. The International Somalia Contact Group intends to encourage such developments in a way that facilitates the full implementation of the Transitional Federal Charter and Institutions.

In the weeks ahead, I expect to participate in further discussions both at the Department of State and with international partners. After my recent trip to the region, it is clear that instability in Somalia has worsened humanitarian conditions for the civilian population. Since the beginning of the year, over eleven thousand new Somali refugees have fled from these worsening conditions into Kenya.

The international community now stands at a crossroads. The outcome is dependent on our will, our ability to work cooperatively, and the quality of our joint decisions. Thank you again, Chairman Smith and Chairman Royce, for convening this important hearing. It is important that United States government policymakers discuss the pressing issues at hand and find a workable plan for moving ahead in Somalia and in the Horn of Africa.

Mr. ROYCE. I guess I would just begin with a question related to Henry Crumpton's observation when he was testifying on the Senate side. He said that he is the State Department coordinator for counterterrorism. He said that the Islamic Courts Union were, in his words, clearly lying when they say they don't know where al-Qaeda is in Somalia. And I was going to ask you if you agree with Mr. Crumpton's assessment there, and also whether you feel that

this element continues to represent a threat. It seems to contain a significant terrorist element in the organizational structure. So I was going to ask your opinion on that.

Ms. FRAZER. Mr. Chairman, I think that it is indeed the case that the Union of Islamic Courts is a heterogeneous group of courts, Islamist courts, and that there are elements in it which are jihadist in nature, militant hard-liners, and indeed are providing a haven for terrorists within Mogadishu and within Somalia.

Mr. ROYCE. I think that one of the difficulties with the government headed by President Abdullah Ali Yusuf was that when it comes to the question of popular support—I mean, I don't know your assessment on that. I thought I would ask you, do you feel he had popular support?

Ms. FRAZER. I believe that the Transitional Federal Government, the institutions of—the Transitional Federal Institutions are the product of a very long process of negotiation, both the international community backing it, the UN, the IGAD countries promoting it, and that it represents the decisions of the Parliament, and so whether—does he have popular support amongst all Somalis? I think that it would be hard to gauge that. And certainly I wouldn't sit here and say that he does.

But does the Transitional Federal Institutions have legitimacy? Yes. And I believe that they can develop even greater legitimacy. They have regional legitimacy and international legitimacy, and they can gather even greater domestic legitimacy by reaching out to all sectors of Somali society, civil society, the business community and to increase the representation of the clans.

Mr. ROYCE. My last question is out on a tangent a little bit, but Tom Campbell used to be a Member of this Committee, you knew him well, and he spent a great deal of time trying to advance the idea that we should give more autonomy to Somaliland. And, you know, in retrospect, one of the things that some of us have thought about is that maybe, you know, we didn't want a formal recognition, but maybe if we had created the ability for them to use institutions like the World Bank and get the kind of insurance that would allow businesses to go in there, you had sort of a functioning example. And had it been showcased, had it been assisted—although it is a slippery slope because of formal recognition problems with Somaliland in general, but could an example have been made so people would say, uh-huh, if we followed that model like the autonomous region in Somaliland, look at the level of support we have once we establish the rule of law, look what a difference the engagement of the international community makes in terms of financing and business and opportunity? Should we—in retrospect could we have thought about that and given a boost for more autonomy there; is that a credible way to show people kind of like East Berlin, West Berlin, there is a different way to go forward other than the warlord culture that prevailed in Somaliland—Somalia?

Ms. FRAZER. I certainly think that we should support positive developments, and we have supported—for instance, we supported the 2005 parliamentary elections in Somaliland, and we do have engagement with the Government of Somaliland. I met with the Foreign Minister when I was in Djibouti. So I think that it is im-

portant to continue to support that positive development and stability in Somaliland.

Whether it would have a demonstration effect to the people in Somalia and to the government in Somalia, I am not so certain that there is that linkage, but I think on its own merit, the Government of Somaliland and its stability and development and its moderation should be supported.

MR. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY [presiding]. Well, thank you, Dr. Frazer.

Mr. Payne.

MR. PAYNE. Thank you very much. It is good to see you again. I really appreciate all the work that you are doing, traveling to the region and convening many meetings.

We know that IGAD had been the primary mover of negotiations in Somalia, but could you, maybe in a quick nutshell, give me the assessment of what the United States policy toward Somalia is and what you would like to see in the near future?

MS. FRAZER. Policy toward Somalia?

MR. PAYNE. Yeah.

MS. FRAZER. Our policy toward Somalia is we want a return to a central government. Particularly we want to support the Transitional Federal Institutions and the Transitional Federal Charter to establish a central government in Somalia. We want to continue to address the needs of the Somali people.

In 2006, the United States provided \$85 million. We were the largest bilateral donor of humanitarian assistance to the people of Somalia. So we will continue to support the people.

We also want to ensure that Somalia does not become a source of instability in the region, the export of criminality, the export of arms across the region. So we need to, again, help to establish a central government so that we can provide stability in the region as a whole, and clearly one of our priorities is to prevent Somalia from becoming a haven for terrorists. There are terrorists there, particularly the three that we are pursuing who were responsible for the 1998 Embassy bombings, but there are others as well, and so we need to engage Somali society and to turn over those ones that we know are there and to prevent others from using it as a base of operation. As I said, that is—that is our policy goals.

We are also seeking in our policy approach to build a multilateral front to get common—a common acceptance of those objectives, which I think we do have, internationally and in the region, and also to strategize on how we can move together to prevent Somalia becoming and continuing to be the source of instability and a threat of terror in that region.

MR. PAYNE. Okay. I had the opportunity to meet with a number of the persons selected to be in the Parliament, and to be truthful, there are a number of very able people that make up the Parliament and its Prime Minister and its President. And I am wondering, in your opinion, do you feel that this selected group of leaders can, with support, be able to move forward as the representative for Somalia?

MS. FRAZER. I think at this point it is what we have, and as I said, it is the product of intensive international engagement and regional engagement. The United States, we have tried to back the

UN and IGAD in helping to bring about this government through with the negotiation and the conferences that took place in Nairobi. So we are committed to supporting the Transitional Federal Government. We are definitely committed to trying to help them establish the legitimacy across all entities by urging and encouraging them to reach out broadly. We are trying to give them the capability in terms of supporting the training of their police force so that they can gain greater authority as well, and certainly it is going to be a long-term process. It is going to be a labor-intensive, diplomatic-intensive engagement, as well as it will require significant resources. But it is what we have, and so we are working with it.

Mr. PAYNE. Just finally as it relates to Somaliland, we do discourage countries from breaking apart; however, it is a question of whether Somaliland was ever really a part of the Union of Somalia. But I do think that the colonial period had a lot to do with the way that various emerging countries out of colonialism are able to have a stability or instability in the government. For example, in the Congo, there was absolutely no training of anyone when the Belgians left, just chaos when Patrice Lumumba and the group took over; whereas in Kenya, for example, they had parliamentarians even before the British left as the rulers.

I think Somaliland had the advantage of having more civil servants involved in government than the British, and, of course, Djibouti is still under the French, and I think that gave them a head start where that—that gave them the ability to have trained civil servants ready to take over governance, and I believe that, in my opinion, seems to be the big difference.

As I indicated, were it not for countries separating, however—if more latitude could be given to Somaliland, and without former recognition—but World Bank and IMF and other kinds of services that could assist them—for the last 10 or 15 years we have been going up to Somaliland, and it has been pretty stable as a place.

So it might just be something that your Department could think about.

Ms. FRAZER. Absolutely.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Ms. Secretary, let me ask you if I could, what is the source of the funding that is going to the courts? Is Saudi Arabia a backer? Are they providing money? Where are the munitions coming from? We know in March, two rather significant caches were intercepted, and just the two were stopped—I am sure there were many more that got through. Where is it coming from?

Ms. FRAZER. Thank you. There is—we certainly know that there is money coming from Saudi Arabia. Whether that is through linkages between civil society, business leaders or government, it is not entirely clear. I don't want to say the Saudi Government is supporting any particular court, but I do know that there is money coming in from Saudi Arabia. There is money coming in from Yemen. There are arms coming in from Eritrea and other places.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Saudi Arabia is obviously a close ally of the United States. What are we doing to put pressure on the

government and on our other friends in civil society there to stop it?

Ms. FRAZER. As part of this process of building common purpose internationally, the International Somali Contact Group were reaching out to the Arab League to have the Arab League as a member of or as an observer—it is not clear, doesn't matter really, because we are all around the same table discussing a common purpose in how to move forward.

So we definitely want to reach out to the Government of Yemen, to the Government of Saudi and to other countries, the UAE and others in the Middle East, so that we can, as I say, build this international coalition of common cause and concerted action.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. The past is very significant because, regrettably, the bloodshed is ongoing, and certainly many people have died in just the last few days and weeks. Could you provide us any assessment on how much has been provided to the Union, to those who now control Mogadishu, and what we did to try to mitigate that kind of activity?

Ms. FRAZER. It is very difficult to have the, you know, concrete, specific numbers like that. It is even hard for us to know specifically what is going on in Somalia because we don't have a diplomatic presence there.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. I am talking about Saudi Arabia, you know, the source. No money obviously, terrorists can die on the vine, but if others provide largesse and weapons, it enables them—

Ms. FRAZER. As I say, I don't have any information that the Government of Saudi Arabia is providing any particular assistance to any courts. As I say, they are businessmen, even Somalis who live in Saudi Arabia. So there is a flow of contacts, a flow of resources, financial assistance going back and forth from Somalia to the region, to the Middle East, and certainly to Saudi Arabia. You have—just like you have Islamic schools being set up in Somalia, you know, which come out of Saudi Arabia, it is a situation that we have seen in many other places. And so I don't have any particular numbers to provide for you, but certainly we can look into that.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Okay. If you could get back to us, because we have had several hearings on Saudi Arabia's influence on terrorism, but also you mentioned education. Obviously Somalia has one of the worst educational systems on the face of the Earth, and if that void is filled by the Saudis, who have had a despicable record when it comes to hate-mongering—we have had witnesses sit where you are sitting who have described the books that are provided to young men and women, young boys and girls as young as fourth-graders, filled with hate and vitriol toward Christians, Jews and anyone who doesn't agree with their very, very narrow-minded perspective. And obviously if you train up young people in such a way, you are going to get very negative outcomes.

So I ask you to get back to us with specifically whether or not our Ambassador to Saudi Arabia has raised this issue, and at what levels, because I think it is important. Hopefully they weren't taken by surprise by the success of the Islamic Courts.

Let me ask you as well, Sheik Aweys yesterday told the AFP that the Union was "ready for partnership with the Americans." How-

ever, Aweys, as we all know, is on the Administration's terrorist list for his links to al-Qaeda; also declared that this partnership could happen only if the United States respects the government and keeps out of Somalia's internal affairs. That to me seems like a nonstarter. What is your sense?

Ms. FRAZER. Well, I think you are hearing very different messages coming from the various leaders in these Islamic Courts. Aweys is saying, you know, Sheik Ahmed has written a letter—he wrote a letter to the Somali International Contact Group, he wrote a letter to the United States, he has written a letter to IGAD basically presenting a face of moderation. Then you will see interviews with Aweys or others which is not at all moderate or tolerant and is, in fact, quite aggressive in terms of the establishment of Sharia law in Somalia. You saw the calls for the stoning and public executions. So we are getting mixed messages.

What is important, really, is not to reach out to the United States, but rather to reach out to the Transitional Federal Government as we have encouraged this dialogue, which the first meeting took place in Khartoum, but, beyond that, also to demonstrate with action, stop the expansion, stop hostilities. Right now there is—as you mention, there is fighting that is taking place to stop all hostilities and fighting. And also to turn over these terror—terrorists that we know are in Mogadishu. So speak with action rather than reaching out to the United States.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Let me ask you a question on the African Union. Obviously that body is seeking a certain kind of role. They have talked about an assessment team going to Somalia. But the AU is overextended. They don't have sufficient troops. We know that for a fact. Both you and I have been in Darfur and saw there was an overextension with the number of troops that were deployed there.

What role do you think the AU might play? And I say that with some concern in addition to the overextension issue.

I note that the African Union is going to play host to the President of Venezuela and the President of Iran, two people that we certainly have some serious concerns about, and for good reason. How do you take that? Why are people with such—particularly in the case of Iran—with such very, very dangerous agendas, being welcomed by the African Union?

Ms. FRAZER. The question of the overextension of the AU and what role they may play in Somalia, they—specifically the IGAD countries have called for an Ecosan peace support mission which would be represented by Uganda and Sudan. They are currently in Nairobi looking at what the nature of that mission might be to do an assessment.

What has been discussed are training—basically strengthening the Transitional Federal Government and its security apparatus, mainly training police and security forces, just as building the capacity of a state. There is also discussion about protecting Baidoa. So that if these Islamic Courts expand out of Mogadishu and Jawhar, there would be a force there that would withstand that offense. Those are some of the issues that have been discussed, but I don't think they have yet defined the mission clearly.

As far as the African Union, I am not sure who is receiving the President of Iran or Venezuela. Normally in these summits we all go. Anybody from the international community can show up at an AU summit. For bilaterals on the margins on the meeting itself, they may be invited in as a delegate to certain open sessions. They normally aren't part of any closed sessions of the AU as such.

Clearly we should be of concern both about Iran and Venezuela going there and what the nature of that dialogue is, but I can assure you that the United States is actively engaged with the AU almost organically. I mean, we very much support what the AU is doing. It is not simply retorts, and we don't go there asking for our support when we haven't given it. And the United States has been a tremendous supporter, so I think our relationship will be a priority, and certainly we can ask them who is receiving both of these Presidents and for what purpose.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. It certainly does raise questions when Ahmadinejad is invited and we don't know what role he is playing. So I would hope that the AU itself would take that under advisement as to what that looks like, what this man, who is rattling the cages of the entire world community with his pursuit of a nuclear capability in Iran—it is very, very disconcerting that he now, all of a sudden, shows up as a guest of the AU.

I have one question on the Ethiopians. Would you elaborate on what is President Meles' role in all of this is? As you know, we have recently marked up, and it is ready for Floor action, the Ethiopian Freedom, Democracy and Human Rights Act of 2006. I have introduced it, and I am joined by Mr. Payne. We have worked very, very closely on language in that piece of legislation, believing as we do that it is about time that President Meles be held to account for many of his misdeeds, certainly the gunning down of people in the streets, and the jailing of over 100 parliamentarians. I'm sure that you are aware of the extent to which this Committee feels, and I personally feel, about what is going on there. What role does he play now with regard to Somalia?

As you know, we provided exemptions in the bill for peacekeeping and for counterterrorism efforts. Perhaps this might fall into that category when it comes to military collaboration with Ethiopia. There are concerns about Ethiopia itself now exacerbated by what is going on in nearby Somalia.

So if you could speak to that issue, how we are working with them, and finally the issue of U.S. support for the warlords. There has been a spate of news articles suggesting that we are currently supporting or were previously supporting the warlords. Can you provide any enlightenment on that?

Ms. FRAZER. Sure. Certainly, as you said, the domestic issues in Ethiopia add to the instability of the region as a whole and are the result of the instability of the region as a whole, and clearly the aftermath of what was an historic open election in Ethiopia, the handling of the vote in the aftermath of that has left a lot to be desired. And we have been very clear with the Government of Ethiopia that it should not have people detained. It should bring to trial quickly. And the democratic space has shrunk since that election, unfortunately, and we will continue to engage and push and urge the government in that regard.

But as this impacts Somalia, I think it is the right question to ask, because what you find is Ethiopia has, probably more than any of the other countries, real interests at stake in terms of what is going on in Somalia and particularly the border between the Ogaden and Somalia in which you have Ethiopian insurgent groups operating out of Somalia. The Ogaden National Liberation Front and Oromo Liberation Front operate out of that Ogaden area.

Ethiopia has said two things to this Union of Islamic Courts: One, be careful in approaching our border; and secondly, don't try to attack the Transitional Federal Government. Don't try to take Baidoa. They basically established that as red lines and have gone into Mogadishu. They have talked to various clan leaders and clan elders to make it very clear what their national security interests are.

We have urged the Ethiopian Government and Prime Minister Meles not to go into Somalia, not to go into Baidoa, but I think it is important to keep Ethiopia out; that the agreement that was signed in Khartoum where the Union of Islamic Courts and the Transitional Federal Government agreed that they would stop all hostilities and all expansion be honored because there are real threats to Ethiopia's national security interests.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. I do have one final question before I go to Mr. Sherman. What brave humanitarian NGOs or international organizations remain on the ground trying to meet the compelling humanitarian crisis in Somalia? We know the ICRC was there, World Food Program and a number of others, but are they still there? And how is the humanitarian crisis being met? And is your crisis contact group addressing that?

Ms. FRAZER. Well, the Union—the international contact group clearly called in. We had represented at that contact group Mr. Aglen from the UN, and we made a very, very clear call for an increased assistance to Somalia. He felt that his appeal wasn't sufficiently met. As I say, the United States is the major bilateral donor in terms of humanitarian assistance to the people of Somalia. The——

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Did you provide that amount? How much is that?

Ms. FRAZER. \$85 million.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Thank you.

Ms. FRAZER. The fighting and instability in Somalia clearly presents a challenge for humanitarian access into the country. But what we need to be clear is it is not just humanitarian access into Mogadishu, but into all of Somalia. At the point where the Union of Islamic Courts were expanding out of Mogadishu and to Jawhar, they brought into—they actually attacked one of the compounds there, but they then provided security. But the programs that are still there are the World Food Program, ICRC, the AU and other NGOs.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. And no comment again on the other issue?

Ms. FRAZER. Which is what?

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. The warlords, whether or not we provided assistance to them.

Ms. FRAZER. What we have said over and over, Mr. Chairman, is that our interests, America's national security interests, are threatened by these terrorists who are seeking safe haven, and we will work with all elements of Somali society to try to gather information to bring them to justice. They killed our citizens, they killed Kenyans, they killed Ethiopians, they continue to represent a threat to America's fundamental interests, and we will continue to reach out to all elements who might have information to bring them to justice.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Thank you.

Mr. Sherman?

Mr. SHERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We know that this Islamic Courts Union includes at least some Islamic courts that are supportive of al-Qaeda. We know that they have played an important role, both before and after the attacks, on the USS Cole and our Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. Have we listed the Islamic Courts Union as a terrorist organization, or have we listed any of the constituent Islamic courts as a terrorist organization?

Ms. FRAZER. As far as I know, we have not, and that is because the Islamic courts are, as we have said, quite heterogeneous, and they have come together quite recently and unified together, but they were pretty much—you will have other experts here to testify who can probably provide you greater information, but they were fairly situated within the clans. And then they had come together more recently, and we haven't, as far as I know, listed any particular court as such on the terror list. But individuals are listed, including Hassan Dahir Aweys, which is listed as the founder of al-Itihaad al-Islamiya.

Mr. SHERMAN. So you have listed the individual, but you haven't listed the organization that he founded. I would hope that the State Department would look carefully at listing all those who support al-Qaeda materially, those who provide refuge for al-Qaeda operatives on the terrorist list, and then I would like to focus on the support that these organizations, some of which I think should be on the terrorist list, individuals who are already on the terrorist list, have gained support from Saudi Arabia and Yemen. To what extent—first of all, does Saudi Arabia or Yemen prohibit its citizens from giving their own money to the most extremist of the Mogadishu operatives?

Ms. FRAZER. Well, certainly AIAI and other groups like that are targets for terror financing as set out under the UN Security Council resolution. They would be on that list, and we would expect states to take action against them.

Mr. SHERMAN. Perhaps you could help me with the acronym AIAI, meaning—

Ms. FRAZER. Al-Itihaad al-Islamiya.

Mr. SHERMAN. Yes. So is it a violation of the laws of Saudi Arabia or Yemen for a rich individual in one of those countries to provide money to that organization or the other terrorists operating in Mogadishu?

Ms. FRAZER. They would have obligations under the UN Security Council resolutions.

Mr. SHERMAN. They would have an obligation, but you don't—in most countries, you don't go to jail for violating your country's UN obligations, you go to jail for violating your country's statutes. Now, Saudi Arabia and Yemen, I would think, would have an obligation to adopt statutes to put their people on notice that it would be a violation of Saudi or Yemeni law to provide aid to these terrorist organizations, and what you are saying is that, to your knowledge, Saudi Arabia and Yemen have failed to enact such statutes, and, as far as you know, the citizens of those countries are free to send their money to these terrorists.

Ms. FRAZER. Well, I am not the Assistant Secretary for the Middle East, and so I would ask you to ask the Assistant Secretary for the Middle East the statutes of Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

Mr. SHERMAN. I will.

To what extent do you see either private citizens from Saudi Arabia and Yemen or the government itself supporting terrorist or questionable organizations and figures in Somalia?

Ms. FRAZER. Well, as I said, there are Somali businessmen and Somali Islamists who reside in Saudi Arabia and Yemen and move back and forth and move financing back and forth. Clearly we need to work very closely, and that is why the Somali International Contact Group, or the International Contact Group for Somalia, is going to bring in the Arab League so that we can work in concert with these countries as well to try to contain and to try to prevent Somalia from becoming a jihadist state, and to prevent it from becoming a safe haven, and to have turned over those terrorists who are operating out of Somalia. So we have to work together with these countries.

Mr. SHERMAN. I think the Chairman was eloquent in expressing how the Saudi Government teaches hatred through its textbooks and educational programs, and now we see the influence of Saudi Arabia again in supporting these terrorists in Somalia.

Shifting to another topic, you have got this Baidoa-based transitional government. How much territory does it control? And are its leaders dedicated to the principles that we would like to see in foreign affairs?

Ms. FRAZER. Thank you for the question. The Transitional Federal Government's authority is very, very weak in Somalia—

Mr. SHERMAN. Does it even control the town of Baidoa?

Ms. FRAZER. I think most parts of the town of Baidoa. We certainly wouldn't want it to come under an attack, and that is why I think the IGAD countries are calling for a partial lifting of the arms embargo and calling for the IGAD countries to come in and beef up that capability to train up a police and security force that would give it more authority capacity, both in Baidoa but also eventually throughout Somalia.

Mr. SHERMAN. To what extent do the members of that transitional government have credentials to really be representative of the Somali people, or at least the southern and central Somali area excluding the virtually independent Somaliland in the north?

Ms. FRAZER. Well, the Transitional Federal Government comes out of the national reconciliation conference that took place in Nairobi, and it is representative of all the clans. As I said, we believe that the Transitional Federal Government should reach out

even more broadly and become more inclusive of civil society, business community. But there is certainly a need for greater inclusivity, but it certainly does represent all of the clans in Somalia.

Mr. SHERMAN. And you seem to be speaking of that transitional government in favorable terms, but I don't want to read too much into the tone of voice. Does this transitional government deserve American support? Is it dedicated to an inclusive democratic government with at least some respect for civil liberties of the people of the country?

Ms. FRAZER. We believe that the Transitional Federal Charter certainly does respect and deserve America's support, and we want to hold the Transitional Federal Government accountable to carrying out its governance in—to carry out—to carry out its actions according to the charter and the principles that are reflected in the charter. Certainly President Yusuf, when he went to Khartoum, I met with him, and I met with the Speaker Hassan, and I also met with the Prime Minister Ghedi, and they went to Khartoum in terms of opening a dialogue with the ICU, and the principles on which they said they were establishing that dialogue I thought we could support, that being recognizing that the Transitional Federal Government is the legitimate Government of Somalia as based on an international process that led to it, recognizing that the Transitional Federal Charter is the basis of governing in Somalia, recognition of the rule of law, and recognition and respect for democracy. And I thought that these were four principles which the United States could back.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. The time has expired.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Chairman, may I just in response to the questions, I will be very brief. I have had the opportunity to meet at two of the conferences, one in Cairo, one in Nairobi, and with the Prime Minister, President and Speaker and many of the members of the Parliament maybe on six different occasions. And I would just like to add that, as I have indicated before, I think that a job was done to try to be as inclusive as possible, trying to have all of the clans together. As a matter of fact, there are about seven Americans who are members of this group, and I think that just taking into account what Somalia has gone through, I believe that this formation of a group is about the best that we could have at this time; very learned and intelligent people who know their country. And so I would like to say having had the opportunity to meet seven or eight times, they are in my opinion legitimate.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Ms. Lee.

Ms. LEE. Thank you.

Let me ask you with regard to—and you, of course, said this in your statement and we recognize it—international terrorists, you know, have found a safe haven in Somalia and do constitute a great risk.

However, and I want to find out, is there a danger of the United States casting such a broad net that many organizations and groups and individuals are considered or could be perceived as being terrorists, at least from their point of view, by the United States and because they are Muslim? And so do we have that issue to address in terms of Americans being seen as possibly anti-Islam.

Ms. FRAZER. I should hope not, Congresswoman Lee. I think that we have been very specific about the individuals who we are seeking. The three in particular are not even Somali. They are not from Somalia. One is a Kenyan. One is from Sudan. And the other is from Camaros.

So I don't think that this is an issue about anti-Islam at all. In fact, when we were talking about the Government of Somaliland, it is an Islamic government, it is a Muslim country. So I don't think that that is the intent, and I think that we are being very clear. I even named the individuals who in particular we are looking for. So it is not against Islam, Muslims or the Somali society as a whole.

Ms. LEE. So we don't have a public relations issue in Somalia?

Ms. FRAZER. Well, that is another issue.

Certainly anyone can whip up anti-Americanism. It is very easy to do so. And so we certainly do need to reach out. It is somewhat difficult to do, since we don't have a diplomatic presence in Somalia, but we are going to try to ramp up our public diplomacy posture vis-a-vis Somalia and reach out both more to the diasporan community as well as within Somalia itself. But it is very easy for ideologues to say that the United States is against Islam. We are not. We are absolutely not. We are against extremist jihadist terrorist organizations.

Ms. LEE. Thank you very much. I mean, I am glad we have that on the record here publicly; that you responded so forthrightly with regard to that.

Next question I would like to ask you is just with regard to the health crisis that is plaguing the Somali people. Given the fact that we really don't know what is taking place, we have children that have been through now at least a decade of lawlessness, what is going on with regard to the HIV AIDS crisis, malaria, tuberculosis? Is there access to drugs and clean water? What is kind of the stage of the humanitarian crisis on the ground there?

Ms. FRAZER. Congresswoman, I will need to come back with specific details on that. As I said, the United States doesn't have a presence there. We don't go in. I would like to do so, frankly. We are certainly looking at whether we can. The insecurity and instability is significant, but there may be places in which we can get in and get eyes on directly. We also have our CPT04 which does civil affairs operation. They may also be able to support and assist directly the people of Somalia, but right now we work through other NGOs, so we will try to get more information for you.

The United States is, however, trying to respond to the crisis of the people and we are providing—we did provide \$85 million last year in humanitarian assistance and we are the bilateral donor of humanitarian assistance.

Ms. LEE. May I ask unanimous consent to submit my opening statement for the record.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Absolutely.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Lee follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE BARBARA LEE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Thank you Chairmen Smith and Royce and Ranking Members Payne and Sherman for convening this important and timely joint hearing of the Subcommittees on

Africa, Global Human Rights, and International Operations and International Terrorism and Nonproliferation on Somalia and the expanding crisis in the Horn of Africa.

As we all know, Somalia remains in social, political and economic turmoil. Although a new transitional government and Parliament are waiting and willing to take up their seats—they remain powerless due to warlords and militant factions that rule the country.

These factions have displaced and killed hundreds of civilians creating havoc throughout the country.

Mr. Chairman, imagine living in this state of lawlessness for over a decade. Some children in Somalia have never known peace-making them the real victims of this unrest.

The sheer desperation of the people and the mounting need for basic services like hospitals and education, electricity, clean water, and trash removal are compounded by a system full of violence and corruption.

Worse still Mr. Chairman, we have no idea about the health crises that plague the Somali people.

What is the HIV/AIDS prevalence rate? How and where can people be treated? How many AIDS orphans are in the country? How many people have tuberculosis or malaria, and do they have access to drugs or clean water?

How many people have fled to the surrounding countries and is there any hope they can return?

Many people have simply lost everything.

Mr. Chairman, this type of desperation leads people towards crime, lawlessness and terrorist fundamentalism—all activities which we are working to diffuse.

How the United States counters these activities and supports the Somali Government's efforts to reassert their authority are key to our future relationship with Somalia and the entire Horn of Africa.

Mr. Chairman, I understand the Administration maintains opposition against a new U.N. peacekeeping mission to restore the democratically-elected Somali Government and supports the continued ban of arms to the country; however, the question needs to be asked, "What are we willing to do to restore Somalia's democracy?"

Mr. Chairman, I believe our diplomacy backed with a guarantee of financial resources and humanitarian assistance could help in negotiating for peace.

I am also in full support of allowing the African Union to be more engaged and work in collaboration with us to finally bring peace to Somalia.

The time is now for action Mr. Chairman; I look forward to hearing from our witnesses on what our next steps must be.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. The Chair recognizes Mr. Smith.

Mr. SMITH OF WASHINGTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to ask a couple of questions about the Transitional National Government. First of all, you mentioned that it is very weak but worthy of support. If you would talk a little bit more about that weakness, what you see as their ability to hold on, their—what are the keys to making sure that happens; a little bit about that and what we here in the U.S. are doing to support the Transitional National Government and what more could we be doing?

Ms. FRAZER. Thank you. I think the first issue for supporting the transition of the Federal Government is to urge the dialogue, the dialogue between the TFG, the Islamic courts, a broader dialogue with all the channels, a broader dialogue with civil society and with the business community. And the strategic objective here is to prevent an attack on Baidoa to gain the recognition that the TFG is the legitimate government through the lone process of negotiation. It is 275 members of the Parliament. So trying to get this dialogue so there is greater inclusiveness and legitimacy in the institutions of government and in governance, I think that is the first step.

The second step is to more directly support the TFG, its capacity, its ability to provide services; again, its ability to provide security both in Baidoa and beyond. So we are engaged in a dialogue with

the region, the IGAD countries, to figure out how we can, for instance, develop and train a police force.

Right now, and I would ask you to talk—ask some of the other experts—but we are trying to make an assessment of the strength of the Transitional Federal Government, and in my consultations with the regions, I asked the very same question. I got varying answers. Some would say that Baidoa is protected by President Yusuf's militia alone. And that doesn't represent the Transitional Federal Government security capability. It represents the President's, which also can be seen as threatening to others. So I think we really do need to work with IGAD on how to strengthen the TFG.

Mr. SMITH OF WASHINGTON. And what do we do now in the U.S., in Somalia; if you can talk specifically about that.

Ms. FRAZER. Well, as things have changed we are sort of—we are working on refining our policy in regard to the TFG. I have to say, frankly, we have not taken the lead in this regard. We have really tried to support the international community, specifically IGAD in the UN, from behind in terms of their support for the TFG. They helped birth the TFG in these talks in Nairobi and we have stayed behind and pushed and urged and encouraged and specifically pushed and urged and encouraged the President, Prime Minister, and the Speaker to get on the same page, to go back to Somalia, which they did this past—this year. So we have been pushing from behind.

Now we will take a bit more of a leadership role. We are working very closely with countries like Norway and others, but to provide some guidance on how we can strengthen them.

Mr. SMITH OF WASHINGTON. Congressman Payne and I have a bill focusing on this, trying to get more resources in there to support that government. We will send a copy of it to you and talk to you about it. It is something we would like to get more money and support to do that, because it seems to me what we need to do is support the TFG in every way we can. It is a hard thing to do because, as you mention, they are kind of standing on a fairly wobbly plank at the moment. But I think that should be our policy, and we will try to move forward and make it more of our policy.

Thank you.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Thank you very much, Mr. Smith.

Ms. McCollum.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

There is a perception that the United States was heavily involved in financing the warlords in the United States as well as in Somalia. I would think that that would be a problem in interaction with even the transitional governmental authority.

Are you concerned that there is a perception or perhaps there is something based on fact about the support of the warlords and how we are going to deal with that?

Ms. FRAZER. The only thing I am concerned about is the continuing discussion of this issue in some ways. As I have said many times, we have supported a broad range of groups of individuals of the Transitional Federal Government to try to track specific terrorists who threaten American interests. I think that what we are trying to do is step up our engagement in support of the Transitional

Federal Government. We are trying to build an international coalition. We are trying to work with the region and what its objectives are, so that we can achieve what is a common purpose, which is to bring assistance and support to the Somali people to prevent Somali from sustaining a haven for terrorists.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. I understand that, but there is a perception within the country that we supported the warlords. What are we doing to eradicate that perception? Is it something that maybe we should be working more behind the scenes with NGOs and letting a country like Norway take more of the lead and be more supportive behind the scenes; or is our engagement directly going into working with the Transitional Government pushing—is pushing going to be seen as, once again, the United States interference? I mean, perception in the Muslim world is something we have to be very cognizant of and deal with in a way that is going to have the end results of what we want, which is peace and stability for the children of that country and for our country as well.

So is there a discussion about how we go about changing that perception within the country without being seen as being the moving force. You do it the United States' way or you don't—you know, you don't get any support. It is our way or no way.

Ms. FRAZER. We certainly have never said that. And in fact, what I was struck by when I went to the region and what I was struck by when I convened and co-chaired the International Somali Contact Group is how much there was a desire from other countries for the United States to take more of a leadership role. I heard over and over and over again, the feeling that we weren't present. I mean, we needed to be actively engaged and at the table. And certainly when Secretary Rice asked me to go to the region and convene the Somalian group, it was with that purpose. The way you overcome a perception is with proactive action and clear policy statements about what we are trying to accomplish. And I think that that is what we have been engaged in. I think that the region has welcomed it.

The communique of IGAD and the communique of the AU in writing welcomed the initiative. That was pretty much the initiative of Norway, backed by the United States to give it some reality. That International Somali Contact Group will meet in Stockholm next. It will include the Arab leaders. It will include the IGAD countries. So the proactive action is so we can work multilaterally to try to address what is a threat to all of us.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Excluding the 33 individuals which the United States Government has very clear reason to be concerned about, should we not be reaching out to the international—not the international—should we not be reaching out to the court?

Ms. FRAZER. Well, we have been very clear that the—probably the next most important step is for the court and the TFG to continue their dialogue that was started in Khartoum. And I say that because what we don't want to do is create an alternative to the TFG, and there is some concern that there are elements within Islamic courts who indeed, despite what was written to the international community, intend to establish an alternative government. So opening a dialogue there is not necessarily in our interest.

The dialogue is a broad dialogue in which we stated very clearly what United States interests are. Turn over these foreign terrorists, don't allow Somalia to become a haven for terrorists. Support and recognize the TFG and the Transitional Charter, a legitimate governing institution for Somalia, and stop all hostility. Stop expansion, because you are threatening not only the Somali people, the TFG, but also your neighbors.

And there is a lack of understanding of what is the purpose and intent of expansion if the Somali courts were there to provide order, to provide services to the people of Mogadishu.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Ambassador Watson.

Ms. WATSON. Thank you so much.

I would like to submit my opening statement for the record, please. Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Watson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE DIANE E. WATSON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN
CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Thank you, Chairman Royce, Chairman Smith, as well as to Mr. Payne and Mr. Sherman for convening this hearing. Somalia's two decade struggle with anarchy is the problem that America keeps wishing would go away. Yet again and again, we find that the ongoing conflict in Somalia is central to U.S. national security.

The Horn of Africa is a central front in our struggle against extremism. The poverty and misrule that persists in Somalia presents tremendous opportunities for al Qaeda and others that seek to harm America and Americans.

This type of threat, both to Americans and to Africans, requires our attention. Yet the United States seems distracted when it comes to Somalia. We keep looking for the quick fix that will let us ignore the Horn of Africa and once again move on to other things.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Colleagues—Somalia has no quick fix. The Somali people are seeking to rebuild their society. This will take years of sustained effort, by the Somali people, with our steady support. No solution that we impose can be successful in the long term.

This lesson has been learned the hard way again and again, but it seems the United States keep repeating our mistakes. When we try to choose winners and losers in the Somali political process, it almost invariably backfires.

Thankfully, there are other, positive lessons we can learn about how to help Somalia. It is true that very time the United States backs a particular horse, we lose. But it is equally true that every time we back a process—and show a sustained commitment to that process, despite our misgivings about the apparent short-term results, we, and the nation we are seeking to influence, win.

I hope that we can take this lesson away from this hearing, because I think it is an important one, a lesson that is applicable not just to Somalia, but to the whole of our foreign policy. Anti-Western Extremism breeds in pockets of anarchy and poverty. To defeat extremism, we must address these areas of mis-governance and economic despair. But the United States cannot do this ourselves. We can only win this struggle by helping people in these pockets to themselves find their own solutions to the problems that ail their societies.

This cannot be done in a day. And this not only requires American patience, it also requires American humility. Mr. Chairman, America does not alone have all the answers. But if we can focus on the long-term, and work with partners around the world who wish to improve their nations, we will eventually triumph over the extremists forces which threaten freedom and prosperity all around the world. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. WATSON. And several things. Number one, Ethiopia. And I know they are very concerned about the instability in Somalia. So what role is Ethiopia, Kenya, and Djibouti playing at this particular time? And you can just give me your answer to all of these things.

And as we fight terrorism, there is a lot of misunderstanding, as has already been voiced by my colleagues, as to what our goals and

aims are. Certainly the extremists in the Muslim world possibly are the terrorists. I really don't know. And we talk about a war against terrorism. Terrorism is a way of thinking, a philosophy. And so what are we doing through the State Department, through our Administration, to make it clear that our interest is in the best interest of their people and not trying to destroy a whole nation and nations that believe a certain way.

I think there is a lot of confusion out there, and it is unclear to us here in America as to just what we are doing when we talk about fighting terrorism.

So if you can comment on what you are doing for better understanding and what the nations that are surrounding Somalia can do and how we might be able to support them and get them to really do the negotiation rather than having us come in. You said that. We have not really been there diplomatically, and I understand that, and I don't think it would be good for us to go at this time.

Ms. FRAZER. Thank you very much, Congresswoman.

That is indeed our approach. And we found it to be an approach that works, which is to support African leadership to support regional initiatives. It has been a support that worked in Liberia. It has worked in the Congo. It has worked in Burundi. It has been an approach that has worked in Sierra Leone.

So in this case the IGAD countries, Kenya, Djibouti, and Ethiopia, I had the chance to visit them. I met with Prime Minister Meles, President Guelleh. I met with President Museveni, Foreign Minister Tuju in Kenya, and many others. And I wanted to better understand their communique and what they were calling for. And what they are calling for is ISOCOM, which is a regional and IGAD peace support initiative, peace support mission, to go into Somalia to support the Transitional Federal Government.

The definition of that mission is unclear and they are working on that right now in Nairobi.

I think what is important here is they did not want the frontline states, Kenya, Djibouti, and Ethiopia to go in, but, rather, neighboring countries; and they specifically mentioned Uganda and Sudan which, of course, would lead us to some concerns for the United States. But nevertheless, we are trying to work with them to better understand what they see as a mission and to see how we might support that effort.

I do think it is important to listen to the region and listen very carefully and their action has been blessed by the AU. And I had a chance to meet with Chairman Konare and to discuss with him, do you really want the partial lifting of the arms embargo? Their view is there are plenty of arms flooding into Somalia, including from Eritrea, which is one of the neighboring countries which should know better. But there are plenty of arms flowing into Somalia, but what is not there is the ability to give the capacity to the Transitional Federal Government.

So if IGAD came in, just as it did in Liberia when we did a partial lifting of the arms embargo so that UNMIL could come in and so that the United States could help support and build the Liberian Security Forces, they are asking for a similar type of arrangements.

Obviously, we are not ready to make that decision. This is going to require tremendous consultation in the Security Council. It will require an understanding of their national, the NSSP, the National Stabilization Security Plan that the Parliament of the Transitional Federal Government passed. So we are not yet there to take any decision. But we need to be aware and cognizant and work with them on developing the options for supporting IGAD.

I think that it is very clear that we do have the best interest of the Somali people at heart, but they need to have the best interest at heart as well. You don't see Americans on those technical shooting kits. They are Somalis. And we have called for them to reconcile, to have dialogue, to stop their hostility. We have been calling for a stop to hostilities for months now, since the fighting really got started.

We understand that the—from the information we have, the Islam assist, the jihadists are a minority even within the Islamic courts, according to the information we have. What concerns me is that these extremists are single-minded. And as more moderate people talk and dialogue and discuss, Islamists are not what their objectives are. Their goals are, and they may be buying time with the moderate phase while they are organizing and consolidating, and that is where the call for the dialogue is important. That is where the call for an ending of expansion and hostilities, because as we see them expanding and as we see them moving beyond Mogadishu, we have to call into question the letter that was written to the international community claiming that they are not trying to establish an alternative government; making claims about, you know, being moderate.

As we see public executions and as we see public stonings, it calls into question the intent of that maybe minority extremist element within the Islamic Court Union. We have to be aware and we have to work on multiple fronts.

Ms. WATSON. Is it that they feel that they want a country of pure Islamic country government and so on? You know, I have been trying to say what is it that they want in other areas. They want their land and they want to be able to practice their own beliefs in their own land. Understand. Understood.

But I don't know in other hotspots what it is that they are after. I know the economy is way down and children are uneducated, and pretty much these are poor nations. But what is it that you can see from your interaction is their goal?

Ms. FRAZER. I think there are multiple interests because it is a heterogeneous group. I think there are some in the union of Islamic courts established by business people intending to provide law and order, provide basic services, everything that every human being would want: Security for their families, stability, some degree of order. I think there are those elements.

I think on the other extreme there are those who have been operating and trying to establish a jihadist strategy, a state of extremist nature that has been doing so for over a decade. They have been building, they have been developing, they have been spreading their ideology. And that element is clearly interested in an ideological battle against those of us who are more moderate. They are

doing it in the name of Islam. And we need to be very careful of that element. They will use any means in terror tactics.

So I think there is a range of interests beyond that. There are those who have business or commercial interests. Financial interests. They want to control the ports, they want to control the plantations. And so I think that there are multiple interests at work here, and that is why it is so difficult to develop a policy and a strategy to take into account all of those interests and be very clear of where the United States' red lines are.

Ms. WATSON. I think an operative word there is "ideology." and maybe it is our rhetoric, the words that we use, that is carrying on their attitudes toward what we are all about in American and Western countries. Maybe when we say and always hook up terrorism with those who are involved, or that ideology, that is what infuriates and incites the attacks that we are seeing around the globe. Maybe we should look at how we express what it is we are trying to do. You know, the Creator comes forth in all the things that humans need. Certainly we are known, we have a reputation of supporting, particularly in developing countries, but maybe it is our—the way we express ourselves.

Ms. FRAZER. I understand what you are saying, but I would submit that in 1998 before we pursued relentlessly the global war on terrorism, our Embassies were attacked. It wasn't our actions that led to our attack on other Embassies in Dar es salaam, in Nairobi.

Ms. WATSON. So that is what I said. What do you think they are after? Why would they then initiate the attack?

Ms. FRAZER. I think they are jihadists. I think they have an ideology that is anti-Western, that is anti-democracy. I don't think you have to go any further than Aweys' words themselves. He has been interviewed quite a lot, and he has stated that they are anti-democracy. And we represent democracy, we represent freedom, we represent choice, and it is opposed to what their interests are.

Ms. WATSON. Don't you think on message we ought to start reaching out by changing the way we describe what we are trying to do?

Ms. FRAZER. I think that that would help. And I think that it is not only message, but it is also action. And, as I say, I think America has been quite generous. We are trying to create the space for the Somali people to grab control of their policy.

Ms. WATSON. Apparently what we have done has not been that impressive to them.

So I would really think we would go into another phase and that is, you know, how do we improve our message to really get out there? Our actions, you know, will continue; but how do we connect that message to those actions? Because they are about the right things, exactly.

And thank you so very much for coming in front of us. And spending this time and educating us as well.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Thank you very much.

Let me just ask one final question and then yield to Mr. Payne because he had some follow-up comments as well.

And I would just say that one of the reasons why we first got involved in Somalia, I remember very well during George H.W.

Bush's Presidency, was to feed people who were starving. It was the altruism and humanitarianism. And the people were happy that we were there. It was the people with the guns, the warlord types, that saw it a different way. But I would ask you, if I could, what percentage of Somali territory does the Union of Islamic Courts currently have and how many men do they have under arms right now?

Ms. FRAZER. Mr. Chairman, I think that that is difficult to know, because it is very fluid, it is very dynamic. Even a town like Baladwayne, which we hear the Union of Islamic Courts, you know, mobilized and went from Mogadishu to Jowar to Baladwayne, it is not at all clear that that is the case. In fact, what we are understanding now is that the court in Baladwayne was a local court and that this union of courts never even, you know—there were no technicals that went up to Baladwayne and took over the tone. So you have copycat, as some people would say, courts springing up even defensively, so that those that are in Mogadishu won't take their towns. So I think it is a very, very fluid situation.

And those types of numbers—it is too dynamic at this point to really sort of have a freeze picture and know what is the relative strength of any element. In fact, some of the clans of certain of the courts may start fighting against each other. So it is very dynamic and fluid right now.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. So we really don't have an estimate as to how many people are under arms?

Ms. FRAZER. No.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Mr. Payne.

Mr. PAYNE. Just on the question about arms embargo. You know, I was one that was supporting the lifting of the arms embargo years ago when the AU said they wanted to send—they were willing to send in at least an accord to protect, you know, the Parliament. As you know, there was the debate about where the seat of government should be and two groups had two different places, according to where they felt safe. And I think that if we had considered, as you mentioned, there is all kind of illegal arms going in, that if we had considered lifting—and it was the U.S. that mainly opposed the lifting of the arms embargo—and we may have been able to have some security, not a Chapter 7 but simply sort of a palace guard, so to speak, for the Department. I do think, though, that as you—if this is going to be reconsidered, that there ought to be some discussion with the AU that perhaps they need to rethink Sudan, you know. It had to be sort of suggested that they rethink who should head the AU, and Sudan's turn was there, and so perhaps some dialogue with them.

There are other countries, Rwanda, Tanzania, Botswana, Uganda, all English speaking, and with well-disciplined soldiers, those who really don't abuse their authority. Each of those countries have been applauded for their peacekeepers being disciplined and well trained.

So I would hope that you might reconsider that. And secondly, though, suggest that Sudan not be a part of the countries. And as a matter of fact, Uganda is at odds with Sudan because of the Lords Resistance Army being protected somewhat by Sudan. And so that doesn't make a good mix in the first place.

So thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Dr. Frazer, thank you very much for your testimony. We look forward to working with you going forward.

I would like to welcome our second panel of witnesses.

Mr. John Prendergast is a Senior Adviser to the International Crisis Group. Prior to joining Crisis Group, he was a Special Advisor to the U.S. State Department, focusing on conflict resolution in Africa. He was also Director of African Affairs at the National Security Council. He is the author of seven books on Africa, including Crisis Group's book on Sudan, *God, Oil and Country: Changing the Logic of War in Sudan*; as well as his new book on southern Africa, *Blood and Soil: Land, Politics and Conflict*.

We will then hear from J. Peter Pham, who is the Director of the William R. Nelson Institute for International and Public Affairs at James Madison University, and is also a Research Fellow at JMU's Institute for Infrastructure and Information Assurance. He is currently directing a pilot study for IIIA on Africa's place in a strategic vision of America's future energy security. Dr. Pham is the author of nearly 200 essays and reviews on a wide variety of subjects in scholarly and opinion journals.

We will then hear from Mr. Ted Dagne, who is a Specialist in African Affairs at the Congressional Research Service and has produced more than a hundred major studies on African issues. He served as Professional Staff Member for the House Foreign Affairs Committee during the mid-1990s. And he was a Special Advisor on Sudan to the Department of State from 1999 to 2000. Mr. Dagne is Associate Editor of the *Mediterranean Quarterly Journal*.

And finally we will hear from Dr. Saad Noor, who was born in what was then known as the British Somaliland Protectorate, who is the Representative to the United States from the Republic of Somaliland. He was educated in the United States at Morehouse College, Eastern Michigan University, and the University of Michigan. Dr. Noor's professional activities in the last three decades extend from serving as an academic administrator, a university professor, international development specialist, and political activist.

Mr. Prendergast, if you could begin.

**STATEMENT OF MR. JOHN PRENDERGAST, CO-DIRECTOR,
AFRICA PROGRAM, INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP**

Mr. PRENDERGAST. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I just returned last night from Eastern Chad and rebel-held areas of Darfur, and, with Ted here on the panel, we visited these very same areas just a year ago. I am sorely tempted to dive into the Sudan discussion.

But we are at a defining moment in Somalia both for the country and for United States policy toward Somalia. Similar, really, to the weeks after our Black Hawks went down in 1993. I was in Somalia then, and I saw the United States eventually cut and run and abandon Somalia to the warlord wolves. We can't afford, obviously, to do that again. What the United States decides to do in the coming weeks I think will have a huge impact on Somalia's future and potentially on the United States' national security interest in the region.

Let me cut to the policy chase. The overriding United States policy imperative right now is to put together a small diplomatic team to go to the region immediately and work with IGAD, with the African Union, the Arab leaders, and the United Nations in support of sustained negotiations; not these one-off deals, sustained negotiations between the Islamic courts and the Transitional Federal Government as well as other actors that are important in the southern Somali mix that aims to secure for the first time in Somalia's history a truly inclusive power-sharing deal that would strengthen the existing Transitional Federal Institutions that are already in place because of the TFG.

We need to get this policy sequencing right, and I heard the Assistant Secretary say it both ways earlier, so it really has to be clear.

First, there has got to be these negotiations to get a government of national units. We can't start putting assistance into the Transitional Federal Government, I think, before those negotiations come to some fruition. If we do so, we are putting the bulls-eye on the forehead of the TFG. They don't have the military muscle to withstand a surge to Baidoa from the Islamic Court militias, and that would certainly bring Ethiopia in and put it into a worst-case scenario.

A specific word or two about counterterrorism in Somalia. I think the worst-case scenario is unfolding for United States interests in the Horn and Eastern African region. United States aid to our warlords emboldened radicals in the Islamic Courts and gave them a recruitment tool and an anti-U.S. rallying point over the last year. Our aid to these warlords increased the popularity of these Islamic Courts conversely, as the courts have become synonymous now with law and order, the opposite of what the warlords we were supporting were able to do in Somalia and Mogadishu.

We couldn't have done worse in Somalia, I think, over the past 3 years to increase our vulnerability and reduce our access as well as to hurt nation-building prospects in Somalia. Our short-term national security interests in locating al-Qaeda suspects has been undermined and the risk of a new safe haven for international terrorists has been greatly enhanced. So what do we do in the face of this grave policy challenge?

I think, as Dr. Frazer said, the Islamic Courts contain a very wide range of ideologies. There is a very genuine risk today that radicals will come to dominate the UIC. But we can influence that outcome positively or negatively. It is crucial, I think, for us to engage with all elements of the Islamic Courts, but particularly the Courts Executive Committee which is headed by Sheikh Sherif. The Islamic Courts have invited an international inquiry into its links with al-Qaeda and whether terrorists are being harbored in Somalia. We need to immediately test the Islamic Court Union and see if it would provide access to investigators into Somalia to have a look and see whether people are actually being provided that safe haven.

If we get into an early mode of cooperation, we could head off a move to Talibanize the UIC later on down the line.

A functioning government that ensures security for Somalia is what Somalis want and that happens to be what will best secure

our interests as well. We need to show that we care about Somalia's nation-building agenda in order for them to care about our counterterrorism agenda. We need to roll up our diplomatic sleeves and get involved directly in state reconstruction efforts, just as we have had to do in Iraq and Afghanistan, in Somalia. It is in our national security interest to do.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Prendergast follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MR. JOHN PRENDERGAST, CO-DIRECTOR, AFRICA PROGRAM,
INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the invitation to testify at this hearing, and for the committee's interest in the crisis in Somalia.

After years of politics defined by impasse and paralysis, Somalia has entered a period of dramatic political upheaval and renewed violence. Following several months of heavy clashes, the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) has scored a decisive victory against Mogadishu's major faction leaders, taken control of the capital city and its environs, and established itself as the dominant authority throughout much of southern Somalia. The prospects for a bitter showdown between the Courts and the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), based in Baidoa, remain very real.

The current situation in Somalia is in part a product of international counter-terrorism strategies, notably those of the United States and Ethiopia. The international response to recent developments must be finely calibrated in order to ensure that it attenuates the potential threat of transnational terrorism from Somalia, and does not inadvertently compound it.

In the weeks ahead, policy decisions by key actors—especially the U.S. and Ethiopia—will have a profound impact on Somalia's political future. External efforts to mediate between the Courts and the transitional government offer at best modest hopes that a power-sharing deal can still be secured. Despite a successful first round of talks between the Courts and the transitional government earlier this month in Khartoum, Sudan, the two sides remain profoundly hostile to one another and the risk of armed confrontation remains high.

As a matter of urgency, international and local actors must work to reverse the country's current slide toward war. If diplomatic efforts fail, Somalia is likely to be politically split, with a virtually moribund transitional government remaining in portions of the Somali hinterland and a parallel Islamist administration controlling Mogadishu and surrounding areas. The probability of Ethiopia injecting its own troops into Somalia in support of the transitional government would increase significantly—with disastrous humanitarian consequences for civilians and grave repercussions for regional stability. Unfortunately, hardliners in both camps may continue to see polarization and armed confrontation in their best interests.

I. U.S. POLICY RESPONSE—A NEW DIRECTION

Effective counter-terrorism policies must be situated within a framework of comprehensive engagement designed to promote reconciliation, rebuild the Somali state, and resuscitate essential social services. At the same time, any engagement with the Courts must be framed in such a way that it does not privilege the role of the Courts at the expense of other community leaders of the Hawiye clan.

The proper sequencing of foreign assistance and policy formulation is essential to avoid inadvertently provoking conflict. No external actions designed to strengthen the security posture of either the transitional government or the Courts should be taken until the two sides first negotiate a power-sharing accord. Calls for partially lifting the arms embargo on Somalia are remarkably ill-advised, and I think I am safe to say that the last thing Somalia needs is more weapons at this juncture in its history. It is also important to note that introducing a regional peacekeeping force into Somalia—absent concrete initiatives to help stand the transitional government up as a genuine government of national unity—will be directly interpreted by the Courts and other constituencies as a threat to their security. Such a move could well trigger attacks on both the transitional government and arriving peacekeeping forces.

Likewise, some supporters of the transitional government have argued that the U.S. must shift its counter-terrorism partnership away from the failed Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism (ARPCT) to the transitional government. But while routine cooperation on matters of international security is not controversial, robust financial and other support to the transitional government for

counter-terrorism initiatives could easily provoke armed conflict unless the transitional government expands into a genuine government of national unity.

Both the transitional government and the Courts must send signals aimed at reducing tensions and reopening possibilities for negotiations. Once the immediate threat of war is reduced external mediators must provide robust support to the transitional government, the Courts (and possibly other groups) to negotiate a power-sharing agreement with the aim of producing a government of national unity. Political representatives of both the transitional government and the Courts must come under considerable and sustained pressure from both international actors and local citizens.

Actions Needed Now

Over the short term, the U.S. government and its international partners should:

- Press the transitional government to broaden its support base by incorporating credible, high level leaders from important constituencies who currently feel alienated (i.e. the Habar Gidir 'Ayr, moderate Islamists, and others) and by ensuring greater balance in the security sector along clan and factional lines. The U.S. and its partners should condition the provision of aid to the transitional government on it taking concrete steps to create a government of national unity.
- Negotiations for the establishment of a government of national unity should include discussions of a phased relocation of the Transitional Federal Institutions (TFIs) to Mogadishu, the constitutional capital of Somalia.
- Encourage the Courts, the current Mogadishu municipal administration, and other community leaders to establish a single authority for the Banadir (greater Mogadishu) area, to which international partners can direct strictly humanitarian aid and support.
- Demand a revision of the transitional government's National Security and Stabilization Plan in light of recent developments. In this context, the U.S. government should prevail upon the African Union (AU) and United Nations (UN) Security Council to set aside the transitional government's request for an exemption to the arms embargo aimed at paving the way for the deployment of a peacekeeping force in Somalia led by the East African regional organization, the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD).
- Engage with Somaliland to demonstrate support for its democratic achievements and counter-terrorism achievements; encourage the AU to become seized of the sovereignty dispute through the appointment of a Special Envoy and assign Somaliland interim observer status at the continental organization.

II. BACKGROUND

The current crisis is the product of several political trends over the past six years. First is the alienation of much of the Hawiye clan-family. The Hawiye dominated the previous attempt to create a transitional government in 2000. The process was undermined by coalition of rejectionists led by current transitional government President Abdullahi Yusuf and backed by Ethiopia. Powerful sub-clans within the Hawiye are now marginalized in the current transitional government, which constitutes a narrow coalition and not a broad-based government. The domination of the transitional government and its security sector by the Darood/Mijerteen clan, its close links to Ethiopia, its decision to base the transitional government in the towns of Jowhar and now Baidoa rather than Mogadishu, and its call for regional peacekeepers have all alienated large sections of the Hawiye clan. Though first and foremost an Islamist movement, the the Courts is also a manifestation of Hawiye interests and resistance. Unless the transitional government is reconstituted into a true government of national unity, it will face continued resistance from the bulk of the Hawiye clan, denying it access to the greater Mogadishu area and parts of central Somalia.

The current crisis is also a by-product of the long-term decline of Mogadishu factional leaders. The factions, which a decade ago enjoyed a monopoly on political representation in Somalia, have gradually faded in importance, creating a political vacuum filled by the Islamists. Their decline was driven by a number of factors, including their own unwillingness to provide basic services and rule in areas they controlled and the rise of rival business elites. Ultimately, their cynical exploitation of counter-terrorism partnerships with the U.S. and other foreign governments for the pursuit of parochial interests and rivalries to the detriment of the Mogadishu public undermined their remaining legitimacy and credibility.

Third, the rise of the system of Sharia courts in Mogadishu—a trend which began a decade ago, as a local coping mechanism to deal with chronic lawlessness—has played a central role in the current crisis. The clan-based Sharia courts—almost all of which are affiliated with Hawiye lineages—are valued by local populations and business interests, and constitute one of the few sources of local governance in southern Somalia. They form the backbone of the Union of Islamic Courts, a loose umbrella group of Islamists whose leaders have in the past four years developed a well-trained militia and independent sources of funding. Among the Courts leadership are hardliners who control key military command positions. The political ascent of the Courts was already apparent since 2004, but was accelerated by the formation of the transitional government and the February 2006 formation of the ARPCT.

III. OPTIONS FOR ENGAGEMENT

1. *Counter Terrorism and the Need for Comprehensive Engagement*

U.S. support to militia leaders in the ARPCT was conceived as a partnership with a narrow counter-terrorist aim: the apprehension and rendition of a small number of foreign al-Qaeda operatives the U.S. government claims are in safe houses in Mogadishu under the protection of Somali radicals. Somali militants who are believed to provide protection and support to these operatives used to be a marginal group, but in July last year, the Courts formally appointed their military commander, Aden Hashi Ayro, to a position of leadership. Since then, extremist elements within the courts have continued to expand their influence and today enjoy formal status within the Courts.

Unfortunately, U.S. backing for the ARPCT produced badly unintended consequences. Far from advancing counter-terrorist objectives, the Alliance's existence and performance strengthened the Somalia's ascendant political Islamist movement, and emboldened the radical wing of Mogadishu's Islamists, which successfully used the war as a recruitment tool and an anti-Western rallying call. Those headline Islamists have also succeeded in conflating their cause with the broadly popular call for law and order and an end to warlordism in Mogadishu, thereby winning support from many Somalis who otherwise would reject their radical interpretation of political Islam.

The dramatic failure of this approach underscores the imperative that counter-terrorism efforts be situated within a broader strategy of comprehensive engagement. As Crisis Group has consistently argued since July 2005, the threat of jihadi terrorism from Somalia can ultimately be addressed only through the restoration of stable, legitimate and functional government. Dealing with that threat requires Somalia's friends to do more to assist in promoting reconciliation, rebuilding the state and resuscitating essential social services. But such assistance must be carefully planned and calibrated in order to ensure that it does not empower one faction at the expense of another or otherwise destabilize a fragile peace process.

2. *A Government of National Unity*

The victory of the Islamic Courts owes less to popular support for an Islamist political platform than a widespread sense of disenfranchisement within the Mogadishu public and the broader Hawiye community of south-central Somalia. Alienation from the transitional government, which many perceived as beholden to foreign interests, and resentment at U.S. support for unpopular faction leaders, gave rise to a wave of popular protest that carried the Courts to power.

Though created as a government of national unity, with all major clans represented in parliament through the "4.5 formula," the transitional government in its current form concentrates power and positions in the hands of some constituencies and clans while marginalizing or excluding others.¹ A number of powerful constituencies—the Islamists, the Habar Gedir Ayr sub-clans, and others—remain either outside of or marginal to the transitional government. Collectively, these groups constitute a powerful veto coalition over the transitional government's ability to expand its presence into the most populous parts of the country. Bringing these groups more fully into the transitional government is imperative if the transitional government is to claim it governs anything more than portions of the Somali hinterland. Until the transitional government negotiates with these groups to form a true government of national unity, it remains exceptionally vulnerable to spoilers and stands little chance of spreading its administration into the Benadir triangle—the

¹The so-called "4.5 formula" is a power sharing formula established under the Transitional National Charter. It established a parliament composed of 61 seats for each of the four major clan groups and 31 seats for the remaining "minority" groups.

strategic territory from Lower Shabelle region through Mogadishu to Balad where the Islamic Courts now hold sway.

Negotiations intended to produce a genuine government of national unity will also have to consider a phased relocation of the Transitional Federal Institutions to Mogadishu, ideally led by a new, broadly acceptable Prime Minister and his cabinet. The parliament and presidency could move at later dates, subject to agreed terms and guarantees. Obviously, moving these institutions to Mogadishu will be unacceptable to the transitional agreement unless the step is part of some broader deal.

The National Security and Stabilization Plan approved earlier this month by the Transitional Federal Parliament must also be revised. The current version of this document, which calls for an exemption for the transitional government from the UN arms embargo and for the deployment of a regional peace support operation, is seriously out of date. The 2002 ceasefire on which it based lies in tatters and was anyway never signed by the Courts. Nor are the Courts party to the Transitional Federal Charter, which is supposed to serve as a comprehensive peace agreement. The Courts' leaders have made it clear that they oppose both the proposed exemption to the arms embargo and the deployment of foreign peacekeepers.

3. A Single Authority for Mogadishu

Although the Courts currently exert *de facto* control over Mogadishu and its adjacent areas, it faces genuine challenges from various political, civic and traditional leaders, sub-clan interests and commercial concerns. Many Mogadishu residents, while acknowledging the current military dominance of the courts as an organization, continue to perceive the recently established Banadir (Mogadishu) Administration, headed by Mr. Adde Gabow, as a more broadly-based and legitimate political authority. The United States should encourage these rival authorities to reach agreement on a single, unified administration for Mogadishu. This would provide greater stability and security for the people of Mogadishu, while making the Courts more accountable to mainstream (generally moderate) Somali public opinion.

4. Strategic, Sequenced Support

Well-intentioned donor support designed to help strengthen the transitional government's capacity could easily lead to even greater polarization and violence within southern Somalia if not preceded by accords to reshape the transitional government into a genuine government of national unity. The transitional government is not a ready-made alternative to the ARPCT as a partner in U.S. counter-terrorism efforts. On the contrary, the transitional government will be at its most vulnerable if it begins to secure sizable external assistance while remaining a narrow coalition. If this occurs, constituencies currently outside the transitional government may well preemptively attack it to curtail what they would likely see as an emerging security threat. Given the rapid consolidation of Islamist control over Mogadishu, a policy which isolates or attacks them as a group is untenable and would only drive more moderate Islamists and many ordinary Somalis into a tighter alliance with hardliners. It might also serve as a disincentive for the transitional government leadership to take necessary but painful political choices in reshaping the interim government.

The only strategy which stands a chance of success in ending Somalia's current crisis is one which focuses *first* on negotiations toward a government of national unity, followed by aid and policies designed to strengthen the administrative and security sector capacity of the transitional government. A strategy which reverses this sequence—first building up the transitional government's coercive capacity and then promoting negotiations with the transitional government's rivals—sets the transitional government up for armed hostilities, sabotage, and almost certain collapse.

5. Engagement with the Union of Islamic Courts

The UIC is a heterogeneous body that includes Islamist groups with a range of ideologies. Although there is a genuine risk that hardliners will come to dominate the Courts' leadership and agenda, at this moment such an outcome is by no means assured. The U.S. government and its international partners should engage with the Courts in a way that reinforces moderate conduct.

Extremists, however, have been rapidly consolidating their influence within the Courts. Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys has been nominated to the chairmanship of the Courts "*Shura*", or "consultative council"; he has previously served as a senior leader of the Somali jihadi Islamist movement, *al-Itihaad al-Islami* (AIAI) and has been designated by the U.S. and UN as an individual with links to terrorism. Ethiopia, Somalia's largest and most important neighbor, also believes that Aweys shares responsibility for terrorist attacks in Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa in the mid-1990s. Aweys has denied any involvement in terrorism.

Additional seats on the Shura have been assigned to young militants associated with the aforementioned militia commander Aden Hashi Ayro, who has been linked to the murders of four aid foreign aid workers, a British journalist and renowned Somali peace activist Abdulqadir Yahya.

The involvement of such figures in the Courts makes any kind of international engagement a complex proposition. However, the Courts Executive Committee, which is led by the comparatively moderate Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, does not include such high profile militants and should be explored as a channel of communication for international interlocutors.

First on the agenda for communication with the Courts should be its standing invitation for an international enquiry into its alleged links to terrorism and the suspected presence of al-Qaeda suspects in areas under its control. Whether or not the Courts would in fact guarantee investigators the kind of access, cooperation and security required to undertake such a task remains to be seen, but it should definitely be explored.

6. Somaliland

Lastly, while the United States should concentrate its efforts as a matter of urgency on the situation in southern Somalia, it should not overlook the achievements and potential of the self-declared Republic of Somaliland in northwest Somalia.

Somaliland has made notable progress in building peace, security and constitutional democracy within its de facto borders. Hundreds of thousands of refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs) have returned home, tens of thousands of landmines have been removed and destroyed, and clan militias have been integrated into unified police and military forces. A multi-party political system and successive competitive elections have established Somaliland as a rarity in the Horn of Africa and the Muslim world. As such it represents an example to the rest of Somalia and an alternative system of governance to that proposed by the Islamic Courts.

The U.S. government should engage with Somaliland in a manner intended to demonstrate support for its democratic achievements and its proven commitment to combat terrorism in the region. Concurrently, the U.S. should encourage the AU to become seized of the sovereignty dispute through the appointment of a Special Envoy and assigning Somaliland interim observer status at the continental organization.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Now Dr. Pham.

STATEMENT OF J. PETER PHAM, PH.D., DIRECTOR, WILLIAM R. NELSON INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS, JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

Mr. PHAM. With your permission, I would like to have my opening statement entered into the record.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Without objection.

Mr. PHAM. Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, I am honored and pleased to have this opportunity to appear before you today. Last year, following my most recent foray into that part of the world, I had the opportunity to brief the staff of this Committee under the aegis of the Subcommittee on International Terrorism and Nonproliferation. Alas, the dangers that preoccupied me at that time, the gathering strength of the Islamic forces, has come to pass by the overtaking of the Mogadishu by the forces of the so-called Union of Islamic Courts, which last Saturday reconstituted itself in what appears to be a more stable institutional form as the Council of Islamic Courts.

Since Dr. Frazer and Mr. Prendergast and others are perhaps better positioned than I am to speak about the ongoing political and military development in Somalia, I would, with your permission, prefer to focus my remarks on the phenomenon of Islamic fundamentalism in Somalia, its origins, its interaction with wider social currents and their implications for the United States.

The main Islamic movement is an offshoot of a group called al-Itihaad al-Islaami, the Islamic Union, which grew up out of the

same radical institutions that have given us difficulty in other parts of the world.

And since its inception, al-Itihaad has rejected the nonconfessional nature of the Somalia state and has sought to establish an Islamic regime based on their own strict interpretation of their faith. It found the direct road to power was blocked. It adopted its tactics in favor of a more subtle approach which has proven it worked, via economic and social programs and these Islamic Courts.

While many have tried to convince themselves that the characteristic traditions of Somali society would inhibit the rise of militant Islamism, claiming that the strength of the clans' structure, coupled with the moderation of traditional legal traditions of the Shaffi School in Somalia, would serve as a check. However, these analysts have overlooked several salient elements.

First, two decades of autocratic rule followed by more than a decade of anarchy have undoubtedly changed the social fabric of Somali society.

Second, the flow of Somalis to educational opportunities in Saudi institutions, followed by many other Somalis going to other jobs in Saudi Arabia and other Middle Eastern countries, produced upon their return a new Somali elite which not only came to dominate important sectors of society, but for whom what was once a foreign version—some would say perversion—of Islam is no longer so alien.

Thirdly, the role of Saudi and other Arab charity organizations should not be overlooked or underestimated.

The aid money flowing from these sources to Somalia has flowed largely through the Islamist leaders and has allowed them to build up rudimentary social services as well as peace and security which other actors have failed to do.

And fourthly, Somalia's business community has played an active role in helping the Islamists as a means of establishing a stable environment for their business interests without the need to pay protection money to feuding warlords.

In addition, remittance banks have become a source of revenue and patronage for these Islamists.

In short, the chaotic situation across the entire former territories of the now defunct Somali Democratic Republic creates the conditions for the advent of the Islamists of the al-Itihaad sort in the same way that the Taliban of Afghanistan arose out of that country's anarchy as a force of order amid factious leaders and rapacious militias.

Well positioned because of the events from 1991 to 1995, al-Itihaad courts are credited with improvements in security in the areas like the Mogadishu neighborhoods, long plagued by kidnappings, robberies, and other criminal acts of the likes of Usman Ali Atto, a multimillionaire warlord businessman, who is not only Mogadishu's largest landowner but is also the Minister of Public Works in the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia.

While much has been made of the fact that only some of these Islamic Courts in the Union are considered radical—and I would question some of the low estimates—the point is that while the overall umbrella group has put forth some mixed signals, the radicals have been less ambiguous. They have closed down makeshift

cinemas to prevent people from watching the World Cup. Even the Taliban permitted soccer. More seriously, they take action, like on Monday, announcing that they will stone to death five accused rapists.

And, of course, there is the person who we mentioned before, the head of one of the courts and now the Chairman of this Council of Islamic Courts, Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys, who was conspicuously decorated by the dictator Siad Barre for his efficient work in the prisons of the regime. He later became Vice Chairman and Military Commander of al-Itihaad. After his defeat by the Ethiopians in 1996, Aweys settled in Merka where he established his court. He then moved on to Mogadishu where he presided over the Islamization of the southern part of the capital. And as Secretary Frazer has mentioned, he figured in the list of 189 individuals singled out as terrorists by the U.S. Government.

Other prominent figures include Adan Hashi Ayro, a close relative of Aweys who trained in Afghanistan with al-Qaeda before returning to his country after 9/11. And there, of course, are the weapons that these people have been importing, such as the munitions that were intercepted by the UN Monitoring Group back in March.

Amid the ruin of the former Somalia, the reemergence of the Republic of Somaliland in the west is a remarkable story. I think Dr. Noor will tell us more about that.

I would like to mention the international community's trying to shore up the so-called Transitional Federal Government, led by Abdullahi Yusuf, a former warlord himself who is as much a terrorist as his Islamist opponents.

In December 2002 Yusuf tried to assassinate the President of Somaliland while the latter visited a town in the eastern part of Somaliland. Furthermore, it should be noted that Abdullahi Yusuf's anti-Islamist fervor is rather newfound. In his previous incarnation as the self-proclaimed President of Puntland, Abdullahi cooperated with the Ogaden National Liberation Front in its hostilities against its various foes, including the Government of Somaliland. He also allowed the Puntland Port of Bosaaso to be one of the primary entry points for al-Itihaad-aligned weapons smugglers to smuggle their weapons in.

One should also mention that he was a protege of Ethiopia's Marxist tyrant, Mengistu Hailemariam, as well as a recipient of the largesse of Libyan leader Mu'ammar Qaddafi during a period when the latter was actively engaged in state-sponsored terrorism. So that is the person who heads the Transitional Federal Government.

For the road ahead, cutting to the policy, I offer four general lines of suggestions: First, the United States should take no actions which have the appearance of strengthening the Transitional Federal Institution of Somalia. Even if they are not headed by a thug, even if their legitimacy in the eyes of many Somalis is very questionable, they would still be too weak to be effectual, but not so toothless, at least in terms of scope and of the judicial fiction of their pretensions, that they cannot be a hindrance to the freedom of the actions that the United States and its allies in the war on terrorism need. In short, any sort of recognition accorded to the

Transitional Federal Government obtains for us no real advantages but may create all sorts of precedents and unintended consequences.

Secondly, we need to enhance and strengthen our cooperation with legitimate, democratic, and secular actors in the region, especially Somaliland, but also our partners in Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Kenya who are on the front lines of the expanding crisis.

I would note in passing that Somaliland has repeatedly offered to the international coalition against terrorism the use of the former United States facility at Berbera.

Thirdly, to be aware of the complex web of interests in the sub-region and how they may or may not be in accord with our interests as the United States, much less the interests of the people of the former Somalia, we need to be conscious not only of the competing agenda of neighboring countries, particularly Ethiopia, Eritrea and Sudan, but also of European nations. For example, quoted in recent media coverage by our major newspapers has been the Italian Special Envoy for Somalia, one Mario Raffaelli. I have yet to see even one of those United States press reports acknowledge the economic interests of the Government of Italy, the Italian firm De Nadai, a number of Italian diplomats and, yes, Signor Raffaelli himself, in the not insignificant Somali banana trade centered around Lower Shabelle, and concerning which there are several very interesting studies from European NGOs.

Finally, recognizing that this long-simmering cauldron has come to a boil, we have to reinforce our capacity in the region and to give our combatant commanders and diplomats the authority necessary to deal with the situation even as we pursue other options.

Mr. Chairman, I hope I have been able to, at least in a cursory fashion, been able to sketch out some of the opportunities which the current crisis presents to Somalia, to its neighbors, to the Horn and the international community, and also what happens to the United States. And I look forward to continuing our discussion.

Thank you.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Pham follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF J. PETER PHAM, PH.D., DIRECTOR, WILLIAM R. NELSON INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS, JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

Mr. Chairman and Distinguished Members of Congress:

I am honored and pleased to have this opportunity to appear before you today to discuss, as the title of this hearing has it, "the expanding crisis in the Horn of Africa." Last year, following research and field work in the subregion sponsored by the Institute for Infrastructure and Information Assurance, I had the opportunity to brief the staff of the Committee under the aegis of the Subcommittee on International Terrorism and Nonproliferation. Alas, the danger that preoccupied me at the time—the gathering strength of Islamist forces—has come to pass with the complete takeover of Mogadishu amid heavy fighting on June 5 by forces of the so-called "Union of Islamic Courts" which last Saturday reconstituted itself in what appears to be more stable institutional form as the "Council of Islamic Courts." Notwithstanding the risible "peace deal" signed in Khartoum, Sudan, on June 22 between Somalia's pretender "Transitional Federal Government" and certain representatives of the Islamic courts—an accord which, not-so-incidentally, addresses none of the major bones of contention between the two sides and which was only arrived at upon the insistence of the President of Sudan (the Islamists did not even attempt to meet the preconditions original set down by the interim "authorities")—I remain convinced that we are indeed facing, as we have for some time, a challenge of great

significance for the security not only of the Horn, but of the wider international community.

Since Dr. Frazer and Mr. Prendergast are certainly better positioned than I am to speak to the ongoing political and military developments in Somalia, with your permission, I would like to focus my remarks on the phenomenon of Islamic fundamentalism in Somalia, its origins and interactions with wider ideological, political, economic, and social currents, and their implications—both challenges and opportunities—for regional and international security and, of course, for the United States of America.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Traditionally, the Somali subscribe to Sunni Islam and follow the Shafii school (*mahdab*) of jurisprudence which, although conservative, is open to a variety of liberal views regarding practice. Throughout most of historical times up to independence, while there were different movements within the Sunni Islam in Somalia, the most dominant were the Sufi brotherhoods (*tariqa*), especially that of the Qadiriyya order. While traditional Islamic schools and scholars (*ulama*) played a role as focal points for rudimentary political opposition to colonial rule in Italian Somalia, historically their role in the politics of the Somali clan structure was neither institutionalized nor particularly prominent. In part this is because historically *Sharia* was not especially entrenched in Somalia: being largely pastoralists, the Somali relied more on customary law than on religious prescriptions. Hence, Somali Islamism is largely a post-colonial movement which became active in the late 1980s and strengthened by the state collapse in 1991 and the ensuing civil war, international intervention, external meddling, and efforts by Somalis themselves to reconstruct politically. Absent this chain of events, it is doubtful that militant Islamism would be much more than a marginal force in Somali politics.

At its origins, Somali Islamism is an import dating at most to the 1950s when the 1953 establishment in Mogadishu of an Institute of Islamic Studies run by Egyptian scholars from Cairo's al-Azhar University introduced both Arabic language curriculum and contact with the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood (*al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin*). As is well-known, unlike the Sufis who emphasize socialization, moral education, and spiritual preparation, the Muslim Brothers stress organization, activism, and the socio-political dimension of change directed toward the creation of a modern Islamic state. After independence in 1960s, Egyptians opened secondary schools in many of the major towns of Somalia. In the 1960s and 1970s, Saudi religious and educational institutions—especially the Islamic University of Medina, the Umm al-Qura University in Mecca, and the Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University in Riyadh—joined al-Azhar in offering scholarships to the graduates of these institutions. It would be fair to draw a parallel with Sudan where the founders of the Sudanese Muslim Brotherhood, which later gave rise to the currently-ruling National Islamic Front, were Sudanese alumni of Egyptian institutions. In fact, the nascent Somali Muslim Brotherhood was so visible by the mid-1970s—when it mobilized massive opposition to the Family Law of 1975 for its recognition and promotion of the legal and economic equality of women—that the dictatorial regime of Siad Barre took measures to suppress it, driving its adherents underground. (“Underground” should not be equated with “dormant” as some of the Brothers in hiding organized themselves into cells which, from time to time, carried out spectacular acts of terrorism like the July 1989 killing of the Roman Catholic missionary bishop of Mogadishu, Salvatore Colombo, an Italian citizen.)

The Somali Muslim Brothers eventually coalesced in two groups: the Somali Islamic Movement (*al-Islah*), founded in Saudi Arabia in 1978, and the Somali Islamic Union (*al-Itihaad*), established in the early 1980s. There was and is no clear demarcation between the Islamic Movement and the Islamic Union, the memberships of the two and the leadership network overlapping considerably. The “differences” between the two groups are largely a function of their clandestine birth. Both sought the creation of an expansive “Islamic Republic of Greater Somalia” and eventually a political union embracing all Muslims in the Horn of Africa.

STATE COLLAPSE, INTERNATIONAL INTERVENTION, AND EMERGENT ISLAMISM

The ouster of Siad Barre in January 1991 led to the chaotic situation of internecine warfare that laid waste to Somalia. At times, as Matt Bryden, now of the International Crisis Group, put it succinctly, it seemed that the factions fought not so much over the Somalia's future as its ruins. Ironically, al-Itihaad found itself in conflict with Mohammed Farah Aydiid, the warlord who would become the international community's *bête noire*, and, after being defeated by him, it was forced to withdraw after heavy fighting.

This withdrawal, which coincided with the fall of the Derg in neighboring Ethiopia, allowed the Somali Islamists to regroup in the ethnic Somali-inhabited Ogaden region of Ethiopia where there were also large numbers of Somali refugees. From this period emerged the cooperation between Somali Islamists and Ethiopian groups like the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) and the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) which continue to struggle against the Ethiopian government that was established at that time. Al-Itihaad's cooperation with armed Ethiopian dissidents was so close that analysts had trouble distinguishing the forces. This last datum explains a great deal of Addis Ababa's current preoccupation with the Union of Islamic Courts seizure of Mogadishu.

Most ironically, the international intervention (UNITAF, UNOSOM, UNOSOM II) in Somalia beginning in 1993 unwittingly allowed the Islamists back into areas that from which Aydiid had ejected them. In addition to infiltrating the civil society sector, al-Itihaad adherents emerged as a business class which amassed fortunes in the service economy that developed around the international intervention. Some armed al-Itihaad militiamen were even paid to provide security escort services to United Nations personnel.

Following UNOSOM II's departure and in the absence of effect political structures of any kind—except in Somaliland, to which I will return—Islamic authorities cropped up in response to problems of crime, Shari'a being a common denominator around which different communities could organize. As the Islamic legal authorities gradually assumed policing as well as adjudicating functions, those authorities having greater (viz, external) resources acquired greater influence.

FROM AL-ITIHAAD TO UNION OF ISLAMIC COURTS TO COUNCIL OF ISLAMIC COURTS

From its inception, al-Itihaad rejected the non-confessional nature of the Somali state and sought to establish an Islamic regime in the country based on a strict Wahhabi interpretation of the Muslim faith. When, in the aftermath of the collapse of the Siad Barre dictatorship, it found the direct road to power blocked by Mohammed Farah Aydiid, it adopted its tactics in favor of a more subtle approach which has proven its seductiveness, viz, economic and other social programs together with the Islamic courts.

Many believe or at least have tried to convince themselves that the characteristic traditions of Somali society will inhibit the rise of militant Islamism. The claim is that the strength of the clan structure coupled with the moderation of the ingrained Shafi'i legal tradition would act as a check on Islamist radicalism. However, these analysts have overlooked some salient elements.

First, two decades of autocratic rule under Siad Barre, followed by more than a decade of violent anarchy have undoubtedly changed the social fabric of Somali society enough to allow the emergence of Islamism.

Second, the flow of Somalis to educational opportunities in Saudi institutions followed by that of many other Somalis to jobs in Saudi Arabia and other Middle Eastern countries produced, upon their return, a new Somali elite which not only came to dominate important sectors of society, but for whom what was once a foreign version—some would say perversion—of Islam was no longer so alien.

Third, the role of Saudi and other Arab charity organizations in this process should not be underestimated. The "aid" money from these sources to Somalia has flowed largely through al-Itihaad's Islamist leaders and allowed them to provide rudimentary social services as well as the peace and security which other actors have failed to do.

Fourth, Somalia's business community has played an active role in helping the Islamists as a means of establishing a stable environment for their business interests without the need to pay protection money to feuding warlords. In addition, remittance banks have become a source of revenue and patronage for the Islamists.

In short, the chaotic situation across the entire former territories of the defunct Somali Democratic Republic (with the exception of Somaliland) created the conditions for the advent of the Islamists of al-Itihaad in the same way that the Taliban of Afghanistan arose out that country's anarchy as a force for order amid factious leaders and their rapacious militias. Well positioned because of the events of 1991–1995, al-Itihaad's Shari'a courts are credited with marked improvements in security in many areas of the country, like the Mogadishu neighborhoods long plagued by the kidnappings, robberies, and other criminal acts of the likes of Usman Ali Atto, a multimillionaire warlord—businessman who is not only Mogadishu's largest landowner, but also now "minister of public works" in the "Transitional Federal Government" of Somalia.

A word is perhaps in order concerning the overly used, but ill-defined, term "warlord" in the Somali context. These "gentlemen" did not take up arms because of po-

litical or social grievances, but rather because of economic calculation. Their actions are motivated by the pursuit of illicit enrichment and war booty; the individual fiefdoms they have carved out are used as a base for the exploitation of confiscated properties, ports, and airports, as well as for drug trafficking and arm trade. Hence for them the underlying point is to prolong conflict in order to profit from it, rather than necessarily to win the war. The use of violence for these men is a form of conducting business.

So while under these circumstances the Somali people's embrace of the undeniable benefits brought by the Islamists does not necessarily imply approval of the al-Itihaad political agenda, it would be delusional to believe that they will not become, however gradually, ideologically and politically influenced by the Islamists' social programs, which are focused on the long-term, sustained growth of the movement. The Islamists' growing involvement with businesses and social services provide them with security and cover wherein to inculcate their ideology into a community whose desire for peace may blind them to the Faustian deal they are striking, although the full scope of that pact with the devil may perhaps be more evident now that the loose "Union of Islamic Courts" has been institutionalized as a "Council of Islamic Courts" with a legislative council and other accoutrements of government.

THE THREAT POSED BY THE SOMALI ISLAMISTS

While much has been made of the fact that only some of the Islamic courts in the "Union" are considered radical—and I would question some of the low estimates used by some analysts—the point is that, while the overall umbrella group has put out some mixed signals, the radicals are less ambiguous. They have even closed down makeshift cinemas to prevent people from watching the World Cup—even the Taliban permitted soccer as long as the only cheer allowed was "*Allahu akbar*." More seriously, on Monday they announced that they will stone to death five accused rapists—the latest sign of their intentions to install a hard line regime not unlike their Afghan counterparts. And the Somali Islamists are better organized, as attested to that the fact that their leader, Sheikh Hassan Dahir 'Aweys, head of the Ifka Halane Court of the Habr Gidir/Ayr, was chosen as chairman of the new "legislature" of the "Council of Islamic Courts," the *majlis al-shura*.

(As an aside, in my judgment the appointment of Sheikh 'Aweys and the other members of the "legislature" represents a qualitative shift by the Islamists towards institutional permanence. While some commentators have tried to minimize the significance of the event by highlighting the "consultative" nature of the body, I would point to the precise Arabic term employed by vice chairman Sheikh Abdulaqadir Ali Umar in making the announcement: *majlis al-shura*. The term has a very precise meaning within Islamic jurisprudence for a body that must discuss and decide all major undertakings; it is the seat of power. Al-Qaeda, for example, uses the very same term for the groups immediately below its "emir," Osama bin Laden.)

Sheikh 'Aweys was a colonel in the prison service of the Siad Barre regime—for which it would fair to read "torturer"—who was conspicuously decorated by the dictator. Later he became vice-chairman and military commander of al-Itihaad. After his defeat at the hands of the Ethiopians in 1996, Hassan Dahir 'Aweys settled in Merka where he established the first Islamic court in the lower Shebelle region. He then moved to Mogadishu to preside over the Islamization of the southern part of the capital. While the name "Aweys" does not presently resonate among many Americans, it should be recalled that he was prominent enough that it figured on the list of 189 terrorist individuals and organizations singled out by the U.S. government in September 2001. While I cannot speak to the evidence on which that very correct decision was made, the record is very clear. This man has made numerous inflammatory remarks—including ones calling for the spilling of the blood of any peacekeepers setting foot on Somali soil and accusing those who have cooperated with U.S. counterterrorism efforts as "selling us to the Jews"—and taken action over the years to put them into action. (I have taken the liberty of appending to my remarks a representative selection of pronouncements by Sheikh 'Aweys and other Islamist leaders.)

The militia commander of the Islamic courts, Adan Hashi 'Ayro, is a close relative (some sources say nephew) of 'Aweys who trained in Afghanistan with al-Qaeda before returning to his country after 9/11. He is a cold-blooded killer with a number of terrorist kills to his "credit," including four foreign aid workers in Somaliland-Italian nurse Annalena Tonelli (Boroma, Somaliland, October 5, 2003), British teachers Richard and Enid Eyeington (Sheikh Secondary School, Somaliland, October 21, 2003), Kenyan Florence Cheriuyot (GTZ truck between Hargeysa and Berbera, Somaliland, April 19, 2004)—ten former Somali military officers, and most

spectacularly, Abdul Qadir Yahya Ali, founder of Center for Research and Dialogue in Mogadishu (July 11, 2005).

Another prominent Islamic courts activist is Hassan Turki, an al-Itihaad leader who was recently behind subversive activities in eastern Ethiopia and who is closely linked with *al-Takfir wal-Hijra* ("Excommunication and Exodus"), a group so extreme that it considered Osama bin Laden too moderate and tried to kill *him* when he lived in Sudan in 1996.

And if there are any doubts about the intentions of these "gentlemen," permit me to read the manifests *just two* arms shipments received by the Islamists from the Middle East (via Eritrea) on March 3 and March 5, respectively:

(i) 200 boxes of Zu-23 anti-aircraft ammunition, 200 boxes of B-10 anti-tank ammunition, 200 boxes of DShK anti-aircraft ammunition, 200 boxes of Browning M2 50-caliber heavy machine gun ammunition, ammunition for the ZP-39 anti-aircraft gun, 50 rocket propelled grenade launchers, 50 light anti-armor weapons, 50 M-79 grenade launchers, and communications equipments to be mounted on technicals.

(ii) 1,000 short-version AK-47 automatic rifles, 1,000 pairs of binoculars, 1,000 remote-control bombs, 1,000 anti-personnel mines, ammunition for 120mm mortars

The data—coming, incidentally, from the United Nations Security Council's Arms Embargo Violation Monitoring Group originally set up under Resolution 1407—show qualities and quantities of armaments far in excess of anything needed for "mere" civil conflict with internal rivals.

Insight might be gained by looking back to the late 1990s when al-Itihaad had a significant insurgent force, capable of mounting small-scale, but deadly, operations in neighboring countries. In July 1996, for example, it attempted to assassinate the Ethiopian minister of transport and communications, Abdel Majid Hussein, himself a Muslim albeit one of insufficient "fervor" for Sheikh Aweys. The minister was struck down by six bullets as he stepped out of his office and was lucky to survive; two of his bodyguards died. Ethiopia's response was to dispatch its forces across the border into the Gedo region of Somalia the following month, attacking al-Itihaad bases in Dolo and Luuq. (The reprisal attack destroyed what appears to have been an al-Itihaad training camp for international terrorists—possibly with links to al-Qaeda—as evidenced by the skilled resistance put up by non-Somalis, including eighteen Arabs and Pakistanis whose bodies were recovered by the Ethiopians.)

And it is hardly reassuring that such allegedly moderate voices such as the spokesman for the Islamic Courts Union, Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmad, who was shunted off just last Saturday to an implementation role within the Islamist movement, was "truth challenged." In a June 10 press conference, for example, he denied that there were any links to foreign terrorist organizations, despite the fact that three foreign al-Qaeda leaders indicted in the 1998 bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania—Fazul Abdullah Mohammed of Comoros, who figures on the FBI's "Most Wanted Terrorists" list with a \$5 million bounty on his head; Saleh Ali Salih Nabhan of Kenya; and Abu Taha al-Sudani of Sudan—are being sheltered by his colleagues in Mogadishu. (The same al-Qaeda cell is believed to be responsible for the 2002 suicide bombing of an Israeli-owned hotel in Mombasa, Kenya, that killed fifteen people and a simultaneous attempt to shoot down an Israeli airliner.) Also, there are credible reports that foreign militants—including Arabs, Pakistanis, Sudanese, and Oromo—were fighting alongside the Islamists in recent clashes.

It should be noted that the electronic connectivity provided by satellite-based internet access will probably enable failed state-based terrorist hubs to extend their connectivity beyond the immediate region of the failed state in which they take up residence. This was certainly the case with the diamond-trading al-Qaeda hubs in Liberia and Sierra Leone, and it seems likely that similar opportunities would emerge for al-Qaeda and other international terrorist hubs should they be able to gain a foothold in Somalia.

While it is important not to overstate the significance of transnational linkages of Somali's radical Islamists, it is nonetheless true that terrorist operatives have been and continue to be able to move into, within, and out of Somalia with little or no visibility to international security and intelligence agencies. As the attacks in East Africa demonstrate that terrorist groups were able to move financial resources, acquire sophisticated armaments, and launch the attacks without coming to the attention of or provoking effective responses by regional or global powers.

SOMALILAND, EMBATTLED BEACON

Amid the ruin of the former Somalia, the reemergence of the Republic of Somaliland in the northwest is a remarkable story. The former British Protectorate of Somaliland became independent in 1960 a full week before the Italian-administered UN Trust Territory of Somalia achieved its independence. The two sovereignties were joined in a union which ultimately could be described as a loveless match. With the collapse of the Somali state, the Somalilanders reasserted their independence and created a functional government, complete with all the accoutrements of modern statehood—including democratic elections, the parliamentary polls last year being observed, among others, by the International Republican Institute with funds from USAID—save, alas, international recognition.

For all these reasons, I have no doubt that after they defeat or co-opt the interim so-called government in Baidoa, the Islamists will turn their attentions on the democratically-elected constitutional government in Hargeysa. I would also add that, although a full discussion of the case of Somaliland is beyond the scope of the present hearing, neither is it divorced from it. Surely if our national commitment to support and strengthen democracy as a bulwark against extremist ideologies and terrorist violence has any real-world application, it is certainly the case here. As I have argued previously, “the people of Somaliland have made their choice for political independence and democratic progress. While they have stumbled occasionally along the way, their efforts deserve encouragement through the appropriate economic, political, and security cooperation—which, in turn, will anchor Somaliland within America’s orbit as well as international society. As a beginning, a few modest steps would go a long way towards engaging Somalilanders, including a minimal consular presence in Hargeysa and some security cooperation through U.S. Central Command’s Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa, based at Camp Lemonier in nearby Djibouti.”

SOMALIA’S “TRANSITIONAL FEDERAL GOVERNMENT”

The international community has taken to trying to shore up the so-called “Transitional Federal Government” based in Baidoa and led by Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, a former warlord who is as much a terrorist as his Islamist opponents: in December 2002, he tried to assassinate President Dahir Rayale Kahine of Somaliland while the latter visited the eastern Somaliland town of Laas ‘Aanood. Furthermore, it should be noted that Abdullahi’s anti-Islamist fervor is rather newfound. In his previous incarnation as the self-proclaimed “President of Puntland,” Abdullahi cooperated with the ONLF—which, as I previously noted, was inseparably linked with al-Itihaad—in hostilities against his various foes, including the government of Somaliland. He also allowed the Puntland port of Bosaaso to be one of the primary entry points for al-Itihaad-aligned weapons smugglers who eventually turned on him and drove him from his “capital” of Gerowe in June 2001. All this comes as of now surprise for those who have followed Abdullahi’s career and recall that he was the protégé of Ethiopia’s Marxist tyrant, Mengistu Hailemariam, as well as a recipient of the largesse of Libyan leader Mu’ammar Qaddafi during a period when the latter was actively engaged in state sponsored terrorism.

In any event, the utility of engaging the rather notional interim government is rather questionable. It took two years of negotiation with self-appointed “leaders” to set up the transitional government in October 2004 and give it a five-year mandate. This “government” has yet to enter its capital and has even failed to assert complete control in its temporary base in Baidoa. “President” Abdullahi rarely visits Somalia itself and it is painfully apparent that his base of support is weak, if existent at all.

CONCLUSION: THE ROAD AHEAD

Since the unlamented collapse of the Siad Barre dictatorship, Somalia has endured more than a decade of violence during which more than ten attempts to start a peace process failed. While the attempts have been well-intentioned—the stability of Somalia being an essential component of the war on terrorism—they have also been misguided, focused as they have been on the imposition and/or propping up of self-appointed interim “authorities” with neither legitimacy nor authority. The “T” in TFG (“Transitional Federal Government”) might as well stand for “Transient.” Faced with the rising power of the Islamists of the “Council of Islamic Courts,” what is needed is a break with previous American and international policies of engagements and disengagements, both of the wrong kind.

In order to achieve the sort of stability needed in the Horn of Africa, authentic voices of civil society need to be engaged, not self-interested warlords or self-ap-

pointed governmental and non-governmental rent seekers. Over the long-term this means a patient approach that assists civil society in developing projects that belong to and benefit the people—truly winning the “hearts and minds” by privileging initiatives that originate from the Somali people and not foreign imports. And, ultimately, this would also include some *approchement* to the Republic of Somaliland, whose existence is the expression of its people’s sovereign will. And, of course, it may also include allowing the appropriate forces—such as the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa based in Djibouti—to employ selective, but decisive, force to deter terrorist activities.

To this end, I offer suggestions along four general lines:

- (1) The United States should take no actions which have the appearance of strengthening the so-called “Transitional Federal Institutions” of Somalia. Even if they were not headed by a thug; even if their legitimacy in the eyes of many Somalis is very questionable; they would still be too weak to be effectual, but not so toothless—at least in terms and scope of the juridical fiction of their pretensions—that they cannot be a hindrance to the freedom of action that the United States and its allies in the war on terrorism need. In short, any sort of recognition accorded to the “Transitional Federal Government” obtains for us no real advantages, but may create all sorts of precedents and other unintended consequence which may come back to haunt us.
- (2) Enhance and strengthen our cooperation with legitimate, democratic, and secular actors in the region, especially Somaliland, but also our partners in Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Kenya, who are on the frontlines of the expanding crisis. (I would note in passing that Somaliland has repeatedly offered the international coalition against terrorism the use of the former U.S. facility at Berbera.)
- (3) Be aware of the complex web of interests at work in the subregion and how they may or may not be in accord with our interests, much less those of the peoples of the former Somalia. We need to be conscious not only of the competing agendas of neighboring countries—particularly Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Sudan—but also of European nations. For example, quoted in recent media coverage by our major newspapers has been the Italian “special envoy” for Somalia, one Mario Raffaelli. I have yet to see even one of those press reports acknowledge the economic interests of the Government of Italy, the Italian firm De Nadai, a number of Italian diplomats, and, yes, Signor Raffaelli himself in the not-insignificant Somali banana trade centered around Lower Shabelle and from which, as we know from several excellent studies by European non-governmental organizations, that the previous mentioned Minister Atto of the “Transitional Federal Government,” Hussein Mohammed Farah (son of Mohammed Farah Aydiid), and other warlords derive what might euphemistically be called “insurance payments.”
- (4) Finally, recognizing that this long-simmering cauldron has come to a boil, we have to reinforce our force capacity in the region and to give our combatant commanders the authority necessary to deal with the situation even as we pursue other options.

With your leave, I will conclude with an anecdote. A friend recently sent me a clipping from the *Washington Times* from shortly after the Taliban seized control of Kabul. The newspaper’s correspondent wrote: “Afghanistan’s Islamist Taliban rebels swiftly overran Kabul and now surge north of the capital with unexpected speed. In their wake, they impose a new religious severity. Most observers find all this surprising and sinister—but it may be Afghanistan’s best break in many years.” History has not, needless to say, vindicated this rather optimistic prediction; nor will it vindicate similar analyses of recent events in Somalia. One can only pray that the parallels do not extend further.

Mr. Chairman, I hope that I have been able to sketch out some of the challenges and opportunities which the current crisis presents to Somalia, to its neighbors in the Horn of Africa, to the international community, and, ultimately in what perhaps most concerns us as Americans, to the United States. I look forward to your questions and observations. And I renew my thanks to you and the Members of the two Subcommittees for the opportunity to come before you today.

SELECT PRONOUNCEMENTS BY SHEIKH HASSAN DAHIR 'AWEYS AND LEADERS OF THE
COUNCIL OF ISLAMIC COURTS

"We must follow the rule of law laid down by Allah. I do not think Somalis will oppose the adoption of the rule of Allah . . . America is not our God and they are not our leaders. We feel much more superior than America. We are people who believe in Allah; let them do whatever they want."

— Sheikh Hassan Dahir 'Aweys
June 27, 2006

"If being a Muslim is crime, I am a Muslim . . . We will negotiate with [the 'Transitional Federal Government'], discuss and remove the secular articles that are opposed to the Islamic law. The TFG should accept this because the TFG members are also Muslim."

— Ibid.

"We are Muslims and we must work at implementing Quranic law. Democracy will never work."

— Sheikh Mohammed Siad
June 13, 2006

"I would rather not answer this."¹

— Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmad
June 16, 2006

"I don't think anybody will ask us to do that [arrest terrorist suspects]. We are not assigned to arrest people for them, as you know . . . [The United States has] no right to do that. As you know, we don't work for the Americans."

— Idem, June 9, 2006

"There are different reports on who is responsible [for the 9/11 attacks]: al-Qaeda, the Jews, even the Americans themselves. It is not right for us to talk about it when real facts are not available."

— Ibid.

"All Somalis must defend the Islamic courts because this is not inter-clan fighting, but war against the infidels. The fighting is between those who support Islam, and godless invaders and those who support them."

— Sheikh Nur Barud
June 7, 2006

"I personally wrote a letter to Bush to tell him that he will lose the war he is waging against the Somali people. The American government doesn't want Somalia to return the rule of law and order, because it is afraid of the emergence of an Islamic government for Somalia that will rule the nation under Sharia law."

— Sheikh Hassan Dahir 'Aweys
May 16, 2006

"Democracy is contrary to Islamic teachings and I told Mr. Geddi [prime minister of the 'Transitional Federal Government'] to fear Allah and stop working for our enemies. Democracy originated in Greece and it allows the public to control the government . . . It is anti-Islam."

— Idem, May 9, 2006

"We will fight fiercely to the death any intervention force that arrives in Somalia."

— Idem, March 25, 2006

"I'm telling that if IGAD or the UN were impulsive to send troops to Somalia, there would be bloodshed and a new destruction."

— Idem, March 21, 2006

"The Western world should respect our own ideas in choosing the way we want to govern our country, the way we want to go about our own business."

¹Response to the question: "There are Muslim people who commit suicide bombings for their own reasons whatever they could be. How do you see these people? Do you see them as martyrs or criminals? Do you think if you find yourself in a critical position that you can resort to such action?"

That is our right . . . can influence all of my people with the faith and our religion. The existing government is not an Islamic one and we will be having our own Islamic faith and we will be very strong in influencing our people."

— *Idem*, October 12, 2005

"High ranking Ethiopian military officers have been in Jowhar, 90 km away from Mogadishu for the past few months. We must wage Jihad against them . . . We have been mobilizing all of our assets in the past few months and we are ready to die for saving Somalia."

— *Idem*, September 7, 2005

"We must be wary of actions of non-believers who want us to follow their leadership."

— *Idem*, September 10, 2000

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Mr. Dagne.

STATEMENT OF MR. TED DAGNE, SPECIALIST IN AFRICAN AFFAIRS, CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE

Mr. DAGNE. Thank you very much for calling this hearing. This is perhaps one of the most forgotten and largely ignored crises where a lot of people have suffered over the past decade and a half. The people of Somalia have suffered for far too long and still face an uncertain future.

A generation of Somalis are growing up surrounded by violence and poverty. Many have been internally displaced or forced to flee their country. The most affected by the violence and chaos in Somalia are women and children. Many Somali girls have been raped and violated by the so-called militia.

After years of failed talks, in August 2004 a new Transitional Somali Parliament was inaugurated in Kenya. The 275-member Parliament consists of all of the major political factions and seems to represent all of the major clans of Somalia.

In October 2004, the Somali Transitional Parliament elected Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed as the new President of Somalia. In November, President Yusuf appointed Professor Ali Mohamed Gedi.

Some parts of Somalia are relatively peaceful despite the absence of a functioning central government in Mogadishu. Somaliland is considered stable and peaceful with the functioning government, and held several elections including one late last year.

The recent fighting in Mogadishu between Islamic Courts Union and the now defunct Alliance for the Restoration for Peace and Counterterrorism represents an important shift in the balance of power in Mogadishu. The so-called Alliance was the creation of known warlords in Mogadishu who have been the main source of instability and violence in Mogadishu; in Somalia in general. The crisis received unusual international attention in large part due to reported United States support for the so-called Antiterror Alliance.

The American decision was driven largely by longstanding concerns that terrorists, individuals, and groups have used and continued to use Somalia as a transit point to hide. This case can be made for all the other neighboring countries, including here in the United States.

Some of the ICU leaders are seen by U.S. officials as extremists or terrorists. The newly elected leaders, as described by colleagues, Hassan Dahir Aweys, was one of the top leaders of al-Itihaad and

was designated as a terrorist by the Bush Administration. Aweys is dismissive of his designation as a terrorist and contends he is being targeted because of his religion.

In a recent interview Aweys stated that, and I quote: "If strictly following my religion and love for Islam makes me a terrorist, then I will accept the designation." He was designated because of his position in al-Itihaad, but no clear evidence had been established linking al-Itihaad to an international terrorist network. And to this date, we know very little about al-Itihaad or its organizational structure at this point.

The forces of the Islamic Courts expanded their control after the defeat of the warlords in Mogadishu. They have captured a number of towns, including Jowar and Baladwayne and, moreover, for the first time, Mogadishu appears relatively peaceful and Islamic Court seems to have the support of the population in areas it controls. This is very important to remember. Despite our views of what they represent, they do seem to have the broad support of those at least in the areas that they control.

The level of support enjoyed by the ICU is difficult to measure, although the group seems to consist of constituencies from multiple sub-clans and appears to have broad support among Somali women, which is different and unique.

During the Mogadishu fighting, women supporters of the ICU played an important role. The ICU success in Mogadishu effectively led to collapse of the Alliance and forced the warlords to flee or join the ICU.

Negotiations between the Transitional Federal Government and Islamic Court did not lead to a major breakthrough thus far, although the talk ended speculation that the ICU rejects negotiations. In June 2006 the Transitional Parliament voted in favor of a foreign peacekeeping force, but this move was rejected by some Islamic Court's leader as being unnecessary and counterproductive.

The deployment did not take place in large part because of the refusal of the United Nations Security Council to remove a United Nations arms embargo on Somalia. Defeat of the warlords in Mogadishu and renewed international interest in Somalia may offer an opportunity to help establish an effective all-inclusive central government in Mogadishu. But peace and stability in Somalia are unlikely to occur in the near future even if Somalis resolve their differences and establish a central government in Mogadishu.

Resolving the status of Somaliland likely requires serious negotiations, international commitments and political compromise among Somalis. The role of Somalia's neighbors, unless focused in support of a successful and stable Somalia, will likely contribute to the instability and chaos in the country.

If the international community fails to seriously engage an attempt to isolate the new leaders in Mogadishu, they are likely to fight back.

The threat of international terrorism cannot be effectively dealt with without a functioning government in Mogadishu. The options for the United States are limited, and success largely depends on how Somalis manage their own affairs. The danger for the United States, however, is being perceived by Somalis as anti-Islam.

The rush to label Somali groups as terrorists or extremists may have led some Somalis to reach the conclusion that they are being labeled because of their religion. Somalis are Muslims and more secular than some of our allies in the Middle East.

No Somali extremists or fundamentalist group has succeeded in dominating the political scene since independence. Moreover, there seems to be no reliable evidence showing the presence of an international terror network or a significant increase in such threat in Somalia. A heavy-handed approach in the absence of clear evidence could be seen as targeting a weak and defenseless country.

The desperation and anger in Somalia may be so entrenched that many Somalis are likely to support and fight for any group that aims or claims to fight for peace and stability.

Let me conclude by giving you two examples of how life has changed in the last few weeks, perhaps temporarily at least, for some residents in Mogadishu.

A friend a few days ago got word from a family member in Mogadishu that for the first time in almost 15 years he was able to take his kids for swimming.

A Somalia woman who sells milk for a living recently told a family member that for the first time she was able to sell her milk without being robbed or paying fees to militias in Mogadishu.

Right now, Somalis are more concerned about the safety and survival of their family than the threat of extremism in their country.

As the saying goes in Somali, I quote: "Sorrow is like rice in the store. If a basketful is removed everyday, it will come to an end at last."

Somalia's tragedy will come to an end. We just don't know when.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Dagne follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MR. TED DAGNE, SPECIALIST IN AFRICAN AFFAIRS,
CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE

THE CURRENT CRISIS IN SOMALIA AND THREAT OF TERRORISM

Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Payne, and members of the committee, my name is Ted Dagne, Specialist in African Affairs at CRS. Let me thank you for inviting me to testify before your committee on this important issue. As you are well aware, the people of Somalia have suffered for over a decade and face an uncertain future. Hundreds of thousands of Somalis have died due to factional fighting, famine, or disease over the past decade. A generation of Somalis are growing up surrounded by violence, poverty, and face a very bleak future. Many Somalis have been internally displaced or forced to flee their country. The most affected by the violence and chaos in Somalia are women and children. Many Somali girls have been raped and violated by the so-called militia.

After years of failed talks, in August 2004, a new Transitional Somali Parliament was inaugurated in Kenya. The 275-member parliament consists of the major political factions and seems to represent all the major clans of Somalia. In October 2004, the Somali Transitional Parliament elected Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed as the new president of Somalia. The swearing in ceremony was attended by 11 heads of government from Africa and representatives from regional organizations and the United Nations.

In November 2004, President Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed appointed Professor Ali Mohamed Gedi as prime minister. The transitional government, however, has not been able to function effectively or move to Mogadishu in large part due to opposition by the warlords in Mogadishu, even though some of these warlords signed the agreement and are ministers in the government. The inability of the transitional government to establish effective control has allowed warlords and clan factions to dominate many parts of Somalia.

Some parts of Somalia are relatively peaceful despite the absence of a functioning central government in Mogadishu. The northwest region of Somalia, for example, is considered by many analysts to be stable and peaceful, with a functioning government. This region, the self-declared "Republic of Somaliland," seceded from the rest of Somalia in 1991, after the collapse of the Siad Barre government. Somaliland has conducted several transparent, multi-party elections. Despite these apparent successes, Somaliland remains unrecognized by the international community.

The recent fighting in Mogadishu between Islamic Courts Union (ICU) forces and the now defunct Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism (ARPCT), reportedly formed in February 2006, further complicates the political crisis in Somalia, but also represents an important shift in the balance of power in Mogadishu. The so-called Alliance was the creation of well-known warlords in Mogadishu who have been the main source of instability and violence in Somalia. These warlords include Muse Sudi Yalahow, Mohammed Qanyere Afrah, and Omar Finnish.

The recent crisis received unusual international attention in large part due to reported U.S. support for the so-called anti-terror Alliance. The American decision to support the Alliance seems largely driven by longstanding concerns that terrorist individuals and groups have used and continue to use Somalia as transit and a place to hide. Some of the ICU leaders are seen by U.S. officials as being extremists or terrorists. The newly elected leader of the Council of Islamic Courts, Hasan Dahir Aweys, was one of the top leaders of Al-Ittihad and was designated as a terrorist by the Bush Administration. Aweys is dismissive of his designation as a terrorist and contends he is being targeted because of his religion. In a recent interview, Aweys stated that "if strictly following my religion and love for Islam makes me a terrorist, then I will accept the designation."

Sharif Sheik Ahmed, the leader of the Islamic Courts Union, was appointed chairman of the Council's Executive Committee and is expected to lead the day-to-day affairs of the Courts. A number of key players in the Islamic Courts Union were named to key positions, including Omar Imam Abubakar and Abdullahi Ali Afrah. Mr. Muhamoud Sheikh Ibrahim Suleh, a man who reportedly declared a "jihad" against the warlords, was named Secretary General. Some observers have expressed concern that the election of Aweys may push the organization toward a more radical position.

The forces of the Islamic Courts Union expanded areas under their control after the defeat of the warlords in Mogadishu. ICU forces captured the towns of Jowhar and Beledweyne in mid-June 2006. Moreover, for the first time in years, Mogadishu appears relatively peaceful and the Islamic Courts Union seems to have the support of the population in areas it controls. The level of support enjoyed by the ICU is difficult to measure, although the group seems to consist of constituencies from multiple sub-clans and appears to have broad support among Somali women. During the Mogadishu fighting, women supporters of ICU played an important role. The ICU success in Mogadishu effectively led to the collapse of the ARPCT and forced the warlords to flee or join the ICU.

Negotiations between the Transitional Federal Government and the Islamic Courts Union did not lead to a major breakthrough, although the talks ended speculation that the ICU rejects negotiations. In June 2006, the transitional parliament voted in favor of a foreign peacekeeping force. But this move was rejected by some Islamic Courts leaders as being unnecessary and counter-productive. The African Union approved a proposal for Uganda and Sudan to deploy a peacekeeping force to Somalia under the auspices of the Inter-Governmental Authority for Development (IGAD). The deployment did not take place in large part because of the refusal of the United Nations Security Council to remove a United Nations arms embargo on Somalia.

In mid-June, an International Somalia Contact Group, consisting of the United States, Norway, United Kingdom, Sweden, Italy, Tanzania, and the European Union, was formed and met to discuss the unfolding Somalia crisis. In a press release after its first meeting, the Contact Group stated that "The goal of the International Contact Group will be to encourage positive political developments and engagement with actors inside Somalia to support the implementation of the Transitional Federal Charter and Institutions." However, many Somalis are skeptical that the international community will help end the crisis. International support after the signing of the agreement in 2004 has been limited and sporadic.

The defeat of the warlords in Mogadishu and renewed international interest in Somalia may offer an opportunity to help establish an effective, all-inclusive central government in Mogadishu. But peace and stability in Somalia are unlikely to occur in the near future, even if Somalis resolve their differences and establish a central government in Mogadishu. Resolving the status of Somaliland likely requires seri-

ous negotiations. The role of Somalia's neighbors, unless focused in support of a peaceful and stable Somalia, will likely continue to contribute to the instability and chaos in the country. If the international community fails to seriously engage and attempt to isolate the new leaders in Mogadishu, they are likely to fight back.

In the view of many Somalis, the threat of international terrorism can not be effectively dealt with without a functioning government in Mogadishu. The options for the United States are limited and success largely depends on how Somalis manage their own affairs. The danger for the United States, however, is being perceived by Somalis as anti-Islam. The label of some Somali groups as terrorists or extremists may have led some in Somalia to reach the conclusion that they are being labeled because of their religion. Somalis are Muslims and secular. No Somali extremist or fundamentalist group has succeeded in dominating the political scene since independence.

The desperation and anger in Somalia may be so entrenched that many Somalis are likely to support and fight for any group that aims or claims to fight for peace and stability. Let me conclude by giving you two examples of how life has changed, perhaps temporarily, for some Mogadishu residents. A friend a few days ago got word from a family member in Mogadishu that for the first time in fifteen years he was able to take his kids for swimming. A Somali woman who sells milk for a living recently told a family member that for the first time she was able to sell her milk without being robbed or paying fees to militia members in Mogadishu. Right now, Somalis are more concerned about the safety and survival of their family than the threat of extremism in their country.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Dr. Noor.

**STATEMENT OF SAAD NOOR, PH.D., REPRESENTATIVE, THE
REPUBLIC OF SOMALILAND**

Mr. NOOR. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. This is a very good day for me and for Somali. If I may say, this is the first time that we are allowed to say a word in the House of the people. And we appreciate that, Mr. Chairman. I have been a fixture in this place, in this particular House in this area for the last 7½ years. This is the first time I am sitting on this seat actually to face the Committee. And I thank you. I also thank Chairman Royce who has been very helpful, and the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee, Mr. Donald Payne.

What I will do here is just, Mr. Chairman, is to say my few pages in the time allowed.

I would begin by saying, Mr. Chairman, and honorable Members of the House Subcommittee, I am very pleased, indeed honored, to appear before you today to participate in the discussion on the current situation in Somalia; the former Italian colony, Somalia, which undoubtedly presents all the signs of an evolving crisis that poses an unstable threat to the entire Horn of Africa.

In the process, I would briefly review the situation of the Republic of Somalia and its remarkable social and political development. More importantly, I will shed light on the real security threats it has been facing, its aspirations and its resolve to stand free and independent in its unwavering commitment to fight international terrorism.

Accordingly, I will cede, as I would like to do to, I would like to say for the most part the ground for the distinguished Secretary, Dr. Frazer, who just left us and my colleague here to address the current policy development in Somalia and ramifications in the region.

Somaliland, the former British Somaliland Protectorate, gained full independence on July 26, 1960. 35 countries recognized Somaliland immediately. Five days later, the new Government of

Somaliland opted to join with the former Italian Somalia, which became independent on July 1, 1960. Unfortunately, the union turned into a disappointment for the people of Somaliland, because it ushered in two decades of political subjugation and 10 years of armed struggle against southern domination. By 1988 the conflict turned into a full-fledged popular resistance spearheaded by the Somaliland national movement, SNM. In retaliation, Siad Barre's forces razed the city of Hargeisa to the ground through aerial bombing and heavy ground fire. Tens of thousands were killed or injured, and about 1 million fled to Ethiopia and other countries as refugees and displaced persons.

Destiny sided with the people and accorded them victory. After the liberation of the entirety of Somaliland and the fall of the dictator, Siad Barre, the people of Somaliland exercised their sovereign right by withdrawing from the union and retrieving their sovereignty in May 1991. The historic re-declaration of the independence was the main achievement of the famous Burao conference, which was attended by all the clans of the former British Somaliland Protectorate.

Without doubt, the people's verdict signified two major achievements. The end of the union with Somalia and the rebirth of the republic of Somaliland. Needless to say, it was done in accordance with the nature of the union between the two states, which was predicated to begin with, on "de facto union"—never made de jure because the act of the union was never ratified by the joint legislature of the two contracting states.

Soon after the withdrawal from the union, the new national government appointed in Burao embarked on the arduous task of nation building. Rebuilding of the capital Hargeisa, which was 80 percent destroyed and other urban centers, including Burao, was immediately started. In a few years, about 1.5 million land mines were cleared.

Repair and restoration of destroyed and dilapidated infrastructure were immediately started. Soon after, the disarmament and redeployment of the freedom fighters was successfully completed. Within less than a year, the first group of the refugees who were living in the camps in Ethiopia began to come home. All in all, more than 95 percent of the refugees living in Ethiopia and other neighboring countries have returned to their country. Today.

By May 2001, democratization process and institutional building programs were in full swing. The first secular Constitution was ratified by a landslide majority, 97 percent of the ballots. The first article of the Constitution declares Somaliland a sovereign independent republic.

In December, the year 2002, local government elections were held, followed by the qualification of three political parties as national parties. In April 2003, the first Presidential elections, contested by candidates from the three parties, were held, and in September 2005, the first multiparty parliamentary elections for the House of Representatives were held. All those elections were supervised representatives from the international community, and were deemed transparent and free.

It is worth mentioning that the institutionalization of a market-driven free economic system had taken hold while the democratiza-

tion process was unfolding. Today, Somaliland is the home of an energetic and booming private sector. The forces of the market, not the government, largely regulate the system. Somaliland's private sector successfully operates airlines that connect the region to Europe and the Middle East, as well as efficient international banking and telecommunication enterprises, just to mention a few.

To date, Somaliland is a *de facto* independent republic that has not received *de jure* recognition. Nonetheless, its quest for international recognition is consistent with article III of the old Organization of African Unity, OAU charter and Article IV of the Constitutive Act of the African Union, both of which state that the union shall function in accordance with the following principles: Respect for the borders existing on achievement of independence. Somaliland today is within the borders it inherited on June 26, 1960, when it achieved its independence.

Somaliland, therefore, complies with Article IV of the Constitutive Act of the African Union. Other African states have been united with neighboring states and subsequently reclaimed their independence in accordance with these principles. They include those which made up the Mali federation, the union of Senegal and the Gambia and Sao Tome and Principe. The dissolution of the United Arab Republic, the union between Egypt and Syria, followed the same pattern. Likewise, the principle of self-determination was accepted when recognition was given to Bangladesh in 1971 after it had successfully seceded from Pakistan, so Eritrea, after its secession from Ethiopia and Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia, after their secession from Yugoslavia.

Moreover, Somaliland fully fulfills the criteria of statehood according to article I of the 1933 Montevideo convention—Montevideo convention, which states the customary international law, on the rights and duties of states. It has one, permanent population, two, a defined territory, the former British Somaliland, with defined boundaries, Somaliland's boundaries were drawn in 1884, over which it has effective control; three, a democratic government; and four, the capacity to enter into relations with other countries.

In addition, Somaliland fulfills the criteria for recognizing new states according to the guidelines set by the European Union. Such criteria were applied to recognize the European states mentioned above. It is appropriate to mention here that Somaliland's application for the AU membership has been well received. The report of the AU fact-finding mission to Somaliland April 30 to May 4, year 2005, states, the message was the same everywhere: "The irreversible independence of Somaliland, no return to the union with Somalia, the quest for recognition from the AU and the international community."

In light of the foregoing, Somaliland's position vis-a-vis Somalia has been, and is that which defines bilateral relations, though there is none now, between two separate entities as they were prior to the union of 1960.

Islamic terrorism is a relatively new phenomenon in the culture of the Somali-speaking communities in Horn of Africa. Traditionally the Somalis adhere to the Sunni sect of Islam, and overwhelmingly follow the Shafii school of Islamic jurisprudence. As a matter of fact, Islam was spread by the Sufi brotherhoods, Tariqa led by

al-Qaadiiriya. They are known for their scholarly orientation, gentility and tolerance. However, the advent of the petro-dollar, propelled neo-Wahabiism, has seriously eroded the Tariqas' influence in the last 30 years. Indeed, it did not only supplant them, but it pushed them against the wall. The vacuum has been filled by ill-educated Somali Wahabist like the former Barre jailer Hassan Dahir Aways, who is the leader of Islamists who are controlling most of the territories of the former Italian colony of Somalia. Their plan is three-fold. One, to take over all Somalia and declare an Islamic emirate and use it thereafter as a base for expanded operations in the region.

Two, infiltrate Somaliland, the only secular democracy in the Somali-speaking region of the Horn, and destabilize it, then take it over with the support of local Islamists, and three, destabilize Ethiopia and Kenya using local elements so as to topple the two other secular republics in the horn. Djibouti will be bypassed first then dealt with later. Threat of Islamists to Somaliland is a serious one. First, we have our own Islamists, albeit a minority. But nothing is louder than success and the successes of the likes of Aways are not but a warning of danger to come.

Second, we are fully aware that the Islamists, whether in Somalia, Afghanistan or in the Arabian Peninsula, see the secular political order in Somaliland as a threat to be nipped in the bud. Third, and more importantly, they are fully aware of Somaliland's role in the war against terrorism in the Horn of Africa.

As a payback, they targeted non-Muslim international workers in Somaliland and killed A lot of people, an Italian nun, two British teachers and a Kenyan lady.

All these criminal operations and many others stopped in time by Somaliland's security services were planned in Mogadishu under the supervision of no one other than the al-Qaeda-trained terrorist Aden Hashi known as Ayro. Currently there are more than a dozen terrorist awaiting executions in Somaliland's jails.

Mr. Chairman, students and scholars of political history are of the view that the entire economic and sociopolitical framework of the world has changed totally at the end of the Cold War and has changed the possibilities which face African nations. Yet within this period and changed environment, Somaliland has presented itself as a secular democracy to the new world. As such, Somaliland has within the constraints imposed by its history, beginning from its fateful union with the former Italian colony of Somalia and its resultant death and destruction has been trying to build itself into a recognized country.

Recognizing America's strategic significance as the sole superpower in a unipolar world, indeed as the leader of the free world, Somaliland, as a matter of national survival, has undertaken to the level allowed by its current limited capabilities, extensive efforts to forge close relationships with the U.S. This is because such a relationship will, among other things, have a benign influence on our relations with the rest of the international community. Somaliland's known assets in developing such a relationship are embedded in its strategic location at the southern shores of the Gulf of Aden, its commitment to stand shoulder to shoulder with the United States in the fight against international terrorism, and

its ability to not only deepen the roots of its democratic system but to also be a fearless defender of human dignity and freedom. In this relationship, it is understood that the onus is on Somaliland to prove its compliance with United States standards and to demonstrate that the country is a state under democratically achieved rule of law. And this, Somaliland, Mr. Chairman, has done successfully.

Mr. Chairman, Somaliland stands tall as a beacon for democracy and human dignity in the turbulent Horn of Africa. Nonetheless, it is standing lonely for the free world has been hesitant thus far to meet its moral obligation this deserving democracy. Mr. Chairman, time has come for the free world to meet this moral obligation. Mr. Chairman, what the people of Somaliland need from the gallant American people and its government is three-fold.

One, political diplomatic support to ensure its existence and its survival as viable democracy. Number two, security and security-related support to withstand the onslaught of Islamic terrorism, and three, economic support to meet its pressing needs without which its viability will be gravely undermined. I hope this Congress, Mr. Chairman, will go down in history as the initiator of this policy.

In conclusion, the people of Somaliland have spoken, Mr. Chairman. They have tried unity and the payback was heartbreak. They paid in blood, plenty of it to retrieve their sovereignty. They are not willing to lose it again come hell or high water. It is Somaliland tomorrow, Mr. Chairman, today, tomorrow and forever.

Mr. Chairman, Somaliland was the Darfur of yesteryear. Never again will Somaliland's sovereignty will sacrificed for an impracticable Somali unity. Never again will aggressors from Somalia or anywhere else bomb our mothers and children to death. Never, never, never again. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Noor follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SAAD NOOR, PH.D., REPRESENTATIVE, THE REPUBLIC OF SOMALILAND

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the House esteemed subcommittees:

I am very pleased, indeed honored to appear before you today to participate in the discussion on the current situation in Somalia (the former Italian colony of Somalia), which undoubtedly presents all the signs of an evolving crisis that poses an unmistakable threat to the entire Horn of Africa. In the process, I will briefly review the situation in the Republic of Somaliland and its remarkable social, economic and political development. More importantly, I will shed light on the real security threats it has been facing, its aspirations and its resolve to stand free and independent and its unwavering commitment to fight international terrorism.

Accordingly, I will, for the most part, cede the ground for the distinguished Assistant secretary of State for African Affairs, Dr. Frazer and others to address the current political and security development in Somalia and its ramifications for the region.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Somaliland (the former British Somaliland Protectorate) gained full independence on June 26, 1960. Thirty five countries recognized Somaliland immediately. Five days latter, the new government of Somaliland opted to join with the former Italian Somalia, which became independent on July 1960, Unfortunately, the union turned into a disappointment for the people of Somaliland because it ushered in two decades of political subjugation and ten years of armed struggle against Southern domination. By 1988 the conflict turned into a full fledged popular resistance spear-headed by the Somaliland National Movement (SNM). In retaliation Siad Barre's forces razed the City of Hargeisa to the ground trough aerial bombing and heavy

ground fire. Tens of thousands were killed or injured and about one million fled to Ethiopia and other countries as refugees and displaced persons.

THE FAILED UNION WITH SOMALIA AND THE PROCLAMATION OF THE REPUBLIC

Victory sided with the people and after the liberation of the total Somaliland soil and the fall of the dictator, Siad Barre, the people of the land exercised their sovereign right by withdrawing from the union and retrieving their sovereignty in May 18, 1991. The historic re-declaration of independence was the main achievement of the famous Burao Conference which was attended by all the clans of the former British Somaliland Protectorate.

Without doubt, the people's verdict signified two major achievements: the end of the union with Somalia and the rebirth of the Republic of Somaliland. Needless to say it was done in accordance with the nature of the union between the two states which was predicated, to begin with, on a *de facto union*—never made *de jure* for the *act of the union* was never ratified by the joint legislature of the two unified states.

RESTORATION AND RECONSTRUCTION

Soon after the withdrawal from the union the new national civilian government appointed in Burao embarked on the arduous task of nation-building. Rebuilding of the capital Hargeisa which was 80% destroyed and other urban centers including Burao was immediately started. In few years about 1.5 million land mines were cleared.

Repair and restoration of destroyed and dilapidated infrastructure were immediately started. Soon after, the disarmament and redeployment of the freedom fighters was successfully completed. Within less than a year the first group of the refugees who were living in camps in Ethiopian began to come home. All in all more than 95% of the refugees living in Ethiopia and other contiguous countries have returned to their country.

DEMOCRATIZATION AND INSTITUTIONAL BUILDING PROCESSES.

By May 2001 democratization process and institutional building programs were in full swing. The first secular constitution was ratified by a landslide majority—97% of the ballots. The first article of the constitution declares Somaliland a sovereign independent republic. In December 2002 local government elections were held, followed by the qualification of three political parties as national parties. In April 2003, the first Presidential elections, contested by candidates from the three parties, were held and in September 2005 the first multi-party parliamentary elections for the House of Representatives were held. All those elections were supervised by representatives from the International community and were deemed transparent and free.

It is worth mentioning, that institutionalization of a market-driven free economic system, had taken hold while the democratization process was unfolding. Today Somaliland is a home of an energetic and booming private sector. The forces of the market, not the government, largely regulate the system. Somaliland's private sector successfully operates airlines that connect the region to Europe and the Middle East, as well efficient International banking and telecommunication enterprises to mention a few..

THE QUEST FOR INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

To date Somaliland is a de-facto independent republic that has not received de-jure recognition. Nonetheless its quest for international recognition is consistent with article III of the OAU charter and article IV of the Constitutive Act of the African Union (AU), which states that the Union shall function in accordance with the following principles: respect for the borders existing on achievement of independence" Somaliland today is within the borders it inherited on the 26 of June 1960, when it achieved its independence. Somaliland, therefore complies with Article 40f the Constitutive Act of the African Union. Other African states have been united with neighboring states and subsequently reclaimed their independence in accordance with these principles. They include those which made up the Mali Federation, the union of Senegal, Gambia and Sao Tome and Principe. The dissolution of the United Arab Republic (the union between Egypt and Syria) followed the same pattern. Likewise, the principle of self-determination was accepted when recognition was given to Bangladesh in 1971 having successfully seceded from Pakistan, so Eritrea, so Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia having seceded from Yugoslavia.

Moreover, Somaliland fully fulfills the criteria of statehood according to article 1 of the 1933 Montevideo Convention on the rights and duties of states. It has 1) a permanent population, 2) a defined territory (the former British Somaliland) with defined boundaries (Somaliland's boundaries were drawn in 1884) of which it has effective control, 3) a democratic government and, 4) the capacity to enter into relations with other countries. In addition, Somaliland fulfills the criteria for recognizing new states according to the guidelines set by the European Union. Such criteria were applied to recognize the European states mentioned above.

It is appropriate to mention here that Somaliland's application for the AU membership has been received well. The report of the AU fact-finding mission to Somaliland (April 30 to May 4 2005) states:

The message was the same every place: "the irreversible independence of Somaliland; no return to the union with Somalia; the quest for recognition from the AU and the international community."

RELATIONS WITH SOMALIA

In light of the foregoing, Somaliland's position vis-à-vis Somalia has been and is that which defines bilateral relations, though there is none now, between two separate entities as they were prior to the union of 1960. As such, any future relations will be akin to the relations Somaliland has with other neighboring countries in the Horn of Africa like the Somali-speaking Djibouti and Ethiopia.

In this vein, it is important to note that Somaliland did not attend any of the over ten reconciliation conferences since 1991 when it re-claimed its sovereignty. This is because, a) it withdrew from the union and, b) it had no one to reconcile with. Now with the conclusion of the last reconciliation conference in Kenya and the formation of what is called the transitional Federal Government (TFG) now trying with apparent difficulty to have a foothold in Somalia, Somaliland's position remains the same.

However, the people and the government of Somaliland would like to extend their hands to their former partner to forge friendly relations through which mutual recognition will be exchanged as two sovereign states. This is because unity can not be forced, and in reality, we trust that Somali solidarity and unity of purpose will undoubtedly be greatly enhanced by having two independent political systems in Hargeisa and Mogadishu. In this regard, it should be remembered, that another Somali speaking entity, which had also decided against the unity mania, is the republic of Djibouti.

THE THREAT OF ISLAMIC TERRORISM

Islamic terrorism is a relatively new phenomenon in the culture of the Somali-speaking communities in Horn of Africa. Traditionally the Somalis adhere to the Sunni sect of Islam and overwhelmingly follow the *Safii* School of Islamic jurisprudence. As a matter of fact Islam was spread by the Sufi brotherhoods (*Tariqa*) led by *al-Qaadiriyah*. They are known for their scholarly orientation, gentility and tolerance. However, the advent of the petro-dollar—propelled *neo-Wahabism* has seriously eroded the *Tariqas'* influence in the last thirty years. Indeed it did not only supplant them, but it pushed them against the wall.

The vacuum has been filled by ill-educated Somali Wahabists like the former Barre jailer Hassan Dahir Aways who is the leader of Islamists who are controlling most of the territories of the former Italian colony of Somalia. Their plan is three-fold: 1) to take over all Somalia and declare an Islamic Emirate, 2) Infiltrate Somaliland, the only secular democracy in the Somali-speaking region of the Horn, and de-stabilize it and take it over with the support of local Islamists, and 3) destabilize Ethiopia and Kenya using local elements so as to topple the two other secular Republics in the Horn. Djibouti will be bypassed first then dealt with latter.

ISLAMIST'S THREAT TO SOMALILAND

Threat of Islamists to Somaliland is a serious one. First, we have our own Islamists, albeit a minority. But nothing is louder than success and the successes of the likes of Aways are not but a warning of danger to come. Second, we are fully aware that the Islamists whether in Somalia, Afghanistan, or in the Arabian Peninsula see the secular political order in Somaliland as a threat to be nipped in bud. Third, and more importantly, they are fully aware of Somaliland's role in the war against terrorism in the Horn of Africa. As a pay back, they targeted non-Muslim international workers in Somaliland and killed Annalena Tonelli from Italy (October 2003), Richard and Enid Eyeington from Britain (October, 2003) and Kenyan Florence Cheriuyot (April 2005). All these criminal operations and many others, stopped in time, by Somaliland's Security Services were planned in Mogadishu under the supervision of no one other than the Al-Qaeda-trained terrorist Aden Hashi known as Ayro.

Currently there are more than a dozen terrorist awaiting executions in Somaliland's jails.

FROM NOW TO ETERNITY SOMALILAND-US RELATIONS

Mr. Chairman, Students and scholars of political history are of the view that the entire economic and sociopolitical framework of the world has changed totally at the end of Cold War and has changed the possibilities which face African nations. Yet within this period and changed environment, Somaliland has presented itself as a secular democracy, to the new world. As such, Somaliland, has within the constraints imposed by its history—beginning from its fateful union with the former Italian colony of Somalia and its resultant death and destruction, has been trying to build itself into a recognized country. Recognizing America's strategic significance as the sole superpower in a unipolar world, indeed as the leader of the Free World, Somaliland—as a matter of national survival—has undertaken, to the level allowed by its current limited capabilities, extensive efforts to forge close relationship with the US. This is because such a relationship will, among other things, have a benign influence on our relations with the rest of the international community.

Somaliland's known assets in developing such a relationship are imbedded in its strategic location at the southern shores of the Gulf of Aden, its commitment to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the US in the fight against international terrorism and its ability to not only deepen the roots of its democratic system, but to also be a fearless defender of human dignity and freedom.

In this relationship, it is understood that the onus is on Somaliland to prove its compliance with US standers and to demonstrate that the country is a state under democratically achieved rule of law. And this, Somaliland had done successfully. Mr. Chairman, Somaliland stands tall as a beacon for democracy and human dignity in the turbulent Horn of African. Nonetheless it is standing lonely for the free world has been hesitant, thus far, to meet its moral obligation toward this deserving democracy. Mr. Chairman, time has come for the free world to meet this moral obligation.

Mr. Chairman, what the people of Somaliland need from gallant American people and its government is threefold: 1) Political/diplomatic support to ensure its existence and its survival as viable democracy, 2) Security and security related support to withstand the onslaught of Islamic terrorism, and 3, economic support to meet its pressing need without which its viability will be gravely undermined. I hope that this Congress will go down in history as the initiator of this policy.

IN CONCLUSION,

The people of Somaliland have spoken. They have tried unity and the payback was heartbreak. They paid in blood, plenty of it to retrieve their Sovereignty. They are not willing to lose it again come hell or high water. It is Somaliland today, tomorrow and forever.

Mr. Chairman, Somaliland was the Darfur of yesteryear. Never again will Somaliland's sovereignty be sacrificed for an impracticable Somali unity. Never again will aggressors from Somalia or anywhere else bomb our mothers and children to death. Never, never, never again.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Dr. Noor, thank you very, very much. Let me ask some opening questions if I could, beginning with a question for all the panelists, if you would like. Who is actually financing or underwriting the Union of Islamic Courts? Do you have a sense of where the weapons are coming from? Let me also ask all of you what role you think President Meles and Bashir are playing, and perhaps, Mr. Prendergast, you might want to respond to this especially. Is there concrete evidence that the United States furnished aid to the warlords? How much and what kind of aid? And you mentioned in your statement that we couldn't have done worse over these last few years. Obviously this is a criticism of the Bush Administration and Congress, but you also talked about how we abandoned the Somalis, which was also a strong criticism of the Clinton Administration.

I remember very well when our soldiers were killed, the rangers were killed and Les Aspen made his way to Capitol Hill to a joint

session of Congress, and I will never forget a comment he made in answer to a question about why our troops were not properly equipped, because the battlefield commanders had wanted more in order to be ready to engage. He said, "I didn't think it would fly on the Hill," which was met with a bipartisan burst of angst that if you are going to put troops in harm's way, make sure that they are properly equipped to carry out whatever that mission might be, and as you recall, because you were there at the time, there was a sense that going after Aideed would be a fool's mission; it was not the right mission for our U.S. military but, that being said, you did make the point that a sense of abandonment was very real.

So my question basically is, what lessons have we learned from that? You know, going through both Administrations as we have, and now finding ourselves right back in the center of a meltdown. Have we learned the lessons? And the International Contact Group, is that the mechanism or is there some other mechanism that needs to be devised to work toward that national unity, government national unity that you think is critical to bringing a newer and better day to Somalia?

Mr. PRENDERGAST. Are you sure you don't want to add any more?

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. No.

Mr. PRENDERGAST. Okay. Let's go one by one real quickly. The support for the union of Islamic courts primarily comes from Somali businessmen. They gravitate toward security. This is the best bet they have had for the last 15 years in security. The areas the local areas clan-based court militias in different parts of south Mogadishu and north Mogadishu demonstrated that in those areas, there wasn't any hanky-panky and there was definitely stability. The businessmen have been the principle supporters in building the infrastructure for most of these Islamic courts.

Now, I think now that it has grown in its ambition and its ideology and brought—and allied itself with some of the senior Islamists political figures that have been floating around the Somali scene for the last 10 or 15 years, our researchers are saying that there is additional assistance coming in from the Middle East.

I don't have it just like Dr. Frazer, a good handle on where that is coming from. But I do know the bulk of the assistance still comes organically from within Mogadishu, which is a lesson that we ought to look at very clearly. This isn't something that is a foreign entity that is landing on the moon here—from the moon. Second, the Ethiopia support is directly to the transitional Federal Government.

They provide direct assistance to President Yusuf, and I think they would if there was a threat to the TFG in Baidoa, they would intervene much more directly militarily, and we would see a conflagration in Somalia and southern Somalia as a result.

Third, the U.S. assistance to the warlords. I spent a lot of time with the individuals who were recipients of U.S. assistance, and we went through all of the kinds of assistance that they receive. Our estimate—best guess is about \$100,000 to \$150,000 a month was going in during 2005 in the first half of 2006, to these individuals, and we encouraged them to come together in the larger terrorism alliance that Ted Dagne referred to earlier. This is the extent of our assistance. I don't think we sent arms in. We didn't technically

violate the UN arms embargo. We provided cash which is instantly monetized to buy arms by the individuals involved. Indeed it was a bipartisan failure in Somalia.

I didn't start in government until late 1996, so I was actually working in for human rights watch at the time and travelling around in Somalia and it was a shameful moment I think and period for United States policy, very difficult and a traumatic moment. The lessons you ask, I think really the most important lesson is that there just is no substitute for patient state building in Somalia. I think that—in the end, our interests are best secured through a very deep and sustained investment in building institutions of the state that will provide the kind of partner that we need for counterterrorism efforts going forward, and that will provide the kind of social services, educational opportunities and job opportunities that Somalis want and crave, and most importantly, when you ask a hundred Somalis in the street of any town in Somalia, what do you care about most in Somalia, if a government was to come what would you want them to do?

Security, security, security is what the answer is from every single one of them, so we have to help build those institutions once there is more of a combination between the ICU and the TFG. Finally, contact group absolutely important. I am very, very glad to see the Bush Administration going forward multilaterally, but there is a role I think the only difference I would—shade of a difference I would have with the Assistant Secretary on that front is that the U.S. can rather than just lead, or support from behind, we can actually lead in the context of this contact group. I think with one or two experienced able diplomats that—you know, there are many in our foreign service who are available.

We could be very directly supportive of the kind of negotiations process that is needed right now between the Islamic courts and the transitional Federal Government. We are going to have to push that along. We are going to have to work directly with the IGAD states. Sudan has its links with particular individuals within the Islamic courts. Ethiopia obviously has its links with the TOG. We can work directly with these guys in order to facilitate and support a negotiations process. It is absolutely imperative to avoid the worst case scenario of a war between these two major entities with Ethiopia jumping in. Thanks.

Mr. PHAM. Mr. Chairman, I would agree with Mr. Prendergast insofar as the Islamic courts movement. In its current articulation was largely a creation of the business community, but I would take it a further step back in history and ask where that business community came from.

Italian, unlike the British colonial authorities in the protectorate of the Somaliland, the Italians did not particularly invest in education. The first real institution of higher education established there was in 1953 was an offshoot of Cairo's Al-Azhar University and it sent its most promising students from there on to Al-Azhar.

Later on individuals were trained at the Islamic University of Madinah in Saudi Arabia, the Umm al-Qura University in Mecca, the Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University in Riyadh. They formed the nucleus after the collapse of the Siad Barre regime. There was an attempt by these individuals to seize power.

Ironically they were thwarted by our bete noire, Mohammed Farah Aydiid. At which point, they had a strategy for working through society. So many of these individuals educated abroad in these places, some of whom actually made money from the UN peacekeeping effort there and were paid contractors for the UN, these businessmen were Islamists before they became businessmen; then they turn around and establish the Islamic Courts—so then there is that linkage there.

But there is also money from Saudi Arabia, the Emirates, Yemen; transshipment, the Government of Eritrea is clearly involved in this. The UN monitoring group has documented quantity—extraordinary quantities—of armaments shipped from Eritrea, including weapons that have no tactical use in Somalia in a civil war, anti-aircraft munitions for example—the transitional Federal Government doesn't have an Air Force to use them against. There is that foreign element as well within the Islamist movement.

Mr. DAGNE. I guess John pretty much covered where the assistance coming, but I would like to put things in perspective. I think it is important that we don't sort of rush to judgment and say, because they are Islamists they must be extremists. What do we know about the ICU? And I think what we know is very limited. What we know of the leadership is very limited except for the few individuals who have emerged recently.

The Islamic Court consists of at least 14 courts, primarily throughout Mogadishu, and it is largely dominated by the majority clan in the Mogadishu, which is the Hawiya. Not all the courts are extremists, and I would suggest going back, as you have articulated earlier, to look at why this group, especially, in fact, Ali Tahad establishes presence and tries to expand. It is, in large part, because of the violence and the warlords who have tormented and killed and maimed civilians, and what they did, I think for the record, one can go back and look at it, establish some relative stability in the small areas that they controlled. Funded schools. Establish courts, the courts were to deal with the criminal elements that tormented the Somali society during that time.

So the level of support or the assumption is that there are arms and weapons coming from outside, primarily most of the munitions and the weapons are coming from the neighboring countries.

You mentioned Eritrea. I would argue that, in fact, most of the support and intervention actually comes from Ethiopia and not Eritrea. Geographically, historically and otherwise. You mentioned earlier about the Abdullah Yusuf receiving assistance from dictator Mengistu Haile Mariam, the fact of the matter is most of the warlords and factions in Somalia dating back to the 1980s received assistance from Ethiopia, from successive governments, including those in Somaliland today.

So it is very important, I think we put things in perspective. I think—where do they get the support? I think yes, there is some businessmen who provide them assistance, but they also get their support from the people. And they don't have a huge government machinery.

It is localized administration that we have seen. In terms of I think, you know, the role of the neighboring countries, as I said

earlier, I think it is important that we try to understand what it is. Ethiopia, indeed, has some strategic interests in seeing Somalia be a stable and peaceful country.

But the role played by Ethiopia, or for that matter, by the Somali factions, have not been very helpful in achieving those objectives. Ethiopia did intervene many times directly into Somalia and militarily, including currently in the current crisis. Ethiopia did back a number of factions, including Abdullah Yusuf, who is the current President. So as the Eritreans countering the Ethiopian influence, they do back other factions, but all the other neighbors, including Kenya and the Djiboutians, have a role and do provide support Djiboutians. It is what they do and what the objective of those neighboring countries should be the one that we should be focused on, whether it is for stability and peace or whether it is to pursue and push their own extremic interests and agenda.

MR. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Let me just ask what threat—or did you want to respond, Dr. Noor?

MR. NOOR. Yeah. Regarding what I think has been said here, basically in terms of the origin, in terms of where the Islamists come from, is it is just like he just mentioned, yes, the Saudis took over after the Egyptians begin—the Egyptian influence receded, began to recede after the petrol dollar came, before al-Azhar University and its institutions were actually the people who were undertaken the teaching of the Islamic religion and the Arabic language both, but soon after the petrol dollar, you know, billions come out, Saudis began building their higher education, I was teaching at the University of Riyadh for 2 years and at the time, you know, they were trying to do their very best to get everybody from Africa to their own institutions, you know, under the guise of supporting Islam, but actually what they were doing was just they were infiltrating their own Wahabiism. Since then, the money, of course, came from different sources.

A lot of the money that those people really get was went through the presence of the United Nations forces, multi-international multiforces, and the groups that actually, in my view, that created the new club for this whole movement, al-jihad, al-Islah, al-Takfir, al-Hijra, and al-Tabligh, these are the four basic ones. There are the small other ones who come and go, the Muslim brotherhood put a Muslim in, they get in and get them out. So you have different groups, but these are the main people. What is their purpose is actually just to gain power.

These people are all from the major clan of Hawiya. We are Somalis. We see this differently from anybody else's point of view because we have our own insights in Somali and Somaliland speakers. There are abuses that Hawiyas, they have tried the secular way to get power. They failed. They basically were responsible for the election of Abdullah Yusuf in Nairobi simply because they could not agree a candidate of their own. Therefore, they have sustained a great deal of political humiliation. Now, there is abuse in that in that they say okay secular system could not bring Hawiya together. We may try Islam, but the end is the same, quest for political power. These people are basically Hawee, the warlord is Hawee. These are the same clans who were supporting the warlords yesterday. But now the color of the game has changed. The

end is the same. Hawiya should stand up and should be something. That is the basic thing as far as we see of Somalis.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Dr. Pham, you had indicated in some writings that you expect the Islamic Courts Union to go after Somaliland. Is that your assessment? Is that the assessment shared by others on the panel? What is the threat and how do they repel it?

Mr. PHAM. I think they definitely will—if they manage to marginalize other competitors for governmental authority and control of the territory of the former Italian Somalia, the natural target is Somaliland mainly because their ideology is not only a militant Islam, but a Somali irredentism, which sees a greater Somalia including what was once French Somalia (Djibouti), Somaliland, the Somali-speaking areas of Ethiopia. These people fought in Ethiopia in the 1990s and the Ethiopians drove them off.

So there have been conflicts before, but Somaliland is the first target. As a Somali-speaking entity, culturally Somali but democratic secular, it stands for all the things they do not like, and it is a natural target for them as Islamists. I think Dr. Noor could speak to that better than I, but there are Islamist cells present in Somaliland, which would lend them support and that is another threat.

Mr. DAGNE. I don't see any evidence that suggests that this group, whether it will exist tomorrow or not, would launch an attack against Somaliland. In fact, what we have seen over the past several weeks is that this group decided to sit down even negotiate with the transitional Federal Government, and that the level of violence that subsided significantly over the past week.

So unless there is clear evidence or intent made by the leadership or has the capability to project that kind of power beyond Mogadishu, which I am not aware of, but I see no sign or no evidence to suggest that the objective is to move against Somaliland, and I think it is also important, once again, to point out it was mentioned earlier and repeated again that this particular group is not the same group that attacked Ethiopia or engaged in the fight against Ethiopia. Ethiopia has its own Somali problem.

As you mentioned earlier, the Ogaden National Liberation Front being dismissed as an extremist group, the Ogadenis had, for many, many years, serious political dispute with Ethiopia, and in fact, they did join the transitional government in 1991. It wasn't until the leadership of the ONLF assassinated during daylight by the security forces that they fled, as the Oromo Liberation Front did also join eventually and left the transitional government. So that particular group is different than the group that we are discussing now, that they have no presence in Ethiopia. Ethiopia has presence in Somalia, either through proxies or by its own forces.

Mr. PHAM. I would just respond, the groups are admittedly different, but the actors are all the same. It is the same phenomenon we see throughout the world with terrorism. They switch names, change designations. You know, so-called Sheikh Hassan Aweys was before the vice chairman and military commander of al-Itihaad now he is the Chairman of the shura for the Islamic Courts Union, different title, same man.

Hassan Turki was a regional military commander for al-Itihaad when it was involved in military conflict with the Ethiopians. Now he is a member of this new council, so it is the same individuals, the same bad apples reappearing in different bushels. I am not sure I am prepared to call that a new product.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Mr. Payne.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much. Are you saying that in your last statement anywhere there is Islam you are going to have some problems? That is almost what I can conclude whether it is Nigeria, whether it is Kenya, whether it is down in wherever.

Mr. PHAM. No, sir, not at all, Congressman Payne. What I am saying is the specific Islamist radicals and some Muslims would say those who pervert Islam. These individuals, I named some of them in my statement, Sheik Hassan Dahir Aways, Hassan Turki, Ata Asho—these same individuals, some of whom are named in our own terrorist lists, keep cropping up as actors in this drama in Somalia. So I am not speaking about Muslims. I am saying these radical Muslims, these particular individuals keep cropping up. They changed the name of the organization so today it is not al-Itihaad today it is the Islamic Courts Union but it is the same people cropping up in leadership roles.

Mr. PAYNE. I certainly agree with you on the fact that the Italian representative Rafaeli really has overblown kind of authority. It seems that he—which was what I have been trying to tell the United States Government that actually withdrew, you know, Somalia is not just some place that exists today and we are a little concerned about it. You know, we go back 45, 50 years when the emperor was deposed in Ethiopia and the Dur took over, and we were supporting Ethiopia as our hands against the communists and Somalia was being influenced by the Soviet Union and then when the emperor was deposed and the Dur took over and communism took over Ethiopia, we switched over and embraced the Somali warlords. I mean, you know, the whole war dealing with the Soviet versus the United States, other than Vietnam, most of the blood was shed in Africa. That is where the fighting wars were going on. That is where people died and were killed, and so for, as I have been appealing to the U.S., and I am not, you know, I am not directing this to you, but to just the discussion, in appealing to the United States Government, that we have a responsibility because we decided that that is where the Cold War should be fought with bullets and killings and so forth, when it was Mabuta in Zaire, whether it was going along with South Africa's policies, we never criticized them because they were anti-communism, and they could have apartheid as long as they were against communists and it took the Congress finally to pass a bill that made the Reagan Administration angry because we said no longer, even though they are anti-communists, they are really bad people, the leadership, and so the question about Somalia—and I wish Dr. Frazer was still here—we have a responsibility.

We created a lot of the situation that occurs there by supporting financially, militarily, ideologically, the characters that are now still around, you know, or remnants of their—of their former organizations, and so the fact that the Italian Somali hand stayed

around has enormous amount of influence disproportionate to what it should be because we decided to withdraw.

We had one fellow at the Embassy in Nairobi that did part time Somaliland, Somalia, eight or nine other things where the Italians had a person sitting in at everything that was going on, and having a disproportionate amount of influence for his own personal gain and for Italy's, you know, business deals that were going on. And so, you know, we have such a large and strong and qualified diplomatic core but sometimes it just seems that we just miss the little boat that could really prevent. Now we are talking about hundreds of millions of dollars, trying to patrol the coastline of Somalia. We are talking about gun boats being there to avoid piracy and all that. Have we sent too high level U.S. State Department people just to sit in the meetings and assist here, and the sad thing was that the Somalis were asking for it. They weren't saying, don't come and assist us. They were making a plea. But just a point that you mentioned, that we should put no confidence in this transitional government. I mean, then what do we do? I mean, where do we start? It certainly leaves little bit to be desired, but you seem to say you have absolutely no comments. Yes, they purposely—because I was at some of the meetings purposely invited a few of the warlords to be a part of because they were the government in Somalia. There was no one else, but then they brought in many, many other of the 275 people that is in this government, maybe eight or ten were warlords, you know, the majority of other people were business people, theologians, whatever, so if you say in your opinion, we should just—you said the more—the more importance we put in this, the worse off we are, well, where do you get a government from?

Mr. PHAM. In response to that, sir, I would suggest in fundamental agreement with you, we need a long-term engagement. We need a moral obligation as well as a political goal that we should pursue, and that engagement includes a presence to build up the civil society and those actors who are legitimate. Somalia lost a great figure a year ago when the founder of the NGO in Mogadishu center of dialogue was assassinated by one of the people we would like as well, one of the terrorists in Mogadishu associated with and most likely hidden by the Islamists.

So we need to, if you will, privilege those authentic voices of civil society, not people who self-appoint themselves leaders of sections of a country and then acquire some sort of stamp of approval. One point of evidence, I would like to point out to you, the government—if it was indeed representative and had some sort of legitimacy, wouldn't have been so—shall we say, not particularly eager to leave Kenya, the Kenyans about a year ago had to stage a rather farcical departure ceremony just to shove them out of Kenya. So they—even as warlords they didn't have much—they weren't even welcome in their own homestead, so to speak.

So in that respect, we don't—in fact, we don't know, as Secretary Frazer said, we don't know because we don't have presence on the ground. We should perhaps consider some sort of presence. In Somaliland, at least a listening post if nothing else.

Mr. PAYNE. Once again, I think you have got to start with something, and this government was, you know, painfully taking clans

and subclans and portions of Somalia attempting to put together something, I mean, that is just like saying that Boston should not have existed in government because Boss Tweed who was actually a criminal, I mean he got re-elected when he was in prison, to be honest. Now, I am just simply saying—no. Let me finish. That you have to, you know, you start with where you are, and it just rattles my, you know, thought to say, scrap this thing which after 3 or 4 or 5 years.

You have got something that is much less than desirable. You don't have another 5 years. I mean, where do you go from here? I mean, it is great to sit here and theorize and if you have written 200 periodicals, you know, you are evidently a very learned person. There is no question about it.

However, practically speaking though, how do you try to even get a functioning government, which they are far from in Somalia, as we know, by saying, this is, I mean, pretty strong, you know, way that you characterize your feelings about this transitional government.

Mr. PHAM. Well, I only respond I would agree we have to deal with the hand we have, but Boss Tweed didn't need, you know, the U.S. Army to enable him to sit in Boston. That is the problem. We have a government that is so weak that—if they were warlords who at least controlled territory, such as what we had with the northern alliance and some of our allies in Afghanistan, the Kurds in Iraq, there is something to work with, but these are people who have to be on life support, even in—for example, Abdullah Yusuf hails from Puntland, but he can't even go to Puntland so he has no base.

That is my point. If he had a base, I would phrase it differently and be arguing a different case. If they actually had some territorial base and a population that actually supported them other than themselves.

Mr. PAYNE. All right. Then let me ask the question then, what would you have governing? What would you have before us then at this time? Since we should dismiss this group. What formation do you see or what are the character—I mean—tomorrow, how could—what could be—what could replace them, that is maybe the question.

Mr. PHAM. At this point, I would look realistically on who is in control in the ground in what was once Somalia. Certainly the Government of Somaliland is an interlocutor that which we should engage and certainly those moderates within the Islamists courts, if they can assert authority then they actually control the capital city and if they can prove their bona fides are interlocutors, they certainly can be engaged but certainly not some group that controls nothing.

Mr. PAYNE. Well, I think that we are mixing apples and oranges when you take Somaliland and put it into this Mogadishu proper. I mean, that, you know, somewhat agree with Dr. Noor. That is a whole separate entity, which is moving along well. We were here 5 years ago, 7 years ago opening up a hospital. This is when, you know, Somalia was still—no one was visiting Mogadishu, and I think before I mentioned the French were up there, the British were up in Somaliland and the British—and that is really the clear

difference, I think, Dr. Noor, the fact that the British, as bad as they were controlling the whole world, but what they did do, other than the Lomay treaty to buy bananas from their former colonies to give them a break was that they did allow the local people to engage in government even though they were protectorate in this stage, in Kenya, Daniel Rapamoy served in the parliament while they were still colonies of Britain.

So what they, at least, had a notion that one day we are going to train people to govern. And that is the big difference, I think, Dr. Noor, you would agree that the advantage that people had in British Somaliland, British Somalia as opposed to French Somalia and Italian Somalia was that there was probably more opportunity for governance and civil servants to be trained so that they were more—they were just trained and able to take over governance wherein Mogadishu and other parts they were not.

Mr. NOOR. If I may say, Mr. Chairman—I mean Mr. Congressman, here is just first of all quickly from what you have just said, the role that the Italian representative in Nairobi has been playing is well known to us. I am very pleased that you know it too. Very, very, very unusual role for a diplomat, but it seems to me and it is very clear to us that Italy is still living in a nostalgia of that east, you know, Italian east Africa. To them, all they see is just that they live through that nostalgia.

They refuse to see the facts on the ground. What they would like to see is just to see a government that has Mogadishu as a seed which is still under Italian influence to the best of their ability. The TFG, normally in Somaliland, especially when we are talking to the international community, do not badmouth the TFG. It doesn't help us. What we normally if we are spending sometime we spend time talking for our own cause rather than attacking those people.

But there is one problem to us, if the United States of America, with the whole full respect of the argument here, wants to support the TFG for whatever the reason is, at least there should be—that should be done conditionally. Condition that they should be dealing with the facts on the ground. They should not claim sovereignty over Somaliland. They should not, and that should be a condition for the United States support for the TFG. If we are going to have something to do with Somalia some day down the road, it is not going to come through that route. That is a starter. They should be told to cease and desist. Take care of your problems. That I would like to emphasize for the Chairman and for you, that it should be conditional although there is a limit to what you can do to support someone that is not able to support himself. What is needed in Somalia actually is not arms and forces from outside. What is needed is brain power. People sitting together and so you can take a horse to the water but you cannot make him drink. You can even reoccupy Somalia, but if the people don't want to put their house in order, you cannot make them. So that is one thing to be known, really. For the British background, yes, you are right, the British colony history is totally different from the colony of French colonial history. The British were well organized. They left civil service in place, they told people the roles they would be playing. The same thing they did in Ghana and Nigeria they did in the

former British Somaliland Protectorate. There was a Somaliland Parliament before 1960.

So that is well known and now we can see the difference, but the issue remains, I do believe if the international community really would like to do something about Somalia, it should, first of all, recognize Somaliland as a separate entity, Somaliland, which is recognized as a separate entity will play a vital role, we are all Somalis. We cannot hide from each other, we know our own culture. We will spearhead the international community's effort to bring about peace in Somalia.

Mr. PAYNE. Let me just thank you. I think that is a UN—it is a little bit above—but I think we can't start putting countries together or taking them apart. I just have a quick question. I know, Mr. Prendergast, you were in—you said something, that killing or assassination about a year ago. Was it—was there some report that was coming out or could you refresh my memory if I am hitting on something.

Mr. PRENDERGAST. I think you are talking about—he just referred to the founder for the Center for Peace and Dialog. He was quite an extraordinary human rights defender and peace promoter. And one of my closest friends in Somalia. Also did a lot of work in the network in Somalis that we have on the ground in Somalia and was assassinated on the day after a report that we produced, International Crisis Group produced about—a very in-depth report about the nature of the courts, the few courts that are, in fact, harboring al-Qaeda suspects and the nature of those organizations. And so he was executed in front of his family and the closest, of course, there is no proper investigation that results from that, but the evidence leads to one of the particular—one of the 14 courts, the one headed by Iro, and that there was a lot of boasting about it afterwards. So I think that is the incident you are referring to.

Mr. PAYNE. Thanks a lot. I want to say, like I said, this is very beneficiary. There is no question about it. However, I think that we have been derelict in our responsibility. I have said that over and over and over again. The Administration did not want to deal with it. They did not want to hear it and Somalia is a big place and it can create a lot of havoc, and I think that you know a stitch in time saves nine. If we had simply started to engage ourselves 6, 7, 8, 9 years ago when this transitional business began, we would be in much, much better shape where we are now, spending, like I said, tens of millions of dollars patrolling the waterways trying to keep piracy out, cruise ships have to change their routes. I mean, you would be—fishing is disrupted. So much economic and just human misery is being spread because we just decided we don't—let us just forget that country and now we have deep, deep problems where many times these things can be avoided with some affirmative action on the part of the Department of State. It is just—it is frustrating.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Thank you, Mr. Payne and thank you to all of our witnesses. You provided very, very useful insights and council for the Committees and Dr. Noor, we won't let another 7 years go by to invite you back.

The hearing is adjourned.

Mr. PAYNE. That is, if you turn your testimony in half. I mean we have got 7½ years in here this afternoon.
[Whereupon, at 5:40 p.m., the Subcommittee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING RECORD

RESPONSES FROM MR. TED DAGNE, SPECIALIST IN AFRICAN AFFAIRS, CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE, TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS

Question:

Somalis are notoriously opposed to any foreign intervention in their country. What is the likelihood of success of any outside force in establishing lasting peace and stability in Somalia at this point? Do you see any way that Somalis might be able to achieve these goals on their own given their dismal history of respecting authority over the last 15 years?

Response:

It will be erroneous to assume that Somalis are “notoriously opposed” to an international peacekeeping force. The Baidoa based Transitional Federal Government supports the presence of an international peacekeeping force. The Mogadishu based Islamic Courts Union has expressed its opposition to an international force. It is important to note that the African Union and IGAD have called repeatedly for an African peacekeeping mission to be deployed to Somalia. But the United Nations Security Council refused to exempt the proposed force from the arms embargo currently in place against Somalia.

Peace and stability in Somalia cannot be achieved by an international force intervention without the support and active engagement of Somalis themselves. Only Somalis can bring peace and stability to their country. The people of Somaliland have achieved that objective over a decade ago. The rest of Somalia can do the same.

Question:

One of our witnesses, Dr. Pham, reports that nominal U.S. allies, such as Saudi Arabia, are supporting the Islamic Courts Union jihadists. One could understand al Qaeda's interest in cultivating an ally that could provide another base of operations, but what do the Saudis gain from this support to Islamic extremists in Somalia?

Response:

The allegation by one of the witnesses at the hearing that Saudi Arabia provides support to the Islamic Courts Union cannot, at this juncture, be backed by credible evidence. I have not seen or read any report linking Saudi Arabia to the Islamic Courts Union. Indeed, there are press reports and some credible evidence linking Somalia's neighbors to the warring factions in Mogadishu and Baidoa.

Question:

Somaliland disaffection with the union for the former British and Italian colonies increased dramatically by the 1980's and now Somaliland wants to become recognized as an independent nation. Given its original status as an independent colony of Great Britain, why shouldn't Somaliland be recognized in its own right?

Response:

The self-declared Somaliland Republic has been actively seeking recognition for over a decade. To date, no government has recognized Somaliland as an independent country. The status of Somaliland should be resolved by Somalis themselves.

RESPONSES FROM J. PETER PHAM, PH.D., DIRECTOR, WILLIAM R. NELSON INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS, JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY, TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS

Question:

You have written that you expect the Islamic Courts Union to go after Somaliland in the near future. Do you see this group as expansionist enough to take up the cause that motivated a previous Somali government to seek control over territory believed to be historically a part of Somalia that is currently part of Ethiopia, Djibouti, and Kenya?

Response:

There are three intertwined factors which are essential to understanding the irredentist streak in Somali politics. The first is that Somali expansionism and its modern correlate, the nostalgia to gather all ethnic Somali peoples within a mythical "Greater Somalia" that some believed to have frustrated by colonialism, are ancient phenomena that long predate the failed attempt of the Siyad Barre dictatorship to seize "Somali" territories from Ethiopia in the 1970s, to say nothing of current noises coming out of Mogadishu. I would follow the great dean of Somali studies, Professor I.M. Lewis of the London School of Economics and Political Science, in dating this strain of the national character back to the twelfth century when the Dir and Darod clans, and later the Isaaq, began pressing on their Oromo neighbors. Second, while military, ecological, and demographic pressures may have historically motivated this expansionism, there is little doubt that it was also driven by a militant, messianic form of Islam. In fact, the word "Somali" first appears in the historical record in connection with the fifteenth century "holy wars" waged against by Ethiopia the Walashma' dynasty centered around Adal and Zeila. The sixteenth century campaigns of the Imam Ahmad Ibrahim al-Ghazi (or "Gran"), although ephemeral, are still celebrated in song as one of the few moments in Somali history when the ordinarily disparate and mutually hostile clans combined together in a sense of national purpose. Third, whether acting out of cynicism or conviction—or a little of both—the Islamic Courts Union might well find it very convenient to tap into this deep reservoir of historical memory in an effort aimed at both regime legitimization and ideological mission.

Question:

You see parallels in what is happening in Somalia today and what happened some years ago in Afghanistan. Do you believe the U.S. would be justified in launching military action against Somalia? Given past experience there and the likelihood of international military support, would such action be feasible given the general abhorrence of foreign intervention by Somalis that could ignite even currently warring factions?

Response:

One of the key ends of our government, as the Preamble to the Constitution of the United States notes, is to "provide for the common defense" in order to "secure the Blessings of Liberty for ourselves and our Posterity." Hence, should current trends with the consolidation of the Islamists in Somalia and the increasing presence, now documented, in that country of non-Somali armed radicals continue, then, absent any other authority capable and willing to control these groups, the U.S. government not only has the right, but the obligation to act, whether unilaterally or in concert with like-minded nations, to preempt even greater threats. However, such actions that military necessity might require should be carefully calibrated and, given the general abhorrence of foreign intervention that you mentioned, be wisely limited to the minimum required to contain the threat—for example, coastal patrols or limited air strikes against terrorist training camps. Nonetheless, until we have a better grasp of the situation on the ground, no option should be taken off the table.

Question:

You report that one of the groups comprising the Islamic Courts Union is so extreme that they tried to assassinate Osama bin Laden for being too moderate. How does their extremism manifest itself? Are they sufficiently extreme to make the Islamic Courts Union unstable, or are they closer in thinking to the other Union elements than we may think?

Response:

I believe that you are referring to *Al-Takfir wal-Hijra* ("Excommunication and Exodus"), which takes fundamentalism a few steps beyond even most radical fundamentalist groups. A number of operatives of that group, originally Egyptian, found refuge in the chaos of Somalia, especially after they were hounded out of their homeland following their involvement in the assassination of President Anwar Sadat. In Somalia, they integrated into *Al-Itihaad al-Islamiya* ("Islamic Union"), the group out of which many of the leaders of the Islamic Courts Union emerged, and recruited additional members. (It should be recalled that *Al-Itihaad* itself has collaborated with numerous foreign terrorist organizations against U.S. interests, including the infamous 1993 "Black Hawk Down" incident and the 1998 bombings of the U.S. embassies in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam.) The difficulty with assessing the strength of *Al-Takfir wal-Hijra* is that, while a Sunni group, it practices the Shi'a discipline of *taqiyya*, which allows adherents to dissimulate their true beliefs in order to advance it. However, they are present.

Another distinct extremist group that has recently emerged within the Union is *Al-Shabaab* ("The Youth"), consisting of young men, aged between 20 and 30 years, who fought on the frontlines of the Islamists' recent successful military operations. Led by Adan Hashi 'Ayro, who trained in Afghanistan with Al-Qaeda before returning to Somalia after 9/11, this group appears to be gathering strength in the competition for control of the Somali Islamist movement.

In short, there are tensions within the ICU, but the battle might be characterized as a race to the bottom for who can stake out the most radical position. While there are some within the Union who are more moderate—and, please note, this is a very relative scale—it seems that the radicals are better organized and armed and are more representative of the fighters who ultimately determine the balance of power.

Question:

Aweys has allegedly set up madrassas in Mogadishu to train young boys in radical ideologies and the use of arms. Do others with ties to or sympathies with terrorists run such schools? What has been the effect of madrassas on Somali society, and what do you predict will be the future role of such schools? Who is financing these schools?

Response:

In addition to the madrassas run by Hassan Dahir 'Aweys, there is the emerging *Al-Shabaab* ("The Youth") movement led by his kinsman and long-time ally Adan Hashi 'Ayro. The former, financed largely by foreign Islamic "charities," seem to aim at training a new elite class to govern the Islamist state the ICU proposes to construct. The latter are mostly uneducated youth who have been indoctrinated and then given more advanced military training. They seem to be financed by groups of self-interested Somali businessmen, although their weapons betray clear foreign connections in the Arab world. While the dynamics of the relationship between the two groups remain to be clarified, they are not necessarily mutually exclusive and may even be complementary in scope.

Question:

What is the state of civil society in Somalia? You suggest that we engage with the "authentic voices of civil society"—who are these voices?

Response:

Arguably the best voice of Somali civil society, Abdul Qadir Yahya Ali, founder of the non-governmental Center for Research and Dialogue in Mogadishu, was silenced by Adan Hashi 'Ayro a little over a year ago. However, there are others like him, mainly small-time self-starters. Our lack of a presence in the Somali territories leaves us dependent upon ineffectual official interlocutors like the members of the Transitional Federal Government, which has now been shown to have pocketed the millions in aid they have received (e.g., "President" Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmad and "Prime Minister" Ali Mohamed Geedi, both of whom recently purchased expensive villas in Nairobi, Kenya), and "local NGOs," who often turn out to be little better than fronts designed to attract foreign money.

If I could mention just one name of a civil society actor worthy of being engaged in the territory of the former Somalia, I would recall Edna Adan, until recently the foreign minister of the Republic of Somaliland. A former wife of the late president of Somaliland, Muhammad Haji Ibrahim Egal (who was also the last democratically elected prime minister of Somalia), Edna Adan was a pioneering campaigner against female genital mutilation. She went on to found and still runs the non-profit Edna Adan Maternity Hospital in Hargeisa. If I may venture a judgment, I think that it is downright disgraceful that having refused to engage her officially as foreign minister, we still do not engage her as a humanitarian.

Question:

What is your assessment of the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa? Is it operating effectively? You suggest that the CJTF-HOF engage further with the Somaliland security forces?

Response:

I do not hesitate in saluting the men and women of the Combined Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOF) for their service. We certainly would be much worse off in the region without them and the efforts they have made since Camp Le Monier was established in 2001. That being said, there is no getting around the fact that our military policies in the Horn of Africa, like our diplomatic and political policies, could use some work. While counterterrorism efforts in the Horn are the responsibility of CJTF-HOF, the task force is also tasked with military-to-military training and security assistance as well as humanitarian efforts. While all these things are interconnected, there is a sense of mission creep. Adding to the confusion, counterterrorism in the Horn is necessarily linked to not only containing the threat in places like Somalia, but interdicting the flow of weapons and jihadis from Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Arabian Peninsula, and elsewhere. The latter task, however, is handled by Combined Task Force 150 (CTF-150), a multinational naval command comprising U.S., French, German, British, Dutch, Australian, New Zealand, Canadian, Spanish, Italian, Turkish, Portuguese, and other allied ships, currently commanded by a Pakistani rear admiral and also operating in the Indian Ocean. CTF-150's mandate is likewise variegated and includes anti-piracy patrols. In short, even apart from the question of resources allocated, we simply do not have the type of concentrated "seamless" unified mission, command, and force structure we might like in an very critical geostrategic theater.

As you noted, I have suggested that CJTF-HOF be tasked to engage further with the Republic of Somaliland's armed forces and security services. I do so for several reasons. First, it is a matter of self-interest in keeping our operational options open. CJTF-HOF's hosts in Djibouti, speaking through Foreign Minister Mahmud Yusuf, has already gone on the record to say that we may not use our facilities there for any possible military actions in Somalia. In contrast, Somaliland has repeatedly offered us the use of the naval facilities at Berbera which we used during the Cold War. Second, by securing its almost 1,400 kilometers of land borders (including some 500 kilometers facing Somalia) and 900 kilometers of coast, Somaliland already makes a considerable contribution to regional security. However, the burden the tiny country thus assumes is staggering when one considers that its entire annual governmental budget amounts to barely \$35 million. Third, while the Somaliland forces, both military and intelligence, have done a phenomenal job with their paltry resources and aged equipment, they would have great difficulty were they to face the full might of the armed Islamist militants in Mogadishu. Somaliland needs, in particular, help with logistics and communications.

Question:

How should the United States deal with Ethiopian interests in Somalia, specifically the tensions between the CIC and the TFG, which Ethiopia supports?

Response:

While the record of the government of Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, especially with respect to its own internal opposition, is not without its own difficulties, one must acknowledge that Ethiopia does have a significant interest in developments in Somalia. First, in many ways, the Ethiopian reaction to the rise of the Islamic Courts Union is very much conditioned by history and concerns for their own state. By this, I refer not so much to the distant past or even to the failed expansionism of Siyad Barre, but the attacks against its territory carried out in the 1990s by *Al-Itihaad al-Islamiya* ("Islamic Union"), whose vice-chairman and military commander was none other than Hassan Dahir 'Aweys, now chairman of the Council of Islamic Courts. There are also very credible reports that fighters from movements opposed to the regime in Addis Ababa have fought alongside the ICU militias in their recent campaigns. Second, the military support that Eritrea provides the Islamists in Mogadishu in blatant defiance of the United Nations arms embargo on Somalia is of great concern for the Ethiopians, who fear that their Eritrean foes are using the Somalis to distract their forces while the bitter border war is reopened.

With this background in mind, Ethiopian reactions, including the apparent dispatch of troops to shore up the feeble Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in Baidoa, are completely understandable. Unfortunately, those same reactions are also counterproductive since they are just as likely as to stir up Somali nationalism and strengthen the cause of the Islamists.

In the end, the only way to restrain the Ethiopians is to give them credible assurance that the world does indeed appreciate the dilemma in which they find themselves and that, in exchange for their restraint, the international community will actually do something to prevent Somalia from turning into a Taliban-like terrorist state at their very doorstep. With enough challenges at home and a still-simmering tensions with Eritrea to the northeast, Ethiopia would be amenable to behaving responsibly if it could be convinced the United States and the international community were actually serious about a robust policy of containment.

Question:

Somaliland has made significant progress in democratization and stabilization since the 1990s. What is the impact (both current and future) of recent events on Somaliland? What contacts has Somaliland had with the TFG and ICU? Does the entity seem to be moving toward greater stability and good governance, or is it likely to backslide?

Response:

The Republic of Somaliland is one of the few solid bulwarks the United States really has in the Horn of Africa against the growing power of the Islamic Courts Union in Somalia. Needless to say, Somaliland is it a target of the ICU, whose radicals are repulsed both by its democratic constitution—Hassan Dahir 'Aweys, for example, has pronounced democracy “contrary to Islamic teachings” and “anti-Islam”—and by the prominent role that women play in its politics. The Islamist threat to Somaliland is existential, not theoretical. In 2003–2004, the same extremists who are now ensconced in Mogadishu purposely targeted four foreign aid workers in Somaliland. Last September, Somaliland’s security services managed to foil a plot by the same radicals to disrupt the parliamentary poll by attacking voting stations and killing the seventy-six international observers, including seven Americans led by retired Ambassador Lange Schermerhorn. Fourteen of the terrorists have already been tried and convicted by Somaliland courts and a number of others have been taken into custody.

Ironically, but not surprisingly, Somaliland is also attacked by the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia which, despite its inability to even control its temporary seat at Baidoa, demands international recognition of its claimed sovereignty over all the territories of the former Somali Democratic Republic. TFG head Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmad has even been complicit in an attempt on the life of Somaliland’s President Dahir Rayale Kahin. Consequently, if we insist on adhering to the fruitless and misguided policy of shoring up the ineffectual TFG, we should at least make it clear that our support does not in any way imply acceptance of all of its claims to sovereignty over the former Somali state, much less condone its subversion of the effective government of Somaliland.

Hence, while Somaliland has made tremendous strides in recent years, all this progress is now at risk unless the international community finds creative ways to reinforce the little country’s military and security capacity as well as to assist its economic revival through some sort of “interim special status” that would allow it access to international financial institutions and other conditions sine qua non for survival in our globalized world. While I hesitate to draw the parallel, I must observe that if a special “not-quite-a-full-fledged-state” status can be found to allow the terrorist-led and ineffectual Palestinian Authority a certain access to international diplomatic and economic assizes, I do not see why a similar effort could not be made for the democratic, secular, anti-terrorist, and thus far very effective government of the Republic of Somaliland.

(I would also add, per the earlier question regarding Ethiopia, that assisting Somaliland to achieve access to international financial and development resources would also increase both our bona fides vis-a-vis and our leverage with the Ethiopian government. With its simmering tensions with Eritrea, Ethiopia’s principal outlet to the sea comes overland via the Somaliland port of Berbera.)

RESPONSES FROM MR. JOHN PRENDERGAST, CO-DIRECTOR, AFRICA PROGRAM, INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP, TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS

Question:

After the Black Hawk down incident in October 1993, what signals did the Clinton Administration get from Congress on Somalia policy going forward? Did those signals indicate what that Administration considered a fixed policy toward Somalia?

Response:

We are not in a position to answer this question without undertaking research.

Question:

Should we engage with the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), despite its links to bad actors as well? Is it a group that is worthy of even conditional support? Is this group any different from the previous dozen or so attempts at government?

Response:

The Transitional Federal Government (TFG) represents a narrowly-based faction rather than a government of national unity. Engagement with the TFG by the USG is likely to be perceived by other groups, including the Islamic Courts, as taking sides, and possibly as a provocation. The Islamic Courts are now politically and military far stronger than the TFG, exercise authority over much more territory and, unlike the TFG, control strategic economic infrastructure such as ports and airports which provide an important source of revenue.

The Transitional Federal Institutions, which include the TFG, Parliament and Charter, nevertheless represent the only broadly accepted framework for national governance at the moment. It may therefore be useful for the international community to continuously reaffirm the legitimacy of this framework and to encourage the participation of the Islamic Courts and other opposition forces (i.e. large sections of the Hawiye clan) to participate in the TFIs for the remainder of the transitional period.

Any engagement with the current leadership of the TFG should be geared to its reconstitution as a government of national unity. This would require high level representation from the Islamic Courts (or of political leaders acceptable to them) and other major political groupings, such as the Puntland administration (the Somaliland administration will not take part in the TFG and should be dealt with separately).

Question:

Dialogue between the Courts and the TFG has been somewhat unproductive as yet. Should we be actively promoting such dialogue in the hopes that the two groups might cooperate or perhaps even merge? Or is there little point in such exercises?

Response:

The USG and its partners should be promoting dialogue between the Courts and the TFG with the aim of brokering a power-sharing deal. The most likely alternatives to dialogue at this time would appear to be:

a) Provision of support to the TFG (whether by the USG, EC, Ethiopia or others), which is likely to encourage intransigence on the part of the TFG leadership and end in armed confrontation between the TFG and the Courts

b) A continued "wait and see" attitude on the part of the international community, while the TFG gradually erodes, leaving the courts as the most important political and military force in southern Somalia.

The advantages of a power-sharing deal would include the stabilisation of the TFIs as a framework for national governance and peace building through 2009 and the engagement of the Islamic Courts in national institutions through which they can be held politically and legally accountable to the international community.

A genuine risk of a power sharing deal is that it would provide a legitimate political shell to shield extremist elements within the courts and allow them to consolidate their influence. It might also produce a situation in which the Courts would participate in government and parliament but, like Hisb'ullah in Lebanon, continue to function as a de facto and independent authority in parts of the country.

Question:

How should the United States continue to conduct counterterrorism operations in Somalia?

Response:

The USG counter terrorism operations to date have suffered from a lack of a broader strategy of engagement in Somalia. This has resulted in a lack of political guidance and failure to adapt to local context. In consequence, Somalia today arguably represents a greater potential threat to peace and security in the region than at any time in the previous decade.

In order to succeed, future U.S. counter terrorism efforts in Somalia must be situated within a broader strategy of engagement on political, economic and social issues. Central to this strategy, from a counter terrorism perspective, should be the accountability of Somali authorities, including the Islamic Courts, for the presence and activities of any terrorist elements in areas under their control. Elements of such a strategy should include:

- A government of national unity in which the TFG and the Courts are obliged to share power with each other, as well as other southern Somali political forces
- Establishment of a single authority for the national capital, Mogadishu, in which the Courts are obliged to share power with other clan, civic, and private sector leaders
- Significantly greater investment in development programs, including education, human and animal health, and economic development
- An enhanced public diplomacy effort intended to raise awareness about U.S. intentions, concerns and actions in Somalia and the Horn of Africa

Question:

The United States does not currently recognize Somaliland, although the formerly independent British Somaliland has established governance and peace in marked contrast to the former Italian Somaliland. Is there still reason to expect that Somaliland will reintegrate into a unified Somalia?

Response:

The prospects for peaceful reintegration of Somaliland with the rest of Somalia are remote. Whereas previous Somali governments have lacked the legitimacy, authority or means to pursue 'unification' in a meaningful way, the rise of the Islamic Courts now poses a potential threat to Somaliland's security and stability through agitation by sympathisers of the Courts in Somaliland.

Somaliland has so far evolved as a stable, democratic and largely pro-Western Muslim polity in a region where such forms of government are rare or—by most standards—non-existent. Its recognition as a state would potentially reinforce the spread of democracy within the region and provide the US and other Western governments with a strategically-places Muslim ally in a volatile part of the world.

Somaliland's recognition would not be without risks: there can be no guarantees that it will continue along a democratic trajectory, than Islamists would not rise to power democratically or otherwise, or that greater access to foreign assistance would not encourage dependency and corruption while undermining the legitimacy and stability of governing institutions.

As Crisis Group has argued in its report "Somaliland: Time for African Union" leadership, there is a need for the AU to become seriously engaged on the issue of Somaliland's claim to independence without further delay. The USG should encourage the AU to do so and be prepared to support the outcome of the AU's initiative.

Question:

In your testimony, you stated, "the rise of the system of Sharia courts in Mogadishu—a trend which began a decade ago, as a local coping mechanism to deal with chronic lawlessness—has played a central role in the current crisis." Please expound on this theory. Are there examples in Africa and throughout the world where Sharia courts "tempered with strong representative governments" have worked successfully?

Response:

The rise of the Islamic Courts has contributed to the current crisis in a number of ways:

- As a rival power not only to the ineffectual and increasingly unpopular TFG, but also to the Juba Valley Alliance in Kismayo, and the administrations of Somaliland and Puntland;
- By providing a platform for Hawiye clan interests outside the TFG

- Through the inclusion in leadership roles of individuals and groups considered detrimental to the security interests of neighbouring countries (especially Ethiopia and Kenya) and the United States
- By serving as a vehicle for external interests opposed to Ethiopian interests in Somalia, thus creating conditions for a proxy war in Somalia (the TFG has fulfilled a similar function on behalf of Ethiopia)

Question:

The newly elected leader of the Council of Islamic Courts, Hasan Aweys was designated by the Bush Administration as a terrorist. What can you tell us about Aweys? Why was he designated as a terrorist?

Response:

Aweys is a senior figure among Somali jihadi-Islamists. He was among the early leaders of al-Itihaad al-Islami (AIAI) during the 1980s and was appointed the movement's vice chairman and military commander in 1992. Aweys was identified as a principal contact for al-Qaeda operatives in Somalia in 1992–3 and remained one of AIAI's senior leaders when the organisation conducted terrorist attacks against several targets in Ethiopia in 1995–6. Evidence presented in the trials of al-Qaeda members in the United States indicated that Aweys was in communication with the team responsible for the bombing of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998 and attempted to contact Osama bin Laden immediately prior to those attacks.

Question:

The Bush Administration continues to monitor possible terrorist activities in the Horn of Africa country of Somalia. Is the Administration convinced of the presence of terrorist elements in Somalia? Are cells of al-Qaeda currently active in Somalia? Where in Somalia are these groups active? Is the Administration working with other groups in the fight against terrorism?

Response:

Detailed information on this topic is included in Crisis Group reports "Counter Terrorism in Somalia: Losing Hearts and Minds?" (July 2005) and "Somalia's Islamists" (December 2005). Additional information is included in "Can the Somali Crisis Be Contained?" (August 2006).

Question:

In early November 2001, federal authorities raided several Somali-owned money transfer businesses in the United States operated by Al-Barakaat Companies. The Bush Administration ordered the assets of al-Barakaat frozen because of its alleged links to Al-Qaeda. Many Somalis and some U.N. officials say the Bush Administration was wrong in targeting al-Barakaat. Please give us your views on this issue. What has been the impact on the economy of Somalia? Many Somalis had been dependent on the services of al-Barakaat to send money to their families. What alternative way, if any, have U.S.-based Somalis found for sending money?

Response:

Crisis Group is not privy to the information or decision making process that led to Al-Barakaat's designation as an organisation linked to terrorism. Within Somalia, Al-Barakaat was widely considered a promoter of conservative Salafi doctrine and some of its personnel were former members of AIAI. No evidence was ever publicly provided to demonstrate that the organisation had directly supported AIAI or otherwise sponsored violence.

Tens of thousands of people and private enterprises have yet to recover the assets they lost when Al-Barakaat's assets were frozen. However, the vacuum left by the collapse of the company was rapidly filled by other large Somali hawala enterprises, including Dahabshiil, Dalsan, Towfiq and others, some of which are similarly linked to Salafi theology or other Islamist interests.

Probably the most damaging aspect of Al-Barakaat's closure (like that of Al-Haramayn Benevolent Foundation) was the USG's failure to take account of the "collateral damage" caused by this decision, which caused widespread anger and resentment. This could have been offset by measures such as awarding compensation, perhaps through the UN or an NGO, to ordinary account holders whose assets were frozen; pro-active engagement with remaining hawala companies to assist them in meeting international standards for financial operations (i.e. Financial Action Task Force guidelines) and to encourage them to cooperate in any investigations relating to their operations or the activities of their clients; and providing for the care,

through other NGOs, of widows and orphans affected by the closure of NGO offices like that of Al-Haramayn.

Question:

Somalia's neighbors continue to express concern about the instability in Somalia. Ethiopia has been vocal about alleged terrorist activities in Somalia and has intervened militarily on several occasions. Why is Ethiopia so concerned about activities in Somalia? How do you characterize Ethiopia's role in Somalia? What can you tell us about the role of Kenya and Djibouti? What roles do you see for these regional actors in the fight against terrorism?

Response:

Ethiopia's concerns are several:

- The possibility that AIAI (or successor groups) might resume terrorist attacks against Ethiopia
- Alleged linkages between the Islamic Courts and armed Ethiopian opposition groups such as the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) and AIAI (which remains active in Ethiopia but arguably not in Somalia).
- The potential impact on Ethiopian Muslims of the emergence in Somalia of a hostile Islamist authority in Mogadishu (or national government).
- The alleged alliance between the Islamic Courts and Eritrea, whose dispute with Ethiopia of their common border remains unresolved.

Ethiopia has long supported Somali groups that it considers cooperative, or sympathetic to its interests. These include the (now defunct) Rahanweyne Resistance Army (RRA), the administrations of Somaliland and Puntland, the Somali Restoration and Reconciliation Council (SRRC, the alliance of faction leaders that helped to paralyse Somalia's previous Transitional National Government (TNG, 2000–3) and which constitutes the core of the TFG, and the TFG itself.

Ethiopia's support for the SRRC and, subsequently, the TFG, has been counter-productive. By marginalising Islamist groups and important Hawiye clan interests, Ethiopia inadvertently contributed significantly to the conditions that fostered the dramatic rise of the Islamic Courts. The TFG's perceived alignment with Ethiopian interests in Somalia, its appeal for an IGAD intervention force (including Ethiopia) and the recent deployments of Ethiopian troops to Baidoa and other Somali border areas, have all undercut the legitimacy and credibility of the TFG in the eyes of many Somalis, while allowing the Courts to conflate their Islamist agenda with a nationalist cause.

Like Ethiopia, Djibouti and Kenya maintain an interest in containing the emergence of radical and potentially hostile Islamist groups in Somalia, ensuring that the country (or parts of it) does not become a safe haven for terrorist groups, reducing the outflow of small arms and refugees from Somalia, and rendering Somalia's coastline more secure for shipping. Kenya remains poorly equipped to play a lead role in Somali affairs because of its historical lack of engagement and lack of capacity within the government; Djibouti is well informed but is more closely aligned with some Somali groups than others. Djibouti's ties with Mogadishu and certain sections of the Hawiye clan make it a potentially useful interlocutor in engaging the Islamic courts.

All three of these governments cooperate closely with the United States in the fight against terrorism and are key partners in the resolution of the Somali crisis. However, their divergent perspectives on the situation in Somalia (and their differences with other countries of the region) have prevented a coherent, constructive engagement with Somalia by IGAD. Although they are essential partners in the search for a solution to the Somali crisis, they should be prevailed upon to cede leadership to a more disinterested authority (in Crisis Group's view the preferred option would be the UN, acting in concert with the AU and Arab League) and act more responsibly to enforce the UN arms embargo on Somalia.

Question:

Some observers have argued that militarily punishing Somalia will accomplish very little in ending terrorism and extremism in Somalia. Are there other options the U.S. might consider? Are there groups or organizations the United States can work with in Somalia? What additional role do you see for the United States?

Response:

While the threat of force from Ethiopia or CJTF-HOA in Djibouti may offer a deterrent to extremist and terrorist groups, militarily punishing Somalia would almost certainly have the following consequences:

- Widespread radicalisation of the Somali population throughout the country, while silencing moderate voices
- Reinforcement of militant tendencies among Somali Islamists
- Catalyse an alliance of jihadists, moderate Islamists, nationalists and certain clan interests against such an intervention
- Internationalise the Somali issue by attracting foreign militants and sponsors to the jihadi-Islamist cause and potentially giving rise to terrorist acts abroad by Somali militants or their sympathisers

Under present circumstances, even a 'surgical' strike would likely entail similar results, especially were it carried out against the wrong target or to cause serious collateral damage.

There are numerous leaders, organisations and groups with whom the United States can work in Somalia, including the existing administrations in Somaliland and Puntland, civil society groups and progressive Islamist organisations. Whether or not the United States can engage the Islamic Courts, or any government in which they are a major stakeholder, will depend in part upon the roles assigned to extremists within the organisation. The signs to date are not encouraging, as the militant wing of the Courts appears to be growing in influence and military capacity.

