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## The Horn of Africa in 2023 A Geopolitical Analysis



The HORN Bulletin is a bi-monthly publication by the HORN Institute. It contains thematic articles mainly on issues affecting the Horn of Africa region.

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By Prof. Macharia Munene, Ph.D.

### Abstract

The Horn of Africa is distinct because it is of geopolitical as well as geo-strategic value to extra-continental powers. The region links Asia and Europe through the Red Sea, the Suez Canal, and the Mediterranean Sea. The challenge is whether the states and peoples in the Horn of Africa, being both distinct and similar, have positive prospects to advance their interests in a realigning world. This article provides a geopolitical analysis focusing on Somalia, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan, and Kenya in the Horn of Africa region and how different factors will shape the behaviour and motivations of these entities in 2023 and beyond.

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## Introduction

There is geopolitical realignment taking place due to global institutional dislocations as a result of natural as well as manmade crises. Natural forces of geopolitical dislocation include pandemics such as Coronavirus, climate change-induced floods and storms, droughts, and huge fires. Manmade agents of geopolitical shifts include de-bordering entities like international terrorism, the internet, the giant media, and financial institutions that are bigger and more powerful than many countries. When the two forces, natural and manmade combine, it becomes difficult for any country or region to handle the shift competently. Regions and countries, depending on the level of capacity and preparation, deal with the shifts differently. Since various countries respond to the shifts in different ways, some end up leading while others remain stagnant or become followers. Some countries and regions, therefore, lead the others in the current geopolitical realignment.

The extent to which the shift is manmade is a question of geopolitical power play, occasionally driven by a country's

grand strategy. The determination of whether a country lead depends on the quality of leadership and whether it has the ability to notice the shifts, a vision of how to handle the shift and its consequences, and a well-thought-out 'grand strategy'. In that grand strategy, the players are well versed in the current world picture, and the power dynamics, can anticipate events, and then prepare for the likely negative outcome. They prepare to protect and advance their individual and collective regional interests, fix their competitors, and still emerge as beneficiaries.

Not all countries and regions are able to prepare well in part because they do not have visionary leaders who have the capacity to know the dangers, seize arising opportunities, and instil confidence in the countries or the regions. In turn, that capacity depends on the economy, technological advancement, political stability, socio-moral capital, an intellectual aptitude that thrives on common sense, and the ability to scheme in advancing perceived 'national' or 'regional' interests.



*Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki, second left, arrives in Kenya for bilateral talks with President Ruto, on February 8, 2023 (Photo Credits: Brian Murimi/NTV Kenya)*

## Africa's Geopolitics and Conflict Clusters

The African continent tends to follow in geopolitical realignment because leaders of the realignment tend to be external to the continent. In part, this is because the continent seemingly has several clusters of conflicts which are both distinct and similar; the Horn of Africa region is one. The other continent's clusters are in West Africa, Central Africa, Southern Africa, and the Great Lakes. In each cluster, the conflicts are within the member states as they search for a common identity to define the state only to fall short because the peoples in each state refuse to be one. In addition, the artificiality of the borders is reinforced by having common people who live in two or more states and often do not recognize those borders. Each state, therefore, has the problem of acceptability within itself, within the cluster, and within the continent.

The Horn of Africa is distinct because it is of geopolitical as well as geo-strategic value to extra-continental powers whose intentions are to control access to the region's resources. It links Asia and Europe through the Red Sea, the Suez Canal, and the Mediterranean Sea. The challenge is whether the states and peoples in the Horn of Africa, being both distinct and similar, have positive prospects to advance their interests in a realigning world. The year 2023 has generally started badly for the Horn of Africa due to such weather-related disasters as droughts, floods, and even diseases. Power rivalries, envy, and suspicions within the Horn are also factors that add to zone difficulties. Thus while the year is new and could portend great things, it is not necessarily 'happy' and could be miserable for the region and the countries in it.

A region of high promise in terms of natural wealth and being of strategic interest mainly to extra-continental forces, the Horn of Africa suffers multiple conflicts within each, and across, the various member states. It hosts the African Union at Addis Ababa and IGAD at Djibouti (Citaristi, 2022), institutions that should promote regional peace and economic growth but the region enjoys neither peace nor substantive development mainly because of three interrelated factors. First, there are intense rivalries, envies, and disconnect competitions that negate cooperation. With governments that have problems of acceptability by the supposed citizen, internal frictions become transnationalized to the neighbouring states. People, particularly those at the borders fail to identify with the state in which they live and subsequently, loyalty to the given state disappears or it never existed. There are people at the border whose citizenship loyalty is not

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permanent and keeps shifting at points of political or socio-economic convenience. In times of conflict, such people help to transnationalize instability that starts in one country and ends up in another. The states in the Horn have yet to find an answer to the challenge of people having multiple loyalties and how to handle them.

Second, there exist uncontrollable entities that de-border states such as terrorism, global institutions, and technology that do not respect African states. The Horn of Africa states are therefore at the mercy of those organs of post-modern colonialism that tend to have more resources and power than several small countries combined. Those organs tend to be headquartered in and are protected by big global powers, which shows their hidden iron fist in case their organs are seriously challenged. As a result, those organs dictate what small countries do. Few states, if any, have the capacity to defend themselves against, or resist such forces. Leaders in those small countries, therefore, wait to be guided on what to do and do not devote time and resources to researching all types of threats that can emanate from those in the distance. Often, research means little to power wielders who wait to be externally guided. By ignoring research on geopolitics and geo-strategy, states in the Horn have become vulnerable to external manipulators and this is likely to continue since there is no foreseeable drive to change that negative predominant attitude.

Third, the region is over-dependent on extra-continental powers for many things which tends to incapacitate it. Countries repeatedly fail to remit their dues to regional bodies either because they cannot or because they do not put as much value on the regional bodies as they should. In some instances, those countries that fail to honour their obligations are inherently not honourable and expect other entities to pay their bills even as their officials live largely. The regional bodies then end up begging for 'aid' from extra-continental donors or 'development partners' who then enjoy putting a lot of conditions on the said

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'aid'. The 'aid' is an instrument for leveraging geopolitical power and turning states into proxies. Subsequently, the begging increases the amount of dependency that a country or region has which gives geopolitical leverage to master states to perpetuate and seemingly thrive in ensuring regional instability at the Horn. Turning states in the Horn into 'proxies' to advance extra-continental interests that might be detrimental to the region's long-term interests or the interests of individual states is likely to increase and that means trouble for the region.

### Somalia

Somalia is one of the countries in which all three factors converge to the detriment of the Horn. It started badly at independence in 1960 with its irredentist aspirations of grabbing the neighbours' territories in the name of Pan-Somalism. In the process, it appeared to be a Cold War proxy as it fought and lost wars. When its expansionist dream collapsed, the glue that had held different factions with competing colonial identities as British or Italian Somali melted. Somalia then fragmented into autonomous and feuding warlord-led territories that seemingly attracted external attention which included terror organizations. Some of the leaders took refuge in Kenya as the transit point for the desperate on their way mainly to the West. Some of the escapees returned to Somalia as 'citizens' of Western countries to serve in government and become proxies in regional power politics. The discovery of the immense amount of gas and petrol on the East African coast made the proxies very useful in provoking a maritime border confrontation between Kenya and Somalia (Hamasi & Ichani, n.d.). The irony is that many of those anti-Kenya proxies operate and have thriving businesses in Kenya. No longer trying to annex Kenya, Somalia's new strategy appears to be to penetrate Kenya in all ways and also to play proxy to external forces that might have a beef with Kenya.

The fragmentation also encouraged the rise of the al Shabab terror organization in Somalia which seems like an alternative, though unofficial, government (Lofane, 2022).. As a result, a symbiotic relationship appears to

exist between the well-organized terror group and the Somali state. It, with some external support, is unlikely to stop its destabilizing attacks on internal institutions and on such neighbouring countries as Kenya. It receives condemnation and support, direct and indirect, from unexpected quarters which claim to fight terrorism while seemingly facilitating the al Shabab to acquire weapons. Since it appears to serve an undeclared geopolitical purpose of enabling extra-continental forces to turn the fragmented Somali state into a proxy to advance dubious claims, the al Shabab is not likely to disappear from the regional scene. It is such a serious facilitator for the extra-continental occupation of Somalia as a proxy and launching pad for geopolitical manoeuvres in the Horn and Eastern Africa. It enables assorted global predators to establish military-related bases in Somalia supposedly to train Somali defence forces. Their conflicting military philosophies, however, end up either confusing the Somali or justifying more intervention. This confusion encourages the terror organization to remain a regional force that renders Somalia unproductive and therefore a subsequent 'object' of geopolitical pity. As a result, aid-dependent war-torn Ukraine purportedly donated food to equally aid-dependent and war-ravaged Somalia in order to elevate Ukraine's image among African states that are sceptical about the fighting in Ukraine.

### Djibouti

Somalia's neighbours also have serious problems. Tiny Djibouti is a virtue colony of external powers partly due to its geostrategic location at the maritime joining point of the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean which attracts geopolitical predators to set up competing for military installations. As the IGAD headquarters, its effectiveness as a promoter of regional peace and stability is limited by IGAD's dependency on such external organs as the European Union. Djibouti was French Somaliland in colonial days and appears as a proxy for French interests in the region. It is vulnerable to pressure on geopolitical matters such as appearing to oppose Kenya's candidacy in regional or global organs.

## Eritrea

Eritrea, on the Red Sea, is equally tiny in land size but it reportedly has links with Al Shabaab and thrives on trying to become a regional power by organizing Somalia and Ethiopia. Its leader, Isaias Afwerki, is unlikely to change his reputation of being regionally uncooperative on security and IGAD-related matters. Kenya's new president William Ruto, however, might persuade him to enter a joint image-improving venture for the two countries that have an interest in Ethiopia's wellbeing. This remains to be seen.

## Ethiopia

While Eritrea has little, if any, dependence on Kenya, Ethiopia is a different story since it not only has a border with Kenya, the two countries have sentimental attachments to each other. It shifted from being a source of pride in Africa and its diaspora into a place of continuous pity and extra-continental pressures and competition. In colonial days, Ethiopia was a source of inspiration for Pan-Africanist resistance to imperialism mainly due to news of its victory over the Italians in 1896 at Adowa. The victory made Menelik II a continental hero although he was himself an empire builder in the Horn of Africa region who was stopped by European empire builders in Africa. Its current borders, therefore, were defined by Menelik II's expansionism as checked by the imperial interests of Britain, Italy, and France. Since Ethiopians and friends had made a habit of annually celebrating the Battle of Adowa and reminding the Italians of their 1896 humiliation, Benito Mussolini decided to invade Abyssinia in the 1930s to regain Italy's self-esteem as a great European power. The invasion success was partly responsible for the outbreak of World War II, the intensification of a sense of Pan-Africanism, the rise of the Rastafarian cultural movement, and the divisive Cold War. That sense of Pan-Africanism created strong bonds between Jomo Kenyatta, Kenya's political adventurer, and Emperor Haile Selassie which guided colonial and post-colonial relationships. Despite occasional geopolitical hiccups, that relationship endures and is likely to continue enduring. It explains Kenya's almost reflex reaction to problems that arise in Ethiopia.

In the post-colonial and post-Cold War world, however, Ethiopian internal contradictions led to its decline as a source of African pride. Its capital, Addis Ababa, had been chosen as a suitable headquarters for the newly created Pan-African entity, the Organisation of African Unity,

OAU, which metamorphosed into the African Union, AU. Being prone to internal violence and institutional instability, Addis Ababa did not live up to its Pan-African expectations. Instead of being a place of continental pride, it deteriorated into a place of refugee-generating wars, drought-induced famines, and an object of global pity. Its current leader, Ahmed Abiy, started well as a peacemaker and even received a Nobel Peace Prize for ending a war with Eritrea only to lapse into dreams of grandeur possibly as the reincarnation of Menelik II's imperial desire to control territories all the way to the Indian Ocean. He had then enmeshed himself by entering into an anti-Kenya geopolitical deal with Farmaajo in Somalia and Afwerki in Eritrea. His power-monopolizing adventure, similar to that of Afwerki and Farmaajo, plunged his country into an internal war with Tigray which Kenya helped to settle. Although he depends on Kenya, he has not renounced the imperial dream of reaching the Indian Ocean at Kenya's expense. He might, however, give full support to the LAPSET project to give Ethiopia access to the Indian Ocean through Lamu without having to push Kenya out of Jubbaland in Somalia.

In addition, Ethiopia still has scores to settle with Egypt over the River Nile and the construction of the Grand Renaissance Dam for energy and irrigation. Part of the reason, Ethiopia insists on building the dam was because Britain, when it controlled the Nile Valley at the height of its imperial largeness, had ignored Ethiopia in its Nile treaty-making ventures. The Nile River is, therefore a source of friction in the region and is likely to continue being so. The friction goes back to the British control of the entire Nile Valley from Egypt southwards to the Great Lakes. It had grabbed the huge territory in order to keep other European powers away from the Nile in order, theoretically, to protect its interests in India by making Egypt its most important post. Protecting its interests in Egypt as a way of protecting India made British officials

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in various colonies enter into a treaty with themselves in 1929 thereby giving Egypt a monopoly on the use of the Nile. British officials ignored Ethiopian interests, although Ethiopia was a sovereign and independent country that was the source of part of the Nile, and also sacrificed the interests of other Nile-connected colonies including Kenya and Uganda. When the British left, Egypt and Sudan cut a deal and continued to ignore Ethiopia. They also ignored the new post-colonial countries around the Great Lakes that had not been party to the 'treaty'. Since the issue of the 'Nile Treaty' has not been settled let alone resolved, it will continue to be a source of bad blood among the states in the region.

### *Sudan and South Sudan*

Sudan and South Sudan are among those states with interests in the Nile but both face other serious challenges that appear to make the Nile ignorable. The challenges are mostly internal stability as governments have problems of acceptability by the people who comprise numerous competing ethnic communities spread over overlapping territories. People in South Sudan had seemingly suffered multiple colonialism under the Arabs in Khartoum, under the Egyptians, under the Turks, and under the British which was complicated by religious differences between the Muslims and the Christians. The South did not receive independence in 1956, it continued as a virtual colony of Khartoum. It had then mounted its own version of anti-colonial war that targeted the Islamic government in Khartoum. It was as a remnant of territorial colonialism that the South Sudanese received a lot of IGAD and extra-continental support in its quest for independence. In the process, people ignored glaring internal contradictions within South Sudan that were hidden in the drive for independence.

The creation of South Sudan from Sudan was thus mainly an IGAD undertaking that Kenya spearheaded but there was hardly any grand strategy that could anticipate the

aftermath of attaining independence. Kenya believed that it was in its own interest to help liberate South Sudan and since independence was the main objective, there was little thought on the possible negative aftermath of success. General Lazarus Sumbeiyu, the Kenyan mediator, regrets not having had the services of a think tank as he waded through the complexities of convincing both sides to agree to stop fighting and that South Sudan should become independent. A think tank, he believes, might have alerted him to likely post-conflict huddles that he could have addressed as part of peacemaking and country creation. The consequence of failure to think of the consequences is that South Sudan is deep in instability as warlords go at each other's throats over power sharing and probably over the looting of South Sudanese coffers. It remains to be seen whether the admission of South Sudan into the East African Community will reduce South Sudanese tendencies to generate two types of refugees, the elite who luxuriously live in Nairobi and the others who live in refugee camps. The continued power feud between the Salva Kiir and the Riek Machal factions, despite the plea from the visiting Pope Francis, shows no sign of ebbing and will therefore ensure the perpetual supply of the two types of refugees into Kenya and possibly Uganda.

### *Kenya*

Kenya finds itself caught in South Sudanese factional feuds and seems unable to extricate itself. It administers the Eleme Triangle and South Sudanese students take Kenyan examinations and will continue doing it as long as South Sudan is unable to do it. Within Kenya, however, there are those who argue that the Eleme Triangle is part of Kenyan sovereign territory to keep. And in South Sudan, some officials accuse Kenya of taking advantage of its internal weaknesses to grab South Sudanese land. Claiming that Kenyan officials incite the Turkana to encroach on Toposa territory, they vow to resist which means unending friction between the neighbouring countries in the Horn. Kenya, therefore, finds itself in contradictory binds; trying to stabilize the region while defending its interests from the very countries it would like to help stabilize. It is caught in the factional feuds in which one faction tries to entangle the neighbour in its internal dispute and probably divert attention from its weakness. Kenya, therefore, will be forced to continue keeping a delicate balance between fending off accusations and keeping its commitments to assist neighbours in trouble because doing so is in Kenya's national interests.

“Kenya's border challenges have colonial roots as policy and as administrative convenience that remain unresolved and might become the source of new trouble



*Pope Francis arrives in South Sudan in hopes he can revive the stalled peace process, February 3, 2023 (Photo Credit: The New York Times)*

Kenya's border challenges have colonial roots as policy and as administrative convenience that remain unresolved and might become the source of new trouble. Its border limitations are products of German, Italian, and British territorial competition as well as Arab coastal influence. With the Equator cutting it into two geographical halves, it had geo-strategic value to extra-continental forces that partitioned Eastern Africa. From its colonial inception in the 1880s and 1890s, Kenya acquired and continues to maintain a special place in the region as the hub, the economic engine, and also the political weathervane. It gained two contradictory reputations which are still subjects of debates and part of its legacy. First, it was the 'white man's country' that was paradise for the white gentry with aristocratic inclinations to be served by 'happy' natives. Second, it was the land of the Mau Mau War in which the 'happy natives' lost their happiness, became violent, and tried to chase the gentry out of their created paradise on the Equator. The result of the confrontation was independence in which post-colonial Kenya stood out as being non-violent when compared to its neighbours in Uganda, Sudan, Ethiopia, and Somalia. Because the others were chaotic, Kenya stood out as an island of stability where the others could escape to in search of refuge.

With the Equator cutting it into two geographical halves, Kenya was and continues to have geo-strategic value to

extra-continental forces that are interested in curtailing its regional influence and dictating its independence of thought and action. It also continues to struggle to find a balance between ideals and practicalities, to lead the region and remain its hub, and anticipate both internal as well as externally engineered challenges. While it remains committed to helping stabilize Somalia and South Sudan, it should prepare for orchestrated hostilities through proxies or frustrated proxies trying to divert attention from their inadequacies. With the al Shabab terror group operating virtually freely in Somalia and the IGAD region, Kenya has to face the reality that the rulers in Mogadishu are largely proxies of extra-continental forces that tend to be hostile to Kenya. With the likely additional discoveries of oil, gas, and other types of sea wealth, Kenya should expect and prepare for more manufacturers of maritime crises. It similarly wants South Sudan stabilized by mediating between the two main groups but its influence is increasingly limited as factions turn on each other and occasionally divert their frustrations to Kenya.

On its part, Kenya is facing and will continue facing serious internal challenges that have bearings on the Horn and other regions. While some challenges may be externally prodded, they pose a much threat to Kenya's ability to function as a state and as a regional player. Kenya holds respectable elections every five years, compared to other countries in the region, but it continues to experience

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tension creating election denials that have a destabilizing effect. The destabilization effect is first on the economy and socio-political cohesion and second on Kenya's ability to handle and deal with regional issues. Its credibility gets eroded when it appears as if many voices claim to speak for Kenya. Internal frictions will continue affecting its ability to handle external challenges including its desired peace operations in the Horn.

### Conclusion

In the ongoing global geopolitical realignment, the Horn region is likely to experience rough times in the near future partly because it is poor in exploiting its natural resources. This inability allows global predators to dictate what happens in the Horn, to use proxies to harass other countries and to keep the region in perpetual dependency which is conducive to external exploitation. It will continue to suffer internally and externally generating multiple conflicts and blaming it on ethnicity, religion, and self-aggrandizing political factions. This will test the competence of various 'leaders' in the region;

some have problems having a vision for either the country or the region. Handling competing for geopolitical forces and having the ability to fend off external challenges would need concerted regional effort. Internal and regional rivalries, however, are likely to diminish that possibility due to increased people's refusal to accept given states. Trans-nationalization of conflicts, starting in one country and then spilling over the border, is likely to perpetuate regional instability. The inability to meet obligations will intensify the 'pity' image and thereby enable geopolitical predators to dictate to countries in the region. A possible way out, however, exists in the region enabling think tanks like the Horn Institute to think of likely consequences of the evolving geopolitical realignment. The problem is that states that rely on 'development partners' for budgetary support to meet basic domestic needs might not be inclined to encourage local think tanks to think about regional interests. Thinking might not be in the presumed interests of 'master states' and their 'proxies' who play the role of regional leaders.

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# Africa in the Shifting Balance of Power: Active Player or Passive Observer?

By Peterlinus Odote, Ph.D.

## Abstract

This article explores the position of Africa in the shifting balance of power, examining whether Africa has been an active or a passive observer in the shifting power play on the international stage. The article tracks the place of African representation in the international shifting balance of power, as well as the underlying processes at work that impact African aspirations to be heard on a global scale. The article further delves into Africa's quest to impact international undertakings; the establishments and thespians involved in this fight; and the kind of alternatives at the continent's disposal in its desire for weightier control and assimilation at the international centre stage.

## Introduction

Paul, Wirtz, and Fortmann (2004) argue that the conduct of governments, non-state entities, as well as people today gives an impression that contradicts classic concepts of the balance of power theory. Globalization enthusiasts, democratic peace theory champions, and other kinds of institutionalism argue that underlying potencies are altering international associations and interactions, moving conventional supremacy politics further than national aspirations. In contrast, traditional military proficiency, nuclear dominance, economic buoyance, and cultural influence have been unsuccessful in producing the much customary balancing performance on the part of prospective mighty adversaries, despite the fact that these sovereignties have progressively depended on international establishments to sway and compel how American policymakers exert political, military, and economic power.

According to Paul, Wirtz and Fortmann (2004), at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the nature of international power politics itself is shifting. The philosophy of "balance of power" has expanded in functional terms. Formerly peripheral countries such as South Africa in the African continent are now competing with conventional powers. Korobko and Musa (2014) recognize that a striking characteristic of the twenty-first-century international centre stage is the neutralization of affluence, manipulation, domination and rule further than the chief industrialized states—the US, Japan and Europe—to the fast-upcoming nations in Africa, Asia, the Middle East

and South America. Many people believed that the world would never change again after the cronies—the United States, the Soviet Union, China, the United Kingdom, and France—won World War II. They redrew the world map amongst themselves and declared themselves guarantors of the international status quo.

The study adopted a desktop review approach that solely focused on secondary data sourced from the library sources: books, e-books, journals, magazines, organizations' publications etc. The desktop approach was preferred due to the diverse geographical scope as well as the multiple variables under consideration. Through this approach, the study was able to consummate themes based on the objectives of the research, from which the findings and the study conclusion were preferred.

## The Global Shifting Balance of Power

The international centre stage has experienced substantial transformations in the last two decades, with significant consequences for the foreign policy of small states. Presently, small governments have a greater global reputation and prominence compared to the previous period in history. In general, their physical security is guaranteed, and the emergence of transnational endeavours like the European Union, the American Free Trade Agreement, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization has placed them on a legal and diplomatic par with bigger countries. With the conclusion of the Cold War, minor developing nation governments are no longer



*Illustration by John Gall (Photo Credits: The New York Times)*

players in a worldwide quest for superpower prominence (Hey, 2003, p. 1).

According to Cilliers (2008), the world is currently seeing a significant shift in power balance while influence and industry migrate from the West to the East. According to Chari (2008, p. 2), the changing notions of power and supremacy in a global context are strengthened by numerous factors: the unprecedented information revolution that is decreasing the global space via the miracle of immediate communication; upward mobility in the developing world's populations, which is a crucial component in the shifting of the economic balance of power to Asia; and ironing out of the cultural subtleties of 'civilizational values' on a global scale.

Following more than a century of exceptional Western dominance, the world economy began to reverse direction in the 1960s and 1970s, with developing (mostly Asian) countries quickly catching up. The West has been in relative decline for decades, and this well-established historical tendency has been exacerbated by the financial and sovereign debt crisis, which has inflicted greater harm to the main industrialized countries. The power balance was rapidly changing in favour of developing countries. This pattern is anticipated to continue,

with China overtaking America as the world's biggest economic power in the next decade. Most industrialized countries have acquired unsustainable amounts of debt, which may significantly impede their growth, according to empirical research. Worse, the ability of governments in certain wealthy countries to service public debt has been severely questioned, increasing the threat of sovereign debt default. To avoid insolvency, a few EU member states sought a bailout. Given the current state of public finances in most industrialized economies, historical history implies that indebted nations will face a protracted and costly de-leveraging process (even if they manage to avoid bankruptcy). Several Western nations, under increasing pressure to simplify public finances and in a desperate attempt to cover expanding debt payments, began to decrease defense spending, among other things. Military spending declined in almost every major industrialized country in 2012. However, it is no surprise, given that interest payments have already outpaced defense spending in all major EU countries in the same year, and usually by a significant margin. While the West cut military spending, most developing countries boosted theirs. If this trend continues, the shifting balance of power between the West and the rest of the world will increasingly show itself in terms of "hard" military might (Gál, 2013).

At the Congress of Vienna in 1815, the five main European countries created “A Concert of Europe” with the purpose of balancing power among themselves in order to avoid war, as well as working to prevent internal social unrest. In the late nineteenth century, this system began to unravel, and alliances emerged among some of the five nations (Britain, France, Prussia, Austria, and Russia). As a result, World War I broke out. During World War I, the Austrian Empire and the Ottoman Empire fell, while the American empire and the Russian Revolution grew. This significantly shook the world order, sparking World War II. Following World War II, a balanced system based on bipolarity and the balance of nuclear weapons threats was established. A cold war ensued, with proxy wars occurring around the world. The Cold War’s end resulted in a unipolar system. Because of the absence of the constraints provided by the bipolar equilibrium, regional and civil conflicts have escalated since then.

According to Korobko and Musa (2014, p. 1), new powers are emerging that are threatening US primacy, most notably China, but also India and Russia. There are now five main nuclear-armed states: the United States, the European Union (the United Kingdom and France have nuclear weapons), China, Russia, and India.

According to recent research by Grix, Brannagan, and Lee (2019, p. 10), the development of the BRICS alliance made up of quickly expanding countries, as well as the formalization of the alliance through yearly meetings and financial institutions, marks a substantial shift in global economic dominance. It depicts the vital deterioration of the “Pax Americana”, which has governed the world economy since WWII’s end, and the emergence of a more pluralist global economy. Nearly two decades ago, Jim O’Neill, formerly the Leading Economist at Goldman Sachs, projected that the BRICS countries—Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa—would have surpassed the main Western economies to grow into the instruments and novel driving forces of the twenty-first-century world economy by 2041.

## Africa in the Global Shifting Balance of Power

According to Merwem, Taylor, and Arkhangelskaya (2016, p. 1), Africa has become a focal point for conflicting political and economic goals of various upcoming countries. The concentration on Africa is explicable, given that African elites are rushing to place themselves to profit out of this. The dynamic offers fresh prospects for

growth, but also treacherous paths for these emergent countries to choose.

Many studies in the area of the role of evolving authorities in Africa have been done. This topic has gotten a lot of attention since a new chapter of cooperation is starting. The upsurge of countries such as Turkey, South Korea, and Indonesia, as well as the failure of certain relatively proven developing economies, point to significant vicissitudes in these countries’ interactions with Africa. These developments need a rethinking of this link in the perspective of the global capitalist system (Merwem, Taylor & Arkhangelskaya, 2016, 1).

The chosen topic, “Africa in the Shifting Balance of Power: Active Player or Passive Observer,” has been placed in the shadow of numerous key global events. The 9/11 attacks, Middle East wars, global warming, the expansion of Iran’s, North Korea’s, and Israel’s nuclear programs, the development of new weapons (such as psychotronic and cyber), constant media criticism of Islam and Muslim dignity, and a slew of other threatening challenges all raise the question, “Where is the world going?”.

The impulse for writing this article came from the increased attention (by scholars, think tanks, and the media) on Africa’s involvement in the shifting global power balance. This argument is predicated on the premise that the current literature does not adequately address whether Africa is an active player or a passive observer.

Taylor and Williams (2004, p. 4) notice that substantial transformations in the global economy have occurred since at least the early 1980s, establishing the structural backdrop for how foreigners have engaged with Africa. The leading schools of thought and conduct in the world economy, known as neoliberalism, have determined



Following more than a century of exceptional Western dominance, the world economy began to reverse direction in the 1960s and 1970s, with developing (mostly Asian) countries quickly catching up

## The international centre stage has experienced substantial transformations in the last two decades, with significant consequences for the foreign policy of small states. Presently, small governments have a greater global reputation and prominence ...

the boundaries within which major external powers should engage with Africa. Neoliberal philosophy has had a substantial influence on almost every aspect of contemporary (state) policy, comprising trade, aid, investment, good governance, development, nation-building, crisis management and peacekeeping, and human rights.

### Discussion

For ages, the scholarship of Africa's international relations has been motivated by an appeal to comprehend how other players have conquered, shaped, and subjugated the region. During cycles of economic crisis and political volatility (much of the 1980s and 1990s), when major foreign powers were dominant, this strategy was undoubtedly reasonable, though incorrect. In those days, depicting Africa as a passive object of external powers, constrained by fixed structural constraints was an imperfect understanding of regional international relations. This tactic began in the second decade of the twenty-first century, at a time African actors established a pathway to strong, high-level diplomacy as the continent saw long-standing economic progress. "For this is an era in which African states, leaders, and diplomats have been centrally engaged in global negotiations over climate change, global trade, aid disbursement, and intervention norms; in which African politicians have made strategic choices in how they reshape existing roles with western donors and forge new relationships with rising powers; and in which African non-state actors have been critical both to the definition and implementation in diverse fields" (Brown and Harman, 2013, p. 1).

There is no doubt that today's global reality and current global governance systems are fundamentally out of sync. Arguments have been advanced in favour of extending membership in the UN Security Council and other key international organizations such as the G-8. Meetings of the G-20 group, which comprises ten industrialized nations and ten emerging market economies, have been urged to be elevated to the level of heads of state. However, western study terminology remains

anachronistically couched in terms of 'giver' and 'given,' ignoring evolving reality (Chari, 2008, p. 9).

According to Korobko and Musa (2014, p. 5), the balance of powers, as a key term in political realism and neorealism theory, seeks to sustain the international order and the safety system first and foremost. "Balancing" states are frequently seen to be those who assist the weaker side in a disagreement or those who support the status quo or the defending state in a conflict. In its most general form, the principle of this concept may be applied in any international system that seeks to prevent the amplification of any state's influence inside the system, which would jeopardize the interdependence and security of others. The strategy for preventing such a situation is to create a potential hegemon challenger.

Africa epitomizes trivial authorities or 'small states' in the world arrangement in certain aspects. Per se, it offers a collection of settings through which to study the stance of international relations that commences elsewhere than with the major countries. Despite the evident emphasis of considerable international relations on major authorities, Africa is important in a number of policy affairs, mainly those requiring multifaceted platforms, international shared action, or sectors in which the continent and other nations have significant interdependence. Africa is critical in creating world trade aspirations, supporting peace and conflict resolution, debating emerging powers, and debating human security issues such as climate change and health. Major shifts in the international system's polarity have not been meaningfully influenced or realized by African states, and substantial ensembles of economic and political governance seem to be obstinately unaffected by change programs from given additional sources of leverage, which have been used, particularly by Uganda (Brown and Harman, 2013, p. 3).

Taylor and Williams (2004, p. 4) notice that substantial transformations in the global economy have occurred since at least the early 1980s, establishing the structural backdrop for how foreigners have engaged with

Africa. The leading schools of thought and behaviour in the world economy, known as neoliberalism, have determined the boundaries within which major external powers should engage with Africa. Neoliberal philosophy has had a significant impact on nearly every aspect of modern state policy, consisting of trade, aid, investment, good governance, development, state building, crisis management and peacekeeping, and human rights.

During the third phase of decolonization, the culmination of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet empire brought both hurdles and opportunities for Africa (late 1980s-early 1990s). In the post-Cold War international system, the economic rivalry between the North and South has overtaken the East-West conflict between capitalism and socialism. Sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the sacredness of colonially inherited borders are increasingly being called into question, while new ones form, such as international humanitarian intervention, regionalism, and federalism. The European nature that characterizes the international system, which dates back to the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) is gradually giving way to a new,

post-cold war international system characterized by two seemingly contradictory (but actually complementary) trends: the erosion of sovereignty in favour of human rights protection and humanitarian intervention, and the rise of an isolationist tendency among the major powers (Martin, 2002, p. xiv).

Ülgen et al. (2022, p. 10) highlight in a recent article that Africa has been included in the world economy since the colonial era, even though at the lowest point of value chains and primarily as a source of raw commodities. Africa has also been predominantly a recipient rather than a provider of guidelines in the international centre stage. The last quarter-century of hyperglobalization has highlighted the inherent excesses of an uncontrollable global economy. Although international standards are significant for Africa, existing establishments and conventions mirror the visions of the supreme powers, who can influence choices for their own political and economic benefit. Whereas wealthy nations constantly emphasize the necessity for change, they are hesitant to abandon the guidelines that have safeguarded their



*The United Nations Security Council meeting at U.N. headquarters in New York on September 30, 2022 (Photo Credit: Ed Jones/AFP via Getty Images)*

fortunate status. Africa's outfit has matured in the last decade or so, as groups founded in the early twenty-first century have been more successful in organizing Africa's assertion in global debates. That voice, however, remains restricted, a task aggravated by the reality that the continent's fifty-plus countries do not all share the same concerns, rendering establishing a unified declaration impractical or vulnerable to the lowest common denominator.

Rothkopf's (2014) observation, as referenced by Grix, Brannagan, and Lee (2019, p. 16), that we exist at a "Time of unequalled unpredictability" is characteristic of the reaction to the ascent of novel capabilities. This changing landscape has disturbed realist and critical scholars, who emphasize the 'disarray,' 'disorientation,' and 'dilemma' that they assert has come to characterize the twenty-first century. According to Duncombe and Dunne (2018), as referenced by Grix, Brannagan, and Lee (2019, p. 16), the emergence of the BRICS has resulted in a one-of-a-kind epoch in international relations studies in which everyone believes that the current global order has come to an end. According to several well-known American IR experts, the upsurge of fresh authorities has resulted in a predicament in global control, with vital organizations, for instance, the World Trade Organization stalled. According to Ikenberry (2018, p. 10) as referenced by Grix, Brannagan, and Lee (2019, p. 16), the growth of influential non-Western governments has resulted in a "crisis of authority" that is weakening the liberal order's political underpinnings. Crocker (2015, p. 7), as referenced by Grix, Brannagan, and Lee (2019, p. 16), places interest in the emergence of novel powers and depicts the contemporary international system as a "disorderly mix of turbulence and drift." Nye (2017), as referenced by Grix, Brannagan, and Lee (2019, p. 16), wonders if the liberal system will be able to weather this upheaval, whereas Kupchan (2012), as cited

by Grix, Brannagan, and Lee (2019, p. 16), thinks that it will be a "no one's new world." Finally, McManus (2014), as quoted by Grix, Brannagan, and Lee (2019, p. 16), in a Los Angeles Times op-ed piece questions if "global upheaval" is the standard criterion.

At the systemic level, the United States maintains its growth as the world authority, unopposed by any one nation or alliance of states, according to T.V. Paul, James J. Wirtz, and Michel Fortmann (2004, p. 11). In reality, practically all possible adversaries, particularly Russia and China, have upheld some type of non-belligerent engagement with the US since the cold war. Simultaneously, the US and its freethinking associates have attempted to involve and assimilate prospective adversaries into a global consumerist, open-minded order via formal procedures. North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) schemes to neutralize Russia by way of eastward enlargement, economic collaboration, and a security affiliation with its eastern neighbours, including Russia; and attempts by France, Russia, and Germany to thwart the United States' plans of launching a war against Iraq in 2002-2003 are illustrations of diverse patterns of behaviour that are not summarized by a single theory.

### Passive Observer?

In an attempt to re-evaluate balance of power theories, Paul, Wirtz, and Fortmann (2004, 2) argue that in light of contemporary transformations in world politics, pessimists and detractors of realism are certain that the balance of power theory has lost relevance amidst the rising global societal dynamism, while protagonists, mainly realists, believe that balance of power undercurrents continue to function in world politics in divergent ways and intensities.

In international relations studies, there is a dispute over Africa's standing. Conversely, Africa has had an unstable standing in the field, pushed to the outside of some dominating techniques by their concentration on the mighty powers, or "the governments that have the most influence," as Walz put it. Such marginalization is denounced by IR critics who see an insurmountable chasm between 'mainstream' IR and Africa, with some seeing it as a hegemonic and exclusionary enterprise. They claim that the 'western' roots and concentration of IR mean that Africa will continually be a problematic 'other' in the field, at odds with a western standard. Africa's presence in international relations is growing. From colonial authority to resource rivalry to post-conditional assistance dependency, most of what is systemically

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*Russian President Vladimir Putin speaks with Chinese President Xi Jinping before an extended-format meeting of heads of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit (SCO) member states in Samarkand, Uzbekistan September 16, 2022 (Photo Credits: Sputnik/Sergey Bobylev/Pool via Reuters)*

relevant in international politics has transpired in this geographical region. Africa is a hotbed of social unrest and insurrection (as witnessed recently in North Africa), as well as an area where new power structures form (Harman & Brown, 2013).

Africa is an underdog at the international centre stage, consequently, its impact on international organizations is at most peripheral, with no meaningful impact on the operationalization of world politics. Notwithstanding the current improvements in quotas and the influence of Africa in global politics, the dominant impression is that African significant representation remains a major concern, and they have yet to have a voice in the international arena.

Brosig (2021) claims in a recent article that Africa while being on the fringe of global politics, is actively contributing to world events. With the rise of organizations among developing countries and the development of organizations such as IBSA and BRICS, interest in these countries developed even more. There is universal agreement that the move away from unipolarity is inescapable and will be one of the fundamental macro events in the global system that will differentiate the coming decades. However, we are unlikely to see a

complete restoration to unipolarity. The relative decline of Western nations, notably the United States and the European Union, has been a hotly debated issue. Among the developing countries, China stands out as the only one that is expected to be able to compete with the United States in terms of economic size and military strength in the future. Chinese influence on the African continent is garnering attention, and it is commonly viewed as increasing, posing a challenge to the dominant position of traditional states. Polarity, whether uni, multi, or oligopolistic, functions with the concentration of power in and around certain centres and is most important when used against others.

There are several outfits that make up the umbrella of the international community. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Group of 77, the Inter-American Development Bank, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the International Council on Human Rights Policy, the International Court of Justice, the International Labour Organization, the International Maritime Organization, the International Monetary Fund, the International Organization for Migration, and the International Organization for

Standardization are among these organizations. These are the world governance institutions that rule and standardize international relations, and the bulk of their choices have an influence on African nations in both good and bad ways. For these reasons, many African leaders believe that in order for them to have a role in debates about matters that have a significant impact on the continent, they must be treated equally.

Africans have managed to attain some effective representation in significant international organizations, comprising of the World Trade Organization and the World Health Organization. This is owing to the veto power they have in these groups, rather than the numbers they have. Nevertheless, there is a widespread belief that the bodies in which African nations have a voice have little or no impact on the world agenda and policy orientation.

African participants at the international center stage have understood that acting as a regional bloc is the viable option they can carve a well-defined position in the international diplomatic game and have a substantial effect on multidimensional procedures. These early wins are being felt in trade and climate change issues, where Africa has used its veto influence to safeguard their voice on problems impacting them is taken into account.

### China in Africa

China's role in Africa has generally been defined as resolutely non-interventionist in its pursuit of economic goals, but it is now on course to become more closely entwined in the region's security situation. While the basic reasons for Chinese engagement remain economic in nature, rising exposure of its interests to the vagaries of African politics, as well as efforts to demonstrate broader global activity, are driving Beijing to reconsider its complacent approach toward the continent.

“China's role in Africa has generally been defined as resolutely non-interventionist in its pursuit of economic goals, but it is now on course to become more closely entwined in the region's security situation”

According to Clapham (1996) and Cornelissen et al. (2015), as referenced by Ogunnubi and Oyewole (2020), realists usually consider the state as the significant unit of analysis in the international system. In spite of years of self-government, the majority of African governments continue to be lacking the realist criteria expected of a state. They are usually pluralistic, with a number of subnational ethnocentric entities contending with the state and its capability to operate as a unified and significant actor in international affairs. Internal problems have hampered the power of large African governments such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola, Ethiopia, Sudan, and Nigeria to perform authoritatively and “rationally” in the realist sense or to unleash their power capabilities to endure the international system. As a result, several researchers that attempted to offer or foster an African agenda or experience in international relations abandoned realism in favour of other theoretical frameworks that permit them to centre on sub-national actors in local and regional political dynamics rather than nation-state actors in regional or global political dynamics.

### Conclusion

According to Ake (1982) and Cornelissen et al. (2015), as cited by Ogunnubi and Oyewole (2020), the field of International Relations is nothing more than academic dominion for African students who are still interested in realism and power politics between nations. They learn primarily about Europe, America, the Soviet Union/Russia, and, more recently, China. According to neorealists concerned with the structural organization of states based on their influence, scholars of international relations should pay greater consideration to powerful nations, which are the major drivers of order and disorder in the system. Structures, according to Waltz (1979), as referenced by Ogunnubi and Oyewole (2020), are classified not by all the actors who survive inside them, but by the important ones. Until recently, African states were rarely seen as significant powers in this situation. Since the end of the Cold War, the weakening and ensuing downfall of globalised superpower politics have enhanced the global significance of regional powers and their politics.

The ascent of the BRICS has clearly rattled global power structures, both jointly as a coalition and independently as fast-rising economies. The ability of these emerging economies to maintain their rising influence in the global system will be defined to a large extent by their ongoing



economic accomplishment, as well as future attempts to expand South-South cooperation in the global economy and better organize their shared interests. Economic growth and increased collectivism will be important to

their long-term diplomatic impact, as will the effectiveness of their collective and individual soft power initiatives (Grix, Brannagan, and Lee, 2019, p. 17).

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# Banditry in IGAD Region: A Nested Complex Crime

By Amos Otieno Ahenda

## Abstract

Banditry has for a long time thrived in countries that now comprise the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). Various mitigation and prevention measures have been offered to deal with this vice, but it has always resurfaced in bolder and more destructive forms. This article examines the phenomenon through three theoretical lenses of functionalism, interactionism, and conflict theory and concludes that the vice and its sustenance in the region goes far beyond current investigations in literature and suggests the presence of an 'Invisible Hand' akin to Adam Smith's that guides the phenomenon. The article proposes that any intervention or study that ignores this hand is bound to suffer the same fate as others in history.

## Introduction

Banditry, a phenomenon as old as the post-colonial Africa, is a type of organized crime committed by outlaws, typically involving the threat or the use of violence. Despite its significance in undermining state security and contributing to massive losses of life and property, the menace has not been dealt with efficiently and effectively. This could, perhaps be due to its complex and multidimensional nature. Banditry in Africa has been symmetrically associated with poverty, community marginalization, political instability and lawlessness (Mustafa, 2021). It has also been observed that, other than poverty and political instability, poor governance structures within a state or in between neighbouring states with porous borders have also been associated with incidence of banditry (Mustafa, 2021; Goalwin, 2021). Correlation has also been made between banditry and cattle rustling (Mburu, 1991; Katsina, Mashi & Abdullahi, 2021); banditry and piracy (Weldemichael, 2019); and banditry with terrorism (Petrich, 2022; Okoli & Nwangwu, 2022).

Consequently, despite its manifold manifestation in different contexts, the discussion of banditry in this article will be anchored on the concept of organized crime as proposed by the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNODC, 2004). According to the Convention, an organized criminal group is a structured group of three or more persons, existing for a period of time and acting in concert with the aim of committing one or more serious crimes or

offences, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit.

The Convention acknowledges the negative economic and social implications related to organized criminal activities and proposes a need to strengthen cooperation to prevent and combat such activities more effectively at national, regional and international levels. It also notes the growing linkages between transnational organized crime and terrorist crimes and determines to deny safe havens to those who engage in transnational organized crime by prosecuting their crimes wherever they occur and by cooperating at the international level. Whereas levels of success have been noted in areas such as terrorism and drug trafficking, banditry has not been prominently featured, perhaps due to its diminished magnitude at the international level, or its being localized mainly in developing countries, or because of implicit complicity of state actors.

The complicity of state actors in the fighting of organized crime, including banditry has been implied by Scheye (2020). Scheye (2020) considers organized crime and the role of political will in its mitigation - attempting to measure political will in an organized crime environment. Banditry, according to his treatise, is one form of organized crime which is complex and intertwined with local community dynamics and government operations. Noting that political will has always been cited as an impediment in fighting organized crime like banditry,



Elizabeth Lokwawi speaking to local media during the Lokirama Peace Accord Celebrations, Turkana County on Wednesday, 19 October, 2022 (Photo Credit: PUN Women/Luke Horswell)

Scheye avers that it is impossible to conceptualize organized crime without the involvement of state actors. In his view the role of state actors is paramount, and he proposes that there is need to shift attention from illicit markets associated with organized crime, to state actors as organized crime entrepreneurs. Scheye's assertion, in my view, is a pointer towards an invisible hand that directs banditry, and which could account for low political will in tackling the vice, where it occurs. Scheye correctly observes that organized crime is clandestine, and that its activities cannot be easily estimated; and where such estimates exist, they are within high margins of error.

### **Banditry, Terrorism- Evidence from Nigeria**

Evidence from Nigeria and North Africa associates banditry with capital interests and social and political power. MacEachern (2020), studying the Boko Haram phenomenon in Nigeria avers that it is a religiously motivated insurgency with a complex history in Nigeria and origins in urban Maiduguri. He observes that through most of its existence Boko Haram has shown an affinity for border regions: the frontier zones between Nigeria and Niger, the Mandara Mountains on the border with Cameroon, and the shorelines and islands of Lake Chad. He argues that this is a historically mediated process. As

such Boko Haram, as a borderland phenomenon, is a structured form of violence and wealth creation that has historically united elites and their followers in the region. Moreover, there are continuities between the actions and actors associated with earlier phases of border violence and processes involving Boko Haram today.

Goalwin (2021) also observes the role of religious indoctrination as a source of intense conflict in 4<sup>th</sup> Century North Africa. Examining the fracture of the Christian Church following emergence from a period of persecution and newly legitimized by the Roman state, he observes the role played competing claims to religious authority between two camps of bishops, leading to a specific form of violence: attacks on clergy and property perpetrated by roving groups of militant bandits. Known as *Circumcellion's*, these bands acquired a perverse reputation for religious zeal, a desire for martyrdom, and what their opponents described as the 'madness' and 'insanity' of their violence. Anchoring on borderland theory, Goalwin (2021) argues that this violence was the result of strategic efforts to consolidate religious and political power. From this sectarian violence, it is evident that banditry and peasant rebellions can serve as alternate sources of social and political power, avenues through which heterodox movements challenge the power state and religious hierarchies alike.

Okoli and Nwangwu (2022), on their part, examine the phenomenon of crime–terror nexus from the context of the linkage between banditry and Boko Haram insurgency in Northern Nigeria and reveal that both groups have functionally adapted each other’s structures and strategies. While Boko Haram and its splinter groups have occasionally engaged in acts of banditry, there has been mutual co-option by both groups as the needs of their operations demand. They propose that Nigeria’s drive at mitigating the banditry-terrorism conundrum must proceed with a pragmatic understanding of the scale and dynamics of their situational interconnections.

### Banditry in Kenya

In Kenya, banditry has been associated mainly with the pastoral communities in the drylands of northern and north western parts of the country; and has played out as violence related to cattle rustling. Okumu and Kioko’s (2021) observation of Northern Kenya as an ‘ungoverned space’ referring to a social, economic, or political arena where the state does not exercise effective authority, parallels the Boko Haram geographical operational

areas in Nigeria. They observe that, in this region, cattle raids and highway banditry attacks have become rather standardized, due to the diminished state presence and authority, giving rise to alternative structures of authority, such as the Kenya Police Reserve (KPR).

Despite the KPR being state-sanctioned to assist in maintenance of law and order, the authors argue that handpicking of individuals from particular ungoverned spaces and issuing them with firearms to provide security has complicated banditry in these areas. They posit that the KPR tend to grow into independent ethnic forces that promote and protect ethnic interests through violent entrepreneurship in raiding and executing revenge attacks. In their view, promotion of such an entity as KPR results in state-aided powerful ethnic forces in ungoverned spaces, providing alternative power structures that violently promote and protect ethnic interests. This is further compounded by such armed groups being mobilized through political instrumentation to act against neighbouring communities and the state. On their part, Mazuri, Mwaeke and Bor (2022), question the persistent cattle rustling, particularly in Baringo



Armed Pokot man spotted at Kapau in Tiaty, Baringo County. (Photo Credit: The Standard)

County, despite securitization of the area. Noting that Baringo County hosts a contingent of security personnel from the Kenya Police Reservists, General Service Unit, Administration Police Anti Stock Theft Unit and, more recently, Kenya Defense Forces, they anticipated that banditry would end in the area. To the contrary banditry attacks have not scaled down, and in some instances have even been directed at the security personnel. Attempting to study the factors that have led to poor performance of security forces in combating cattle rustling and general banditry, they aver that cross-border incursions were a major challenge in combating the vice. They further establish that the efforts of the security operation have kept producing dismal results due to lack of cooperation by, or failure to include the local population. Additionally, networks of bandits have been found to be so intricate and with established international linkages, that made it difficult to sometimes recover the stolen cattle.

### IGAD Transhumance Protocol and Banditry

The issue of cross-border banditry in the Horn of Africa region has equally been noted by the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development. IGAD (2020) acknowledges that its member states encompass cross-border pastoralist regions with porous international boundaries. It recognizes that the pastoralists in Kenya, Uganda, South Sudan, Sudan, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Eritrea and Somalia practice transhumance, which contributes to between 6-10 per cent of the countries' GDP, supporting over 70 per cent of the pastoralists livelihoods. Noting this importance, IGAD registered its concerns about the phenomena of dwindling pasture, cattle rustling and extreme weather patterns, leading to the proposal of a Transhumance Protocol to facilitate a legal framework for free movement in the region and enhancing orderly cross-border mobility, migration, regional economic integration and development.

Musau (2021) examines the IGAD Transhumance Protocol and contends that the illegal proliferation of small arms and light weapons among the pastoralist communities (especially in the borderlands) pose a serious threat to achievement of the Protocol's ideals of a stable region. This is especially so, since most banditry incidences in the region have been associated with the use of small arms within the pastoralist regions. Though member countries of IGAD have sporadically engaged in disarmament exercises, Musau notes that these have not yielded desired results; as small arms and light weapons

“In Kenya, banditry has been associated mainly with the pastoral communities in the drylands of northern and north western parts of the country; and has played out as violence related to cattle rustling

have not been completely mopped out of the areas. Musau, in his examination, argues that among reasons for the failure, include disarmament being done against the backdrop of poor state-citizen relationship in the pastoralist areas, due to limited state presence. He also faults governments for disarmament paradigms that target whole communities, instead of individuals; leading to mass torture of children, men and women alike. These disarmament exercises, in his view, have also locked out meaningful community and civil society participation, as well as impartial and independent observers; leading to gross human rights violations. Most importantly, he argues that disarmament has been carried out through state security, instead of human security lenses.

His views are also echoed by Katsina, Mashi and Abdullahi (2021) who consider the banditry phenomenon in the region as a consequence of proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALWs) across national and regional borders. They argue that this proliferation has facilitated the emergence of several armed groups that operated as militants, bandits, and herdsmen in Nigeria; as pirates in the Horn of Africa notably in Somalia; as rebels and freedom fighters in Mali and Niger Republic; and in many other places.

### Theoretical Underpinnings of Banditry

The complexity of banditry and other organized crimes can be evidenced by the existence of various theories that can be applied to understand the phenomenon. This implies that no single theory is adequate in capturing the essence of the phenomenon. Three dominant paradigms will be considered in attempting to understand banditry in the context of the Horn of Africa, particularly Kenya. These include functionalism, interactionism and conflict theory.

Ashley (2020) avers that functionalism has its roots in the works of Emile Durkheim, who was particularly interested in the mechanisms by which social order was maintained

## Though member countries of IGAD have sporadically engaged in disarmament exercises, these have not yielded desired results; as small arms and light weapons have not been completely mopped out of the areas

at the macro-level in society. Functionalists view society as an organism with systems that contribute to the overall wellbeing of the whole. As such, institutions exist only insofar as they serve a useful function in society; if such a function no longer exists, the institution dies away naturally. Viewed through the functionalist lens, therefore, banditry could be understood to be a consequence of failed or ineffective government structures leading to existence of large swathes of ungoverned spaces within a state or between neighbouring states (Osamba, 2000). But whereas, this theory would be useful in explaining the emergence of banditry in poorly governed spaces within or between states, it fails to account for other dimensions to the menace, including culture.

Interactionism, on the other hand considers acculturation of a community through the processes of interaction. Of particular interest is symbolic interactionism, whose roots are in the works of George Herbert Mead (1863-1931) and Max Weber (1864-1920), who viewed society as the product of shared symbols, and that the social world is constructed by the meanings that individuals attach to events and social interactions. Interactionists argue that knowledge, actions, and expectations are all social constructs, or things that are only real because society values them. A bandit is a bandit because society has created or labelled him/her so – not because of anything internal to themselves. Arguing from this view, for example, banditry associated with cattle rustling in the IGAD region would be viewed as a normal cultural occurrence among the Turkana, Pokot, Samburu, and Karamojong in Kenya and Uganda. The interactionist would argue, that the young men growing up in such a culture become conditioned to accept this as a norm of life. Even with the emergence of capitalistic interests leading to commercialization of cattle rustling and its associated banditry, the young people raised up in those environments would still consider it a cultural practice; they become 'bandits' because the authorities label them so. The implication of this approach is that banditry is an illusion, as different entities would observe the same phenomenon and arrive at different conclusions about

it. As such, governments would not be required to act on the vice, as it would amount to failure to appreciate a community's way of life. Community leaders in such environments would therefore be antagonistic to any effort by government to disrupt the normal way of life of the community.

The last theory to be considered in this discussion is the conflict theory, associated with Karl Marx. Conflict theorists are opposed to both functionalist and interactionist views and argue that every society is established on existent struggles by different groups over access to limited resources; society is in a state of perpetual conflict, as a result. According to the theory entities within a society will work to maximize their own wealth and power at the expense of social order. Power and domination become the means by which the wealth is generated and maintained; those with wealth and power cling to it by all means. Conflict theories assume that all societies have structural power divisions and resource inequalities that lead to groups having conflicting interests (Wells, 1979). Banditry in the IGAD region, then, would be viewed as a consequence of a struggle for limited resources, which include animals (a symbol of wealth), pastureland, and water. Whenever inequity is perceived by a general population there may be tendency to stage uprisings and violent actions against the perceived oppressors. This would consequently give rise to armed groups bent on destabilizing the status quo with an aim of controlling productive resources in the region.

### Past Measures to Address Banditry

But, could there be more than meets the eye in the banditry question? Mburu (1991) observed the evolution of banditry in the Horn of Africa, over time, and concluded that it no longer fit within the confines of traditional feuding. He argued that, despite its pervasiveness and devastating nature, it had not only failed to attract significant international scholarship, but had also been dismissed as a purely third-world concern. Additionally he posited that existing literature tend to romanticize the bandit and fail to link the phenomenon with geopolitical

issues that wrap together poverty, political instability and inexorable lawlessness. He submitted that, though organized banditry's motivation, opportunity and means manifests within a state, it is symptomatic of regional challenges, and as such cannot be addressed without due consideration to the same.

Whereas it cannot be dismissed that the absence of state presence in any region essentially relegates it to other forms of governance, of which banditry quickly takes roots, a deeper treatise of the same reveals the primary motivation of resource control for capital gain. For instance, Onwuzuruigbo (2021), examining banditry in parts of northern Nigeria, observes that these regions are becoming enclaves of banditry for gangs of cattle rustlers who maraud largely ungoverned forests. He affirms Mburu's (1991) assertion that a covert economy appears to thrive, and which is attached to the 'ungovernability' of the regions. As such the state of insecurity in these regions could not only be looked at in terms of resource-based conflict, but more possibly as a means of ensuring governance chaos, in order for the secret economies to thrive.

For instance, in the case of Kenya, the North Rift areas inhabited by the pastoralist communities, have witnessed persistent violent conflicts in which significant losses of lives and destruction of property has been witnessed. On 11th November 2012, 42 Kenya Police officers were ambushed in the Suguta Valley and killed while pursuing cattle rustlers. Similar incidences have persisted, even as recently as 25th September, 2022, where 8 police officers were among 11 people killed by such bandits (Local Dailies). Despite numerous calls to the government to find a lasting solution to the menace, government reaction has been knee-jerk and often taking state security-centric approaches. This has failed to address the menace. If, as Onwuzuruigbo (2021) suggests, improved governance of such areas would help restore order, why have governments been reluctant to establish lasting structures for effective governance in the regions? Is it purely for lack of resources, or are there powerful beneficiaries to the confusion and chaos regularly meted in such areas?

Petrich (2022) avers that, contrary to historical terrorism scholarship, terrorist groups (including bandits) can strategically diversify into a variety of criminal activities without losing their core ideology or support among the civilian population. He demonstrates this pattern

by the evolutionary arc of al-Shabaab, which grew from a small subset of Somalia's Islamic Courts Union to the most violent political actor in the Horn of Africa, able to conduct terrorist attacks as far afield as Kenya, Djibouti, and Ethiopia. Al Shabab has, according to him, been highly successful in creating a narrative of truth and justice provision while simultaneously exploiting the Somali population and engaging in criminal activity. For the group, criminal activity and crime networks serve two primary purposes: as a funding mechanism and as an avenue for recruitment. Using ethnographic fieldwork and process tracing, he finds that the group's criminal activities throughout the Horn of Africa have made it significantly more resilient to counterterrorism and counterinsurgency campaigns, extending both its lifespan and operational capability. Petrich's viewpoint could be extended to explain the government's inability to carry out effective crackdowns on bandits in the North-Western parts of Kenya, despite the persistent threats by security ministers in different regimes. Could it be that the banditry ideology has so sunk into the local population that it has been legitimized and the government is considered intrusive?

In the same breath, but from a different angle altogether, Weldemichael (2019) considers the menace of piracy off the coast of Somalia and the adjoining waters and observes that piracy is not a product of the absence of the Somali state, but rather a response to the stimulus of predatory assault on the country's land and waters by foreign profiteers. In his view, these actors smuggled poisonous wastes inland while undermining Somalia's economic mainstay through illegal offshore fishing. He amplifies the role of external actors in the networks of transnational corruption that produced piracy on the East African Coast and totally rejects the idea that Somalis are lawless people who practice criminality as a way of life.

Whereas it cannot be dismissed that the absence of state presence in any region essentially relegates it to other forms of governance, of which banditry quickly takes roots, a deeper treatise of the same reveals the primary motivation of resource control for capital gain



*Cattle herder keeps watch over his cows during a seasonal migration of their livestock for grazing near Tonj, South Sudan on May 18, 2022 (Photo Credit: africanews ALEX MCBRIDE/AFP)*

Weldemichael castigates the Western viewpoint that celebrates pirates in classical literature as bold privateers while depicting African counterparts as detestable rogues. In his view, the depiction of Somali maritime violence as piracy is symptomatic of the hegemony of the powerful to label its target.

## Conclusion

Empirical evidence suggests that banditry and terrorism are closely associated and are both correlated with weakened state governance in pastoralist and resource-starved areas. Banditry has heightened insecurity around borderland areas of the IGAD region, prompting IGAD to propose a Transhumance Protocol in a bid to mitigate armed conflicts involving the pastoralist communities. Whereas disarmament of these communities has been touted as an essential step toward ensuring regional security, which is essential for the development of these regions, its success is far from being flaunted. The author suggests that there is a possibility that a wrong prescription has been made on the banditry challenge and that in the ensuing confusion, efforts have been directed away from the critical issues surrounding who the beneficiaries of the banditry are and whether the interests are purely local or transcend international boundaries. The author suggests the need for a more critical reflection on what has been tried so far, and why the results have been dismal. Most

importantly, the results from such an investigation could only gain traction by incorporating both traditional and non-traditional methods of scientific inquiry to arrive at reliable data, given the sensitive nature of such a venture.

An examination of efforts that have been put in place to mitigate on banditry show that they have largely been unilateral and driven by state-centric engines which, by and large, have favoured fire-power intervention. Even when it has been employed, such interventions have failed to be sustained in the long term due to, among other things, inadequate resourcing. Why a unilateral approach would be favoured to address a multi-dimensional phenomenon like banditry appears to suggest a lack of commitment by duty-bearers to completely deal with the vice; which points to a secret and stealthy economy thriving parallel to the mainstream economy.

## Recommendations

At the regional level, the African Union and IGAD could consider investing in data-driven policy intervention proposals. There is a need to conduct subtle empirical studies to properly evaluate the banditry ecosystem due to its contribution to impoverishing the local populations and destabilizing regional security. Many empirical studies that have been done on the topic in Africa have been based in the context of Nigeria. There need to be



more studies on the banditry-pastoralist and political ecosystem in the Horn of Africa region. Of particular interest would be an attempt to deliberately measure political will in dealing with the menace. Rather than deal with specific events, an ecosystem approach is recommended. As such intelligence-led mapping of the illicit markets fueling banditry could be conducted with an aim of destabilizing and completely eradicating the vice from its roots.

Coupled with data-driven interventions, the author also proposes that since a multi-faceted and multi-dimensional phenomenon like banditry would require a multi-faceted and multi-dimensional approach in its mitigation, human security approaches could be considered. The human security paradigm is proposed because it recognizes the inadequacies of state-security approaches, and is comprehensive in nature; leveraging on multi-stakeholder engagement.

The INGOs and civil society organizations working in pastoralist areas in Kenya could, as part of their strategy, consider empowering the locals at the county level to be more involved in demanding development accountability of the county governments through established mechanisms like budget activism. This will enhance greater investment in local development, which will create micro-ecosystems that would support business

“An examination of efforts that have been put in place to mitigate on banditry show that they have largely been unilateral and driven by state-centric engines which, by and large, have favoured fire-power intervention

and improve livelihoods; creating a push for stabilization that is conducive to business.

In the context of Kenya, particularly in the Baringo region, the author proposes that the government could consider investing in training the security actors in the deployment of the modern state-of-the-art virtual technology for aerial intelligence-gathering and monitoring of cattle rustler's movements and activities; given the challenges presented by Baringo's inhibitive topography and poor transport network. This intervention may also save security officers from death traps in the lagas' (dry valleys) which were perceived by this study to be security agencies' killing ground. Aerial monitoring of cattle rustling may also enhance security operations and aptly police cattle rustling networks at all levels; local, national and international.

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# Climate Change Crisis in the Horn of Africa

By Odhiambo Frank Arogo

## Abstract

This article provides an overview of climate change and its impact on the Horn of Africa, current adaptation and mitigation plans, the vulnerability of this region vis-à-vis climate change, threats to development efforts, conflicts over natural resources, displacement and migration due to unbearable climatic conditions as well as strategies that need to be considered in order to tackle these issues. The climate crisis is reshaping our world, as the earth's climate is now changing faster than at any point in the history of modern civilization. Climate change is certainly one of the foremost manifestations of anthropogenic disruptions to natural resources. Therefore, drastic measures need to be taken to win the battle against the climate crisis.

## Introduction

Climate change is real as evidenced from the rising of sea-levels to saltwater intrusion and the Horn of Africa bears the brunt of the climate crisis. The impact of climate change on the people in the region and nature is increasingly apparent. The Horn of Africa is largely inhabited by pastoralists and agro-pastoralists who heavily rely on the environment for sustainability. As the effects of climate change make themselves become increasingly apparent, vulnerable populations—including lower-income and other marginalized communities—have lower capacity to prepare for and cope with extreme weather and climate-related events and are expected to experience greater impact.

People are experiencing climate change in diverse ways. It affects our health, ability to grow food, housing, safety and work. Some of us are already more vulnerable to climate impact, such as people living in developing countries. Climatic conditions have advanced to the point where whole communities have had to relocate. In the future, the number of “climate refugees” is expected to rise. This article presents an overview of the climate change concept, its consequences in the form of the multiple impact of climate change on human life as well as solutions that may be useful in curbing this crisis.

## Climate Change Response

Climate change is one of the most complex issues facing humanity today. The world responds to climate change in two main ways: mitigation and adaptation. Mitigation involves reducing carbon dioxide gas emissions and stopping the problem of climate change from growing. This means burning less fossil fuel (coal, oil and natural

gas) and producing more renewable energy from technologies such as wind, solar and hydro power. Another way to reduce carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is to plant more trees and prevent the destruction of existing forests. Our forests help to absorb the build-up of carbon dioxide, a major greenhouse gas, in the atmosphere. Adaptation involves learning how to live with existing climate change and protecting ourselves from the future effects of climate change. This is basically adopting survival strategies uniquely developed to suit a particular environment.

Until recently, the Pokot in the highlands of the Baringo area in Kenya have practiced semi-nomadic pastoralism. Today, they are rapidly sedentarizing and in many areas suitable for farming, they are adopting rain-fed agriculture. As a result of these dynamics, claims to individual property on *de facto communal rangelands have arisen, and to such an extent that they seriously threaten the peace of the community.*

Pastoralists are changing what their animals eat. From grazing on natural pasture to purchasing harvested



On November 21, 2021, the military and the civilian government reached a political agreement, a 14-point Agreement that led to the release of Hamdok and reinstated his government

fodder, crop residue and commercial feed. Traditionally, pastoral households watered their livestock after every two to five days during periods of water stress before the rivers and wells dried up. This has stimulated them to invest more in water tankers for water supply. Furthermore, to cover additional expenses of fodder or water, pastoral households use strong social networks to pull resources together. This is because livestock from various households migrate and graze together.

Pastoralists do not generally move in response to pasture shortage as is widely perceived, instead, they seek out the best fodder for their animals. As a general rule, pastoralists are more concerned with the quality of the diet as measured by their animals' health and productivity. They move towards quality, rather than away from low quantity. Pastoralists use mobility to respond quickly to fluctuations in resource availability.

Livestock off-take is also another strategy employed by pastoral communities. The growing market for livestock locally has supported this. However, during drought and famine periods, they offer low prices of about 60 per cent lower than the average prices which means that households incur losses of and in their livelihoods. To reduce the dependence on livestock, households are diversifying their income generating activities. For instance, small-scale irrigated crop agriculture is expanding fast along the Tana River. They are developing livestock business by selling livestock products like milk, meat, hides and skin. Most businesses are small-scale and the returns are mainly used for daily household needs.

## Forced Displacement

Climate change continues to compel millions of people to leave their homes every year. As the global climate crisis worsens, an increasing number of people are being forced to flee their homes due to natural disasters such as droughts, hurricanes, tsunamis, floods and other climatic events. Leave (live) or die. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reports that an average of 21.5 million people were forcibly displaced each year by sudden onset weather-related hazards between 2008-2016 (UNHCR, 2016), and thousands more from slow-onset hazards linked to climate change impact. It is further projected that tens of millions of people are likely to be displaced over the next two to three decades due in large measure to climate change impact.

As people try to avert famine and seek safety, many have been forced to flee. According to the UNHCR-led Protection and Return Monitoring Network, in Somalia, the number of people displaced internally primarily by drought this year alone is nearing 1 million, with another nearly 500,000 displaced due to conflict and insecurity (Reliefweb, 2022). Many who have already been forced to flee violence have been displaced yet again by the worst drought in 40 years, brought on by four failed rainy seasons, with a fifth predicted. Globally, such extreme weather events are intensifying and becoming more frequent due to the climate crisis. Despite urgent calls from humanitarian agencies active in Somalia, the catastrophic and multifaceted consequences are largely unnoticed as the world's attention remains elsewhere.

The impact of climate change is extensive and may trigger displacement and worsen living conditions or hamper return for those who have already been displaced. Some people are forced to cross borders in the context of climate change and disasters and may in some circumstances be in need of international protection. Refugee and human rights law therefore have an important role to play in this area. Forced displacement itself can be a source of tension and potential conflict if there is added competition for natural resources, land rights, food and water – problems amplified by the adverse effects of climate change. Such issues can worsen relations between refugees and their non-refugee neighbours, or even help to create new refugee emergencies by themselves.

The biggest single increase in forced displacement in the Horn of Africa in the past year occurred in Ethiopia. This continues the fallout from the conflict in Tigray, which has also swept up the Amhara and Afar regions. As a result, approximately 1.7 million Ethiopians were displaced in the past year, contributing to the total 4.7 million Ethiopians who have been forcibly displaced (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2022). This represents a 56 per cent increase from the previous year. The upsurge in displacement in Ethiopia comprises 45 per cent of the total increase in forced displacement recorded in Africa over the past year (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2022).

Similarly, with 4.6 million people forcibly displaced, South Sudan has the highest proportion of its population displaced (40 per cent), compared to any African country. The 700,000 people displaced over the past year makes



*Flooding drives South Sudan residents into displacement after River Nile overflowed due to continuous heavy rains (Photo Credit: AFP)*

South Sudan the African country with the second largest level of displacement in Africa, representing roughly 20 per cent of the increase on the continent. Flooding is common in the poverty-stricken nation. Khartoum, Blue Nile and River Nile states are among the hardest-hit by the floods (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2022).

## Resource Conflicts

Climate change can cause or exacerbate resource scarcity, which may lead to conflict as well as induce migration of populations in vulnerable situations attempting to secure safety or livelihoods elsewhere. However, some scholars note that resource abundance may be a driver of conflict as governments create large-scale farms on land that once served as communal rangelands, for instance in Sudan. Changing patterns of livestock movement can also create friction with other resource users.

Just like any other eco-system, humans also suffer the complexity of struggle for existence and survival of the fittest especially in developing countries. Limited natural resources, such as drinking water, are becoming even scarcer in many parts of the world that host refugees. Crops and livestock struggle to survive where conditions become too hot and dry, or too cold and wet, threatening livelihoods. In such conditions, climate change can act as a threat multiplier, exacerbating existing tensions

and adding to the potential for conflicts. Due to the scarceness of resources, there is usually a scramble when it comes to the distribution of these natural resources.

The discovery of commercially-viable oil and gas reserves, uranium and gold in pastoral areas in the Horn of Africa has intensified resource conflicts and brought about a new dynamic characterized by extreme violence, involving both State and non-State actors, across these regions. The exploitation of oil, gas, and minerals in pastoral areas has made a bad security situation even worse. Obviously, land alienation in pastoral areas is no longer a factor of traditional localized conflicts between traditional land users alone (farmers and pastoralists), instead, the conflicts involve global interests of transnational corporations, and governments and elites' desire for revenue and to exploit the large financial rewards oil brings.

In South Sudan, oil is produced in areas largely inhabited by pastoralists, the largest groups being the Dinka and Nuer (Pendle, 2020). We have also witnessed this in Turkana, Kenya where oil was discovered in 2012 and the bourgeoisie wanted a piece of the pie. It was found in Turkana's ancestral lands by British oil prospecting company Tullow Oil that estimated there are around 600 million barrels of oil in wells that have been discovered

(Mkutu & Mdee, 2020). As if the oil blessing was not enough, in 2013, Kenya discovered a large water aquifer in Turkana County, which remains one of Africa's driest, hottest, and poorest regions. According to experts, the reserves could reportedly provide the country with water for 70 years and it is self-replenishing. However, eight years down the line, the local community still remains thirsty.

Pastoralism is a substantial part of the rural economy throughout the Horn of Africa. Pastoralists, both nomadic herders and partly-settle livestock farmers, make up over one-half of the population in Somalia and South Sudan, 30-40 per cent in Chad, Djibouti, Mali and Mauritania, and 10-20 per cent in most other countries of this region (Prieto-Garcia, Ismail, Cattero, Amrelia, Darby, & Evans, 2022). There are longstanding sources of conflict involving these groups. They tend to resist the regulatory and revenue-raising demands of the modern state that has been superimposed on ancient trade and droving routes. Population growth and climate change brings them increasingly into competition with farmers as resources become scarcer.

Not so long ago, cattle rustlers locally known as 'bandits' ambushed officers who were in hot pursuit of Pokot

bandits who had raided a village in Turkana East and made away with livestock. Eight police officers are among 11 people who were killed that Saturday following the bandit attack in Turkana County. It is such incidents that make the government hesitant to intervene and in the process end up being dubbed as incompetent for their failure to intervene.

## Migration

During the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, most national governments tried to force pastoralists to stop their migration and reduce the sizes of their herds to prevent overgrazing. These efforts at controlling them were consistently resisted by pastoralists. Large herds were usually seen by them as symbols of wealth and security against unpredictable climate changes and periodic epidemics among their animals. Pastoralism will continue to exist in the near future especially among developing countries since it is an efficient and low energy requiring subsistence base. (Prieto-Garcia, et al, 2022).

In South Sudan, flooding has played a significant role in shifting the movement of pastoralist populations; as has been observed in 2019 with the internal displacement of cattle camps into Equatoria. Transhumance movements and livestock production more generally



Migrants line up on a Somalia beach to board boats that will take them across the Gulf of Aden to Yemen. (Photo Credits: UNHCR/Alixandra Fazzina)

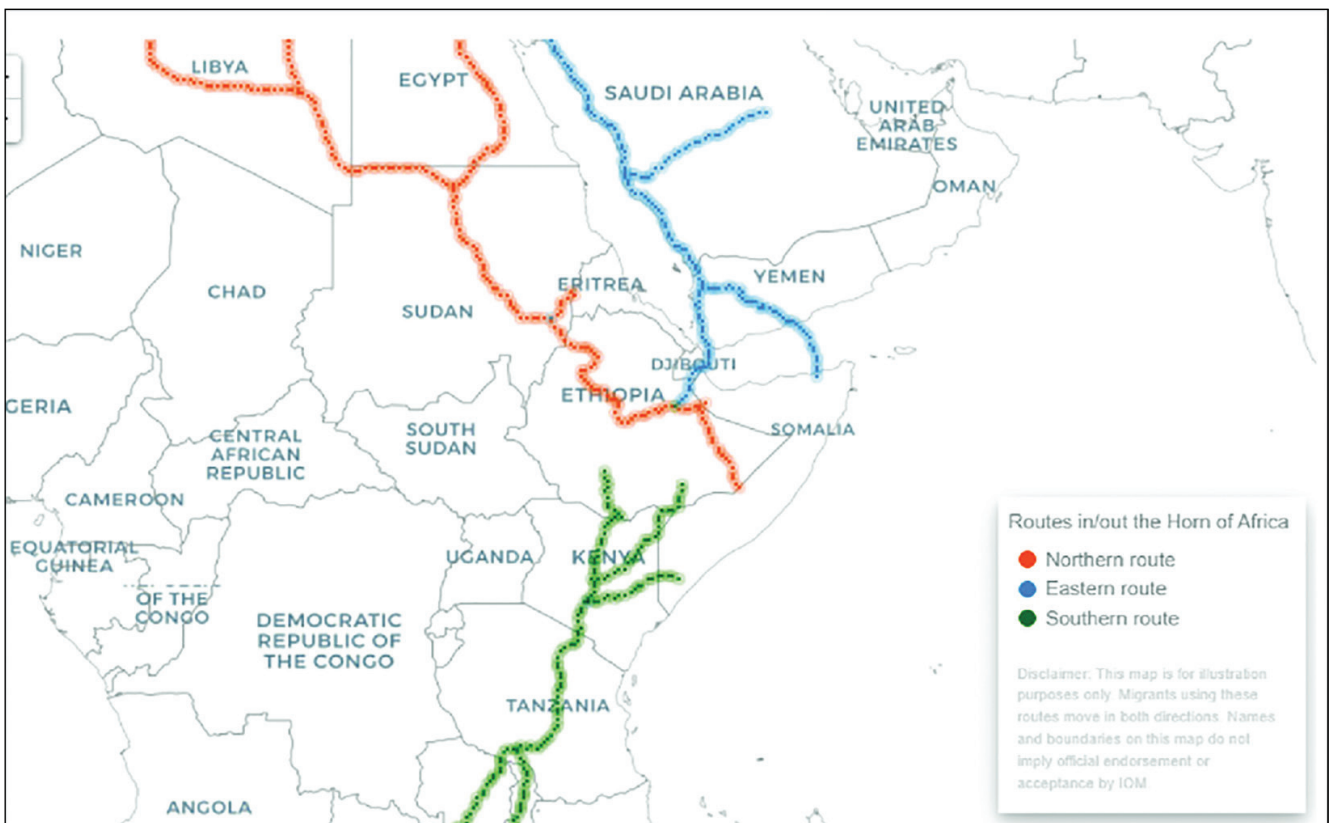
## In 2004, the EU established the European agency for the management of operational cooperation at the external borders of the EU member states. It was repealed in 2016 establishing Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency

can shift southward as pastoral groups seek new grazing opportunities in sub-humid areas or new markets, and through livelihood diversification into trading and agriculture.

Although the 1984 drought, for instance, greatly damaged pastoral livelihoods and contributed substantially to this shift, there is evidence that this is not as much a sudden shift as it is a much longer and incremental process of adaptation by pastoralists. In Sudan, as in the western Sahel, the 1984 drought triggered a mass migration of Zaghawa pastoralists from northern to southern Darfur, where they ultimately came into conflict with the areas' sedentary tribes over land rights and political power. The case of Darfur also demonstrates the limited power of environmental shocks as a push factor that triggers conflict – other pastoralist groups, the Zayadia and

Meidob, stayed and adapted to new conditions in their home region while the Zaghawa migrated *en masse*.

According to International Organization for Migration (IOM), “more than 40,000 African migrants have arrived in war-torn Yemen since the start of 2022”. African Migrants, particularly from Ethiopia and Somalia, use Yemen as a transit point on their way to the Gulf. When Yemen’s civil war erupted in 2015, it was widely expected that migration to the country would nosedive for obvious reasons. However, the ongoing political instability is not enough to deter the thousands of people who arrive into the country every year. Despite the widespread insecurity that has led millions of Yemenis to flee their homes, migrants from the Horn of Africa continue to disembark on the Gulf nation’s war-torn shores.



Migration routes in and out of Horn of Africa. (Photo Credit: IOM, 2018)

## Environment

The relationship between societies and their environment has been a long theme of interest. Ecological factors have led to new changes in climate. This requires that people adjust and make the necessary adaptations for survival. This is usually evident when assessing the relationship between people and their environment. There is a constant interplay between man and his environment and the two are not two distinct spheres. Humans shape the environment they live in as the environment shapes the culture of the population in return. People use elements of their culture to maintain their ecosystem. This may include new methods of production. For instance, where there is a lack of water, people use irrigation for farming.

Environmental protection is an increasing concern of individuals, organizations and governments all around the globe. Due to pressures of population and technology, the environment is being degraded sometimes permanently and new governments and the international community have begun to place restraints on activities that cause environmental degradation. Protection of the environment from various human activities is needed to attain sustainable development. The whole idea of sustainable use of the environment is to exploit natural resources in a manner that we can satisfy our needs and leave the resources intact for use by future generations.

## Livelihood Resilience

Livelihoods are increasingly caught between major global transitions in climate systems. The impact of dangerous climate change falls disproportionately on the livelihood systems of the poorest citizens, undermining their capacity to build sustainable livelihoods and increasing their vulnerability.

Rural livelihoods primarily depend on natural resource-based activities focusing on agriculture and allied activities. These activities are mostly climate-dependent and face the climate change brunt as they are more vulnerable to climate-induced uncertainties, risks, and shocks. Natural calamities such as floods and droughts brought on by climate change make it harder to produce food. Livelihoods of environmentally displaced people, for instance, are rendered unsustainable by proliferating natural disasters. To build resilient livelihoods, households and communities must be able to diversify their activities and have adequate support in terms of assets that are protected from the damaging effects of natural hazards and other shocks and stresses.

Like all human systems, a society's subsistence system is intricately linked to the climate. With respect to climate, communities interpret meteorological phenomena and implement them by responding through their agricultural and health practices. New forms of production and consumption during contemporary climate change are altering people's livelihood strategies, modes of interaction and spatial and temporal horizons. Therefore, climate change is accompanied everywhere by other kinds of change in the society.

Pastoralists are diversifying their herd species. The Somali Abdalla clan in Kenya, for instance, now embraces camel breeding as opposed to cattle, sheep and goats. This is quite ironic because it used to be considered a cultural taboo. However, the reason behind this is because camels are more resilient to climate changes than other livestock species.

The resilience of populations most at risk is strengthened to allow them to remain where they are. The need for livelihood opportunities enables people to remain where they live despite the looming natural disasters. Policymakers have recognized El Niño, for instance, as a major environmental hazard leading to drought and floods that impair food and livelihood security in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa. Despite the resilience of pastoralism to such environmental variability, these changes can act as a medium to long-term factor in conflict as some strategies that pastoralists adopt to diversify their livelihoods can increase competition with other resource users.

## Humanitarian Response

The global poor, who suffer the most from climate change, are being further marginalized as a result of mitigation and adaptation responses, through hierarchies and social stratification at all scales. Understanding and responding to these resulting "insults and injuries of intervention" (Marino & Ribot, 2012, p. 327) is an important new component in achieving sustainable development in a climate-changed world, along with the ongoing need to understand root causes of vulnerability (Ribot, 2014), double exposure to climate change and globalization (O'Brien & Leichenko, 2000) as well as the social basis of disasters (Sen, 1981; Wisner, Blaikie, Cannon & Davis, 2004).

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is providing protection and assistance to many





*World leaders agree to the loss and damage fund during COP 27 held in Sharm el-Sheikh in Egypt on November 6, 2022. (Photo Credit: UN, Climate Change)*

refugees and other people displaced by the effects of climate change, as well as helping them increase their resilience to future disasters. At the 26th United Nations (UN) Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) held in Glasgow, United Kingdom, UNHCR hoped that all parties work together to deliver on securing a global net zero, mobilize finance and adapt to protect communities and natural habitats. UNHCR urged all parties to: first, combat the growing and disproportionate impact of the climate emergency on the most vulnerable countries and communities — in particular those displaced and their hosts. Second, support vulnerable countries and communities in their efforts to rapidly scale up prevention and preparedness measures to avert, minimize and address displacement.

In Sudan, United States Agency for International Development (USAID) programming aims to enhance the benefits of local migration for rural populations by building the capacity of youth to obtain better paying jobs and send funds back to their villages, as well as improving remittance fund transfers. Additionally, state programming focuses on supporting governments to anticipate, prepare for and respond to climate change-related migration movements through community programming and durable solutions for rural communities. During the 27th Conference of the Parties to the United

Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, (COP 27), participating countries reached an agreement on establishing a fund to compensate vulnerable nations for 'loss and damage' for climate-induced disasters. The fund aims to provide financial assistance to nations most vulnerable and impacted by the effects of climate change. This will be very essential in tackling the effects left behind by natural disasters.

International Financial Institutions (IFIs) have also helped in the development of countries, especially those affected by natural calamities. They tend to be more focused on these regions. IFIs came up with an initiative to relieve disaster-stricken countries of their debts known as the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative. It ensures that no poor country faces a debt burden it cannot manage. To date, debt reduction packages under the HIPC initiative have been approved for 37 countries, 31 of them in Africa. Sudan and Somalia are the most recent countries to be benefactors of this initiative.

## Development

Human development focuses on improving the lives of people rather than assessing whether it will automatically lead to the people's well-being. The World Bank describes development as a rising economic status defined by expanding income and employment of people.

Development is most effective when it:

- Is inclusive in the sense that it provides opportunities for every segment of a society.
- Only takes from nature what is required and does not disadvantage future generations.
- Protects the environment and provides more opportunities to the much marginalized groups.

Political instability has however delayed development interventions. The dialectical relationship between conflict and development requires that development be delayed until conflict is resolved and peaceful conditions are created for development. New fringe pastoralism has emerged within the new global context of development, involving activities that are mostly new even to the small proportion of the pastoral population that is involved in them. Activities such as regional trade and markets are not new, but they have intensified because of infrastructure improvements and accessibility of better transport, information and communications technology and currency exchange facilities. Regional and national markets for livestock products such as meat, dairy products and hides are increasingly competing for exports and imports with international markets.

Pastoralists have experienced profound transformations as a result of globalization, defined by Scholte (2005) as the emergence of globally networked societies or the spread of transplanetary – and, in recent times, more particularly supraterritorial – connections between people. Pastoralists, particularly new fringe pastoralists, are ultimately connected with these globally networked societies. These activities, combining the old and the new, have dominated the relationship between an emergent new fringe pastoralism and these globally networked societies.

It should be noted that the peace agreement outlined both the creation of the Somali Federal Government as well as the authoritative rule of the state government in Somalia over any future emerging federal governments

The emergence of transnational jihadist groups in the Horn of Africa inspired by and having pledged allegiance to al Qaida added a new and more complex dimension. Currently, al Shabab in Somalia and a plethora of al Qaida affiliates are exploiting the remoteness of pastoral areas, the relative absence of State institutions and the widespread poverty to mount their attacks on security forces and civilians. De Haan, Dubern, Garancher & Quintero (2016) summarized this situation as follows: “There are indications that armed groups emerge from the poorer pastoralists groups; however, the rich may also support illegal gangs because they are disappointed with the central government and their broken promises.”

### Crisis Communication

Climate crisis communication is all about creating awareness through educating and informing people about this massive issue, in order to mobilize and solve the climate crisis. Everyone can play a part by raising their voice, sharing solutions and advocating for change. Public awareness and the effective communication of climate change information are flagged as critical issues in the Paris Agreement on climate change.

Modern states have what we call the ‘Fourth Estate’ which is the mass media. The mass media is equipped with Information Communication Technology that helps to educate the public. The circulation of climate knowledge in everyday practice, policy realms, media discourse and popular culture is very important as it transports climate science into different social contexts.

### Conclusion

The climate crisis is a human crisis. It is driving displacement and makes life harder for those already forced to flee. Conflicts arise due to disputes over natural resources and human activity may trigger natural disasters such as landslides. As stated earlier, the global poor, who suffer the most from climate change, are being further marginalized as a result of mitigation and adaptation responses, through hierarchies and social stratification at all scales. In my opinion, the government sorts of neglects and even oppresses its citizens on the basis of status. These neglected citizens usually take it upon themselves to find ways of making a living. There is usually a lack of governmental support among areas affected. Existing legal instruments to protect displaced individuals are limited in scope and do not readily lend themselves to protect those individuals displaced by the

impact of climate change, especially those that address migration across borders. Given the growing trend in displacement related to climate change, expanding access to protection will be vital.

There is a strong correlation between countries and regions most vulnerable to climate change and those that are fragile and experiencing conflict or violence. Climate-related impact may further stress vulnerable communities, increasing the risk of conflict and displacement in the absence of effective prevention efforts, and vice versa. Climate-related impact also pose an increased risk to marginalized communities displaced by conflict related to the impact of climate change. This risk is more acute in regions with weak governance and dispute resolution infrastructure, and in growing peri-urban areas where many migrants are heading.

## Recommendations

Climate impact such as shifting precipitation patterns and drought are already driving mobility in the Horn of Africa. In response, we should focus on addressing the climate risk in the region by managing droughts; promoting resilience to shocks and stresses; increasing

water and food security; diversifying livelihoods; and improving access to affordable, quality health services through universal health care.

Effectively addressing migration impacted by climate change, for instance, will require action from all stakeholders, including ensuring people most affected can make informed decisions in response to the effects of climate change. It is the role of the state to develop the whole nation uniformly and ensure that national resources are evenly distributed and shared without discrimination. The state should ensure social protection of vulnerable groups. The state should also be capable of managing heterogeneous populations whereby all citizens in the country should be subjected to the laws of the land.

Understanding the resilience of livelihood systems of the poor and enhancing them must also be seen as a normative priority. Policies aimed at sustainable livelihood production should cover the predictable effects of El Niño, for instance, on the population as a whole and pastoralists, in particular, in order to improve their coping strategies.

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## Editor's Note

Dear Reader,

We are excited to release our 29<sup>th</sup> bi-monthly issue of *The HORN Bulletin* (Vol. VI, Iss. I, 2022). We bring to you well-researched articles and analysis of topical issues and developments affecting the Horn of Africa. We welcome contributions from readers who wish to have their articles included in the HORN Bulletin. At HORN, we believe ideas are the currency of progress. Feel free to contact the Editor-in-Chief for more details at [communications@horninstitute.org](mailto:communications@horninstitute.org).

Hassan Khannenje, Ph.D.  
Editor-in-Chief, The HORN Bulletin

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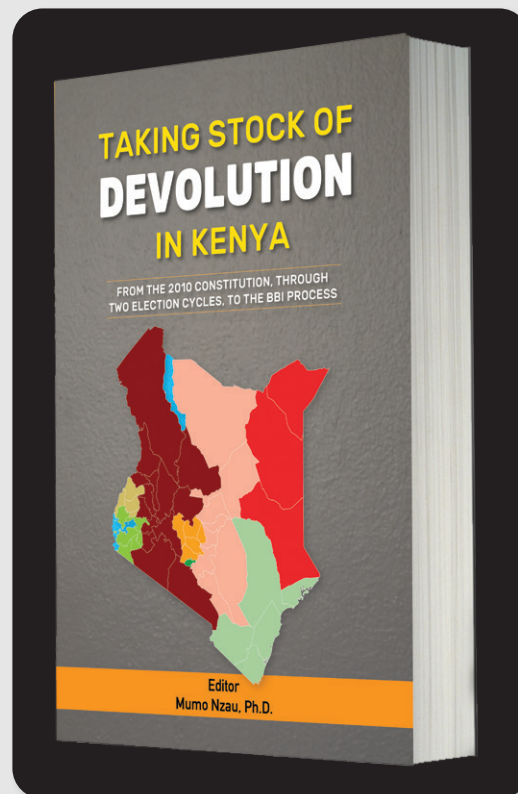
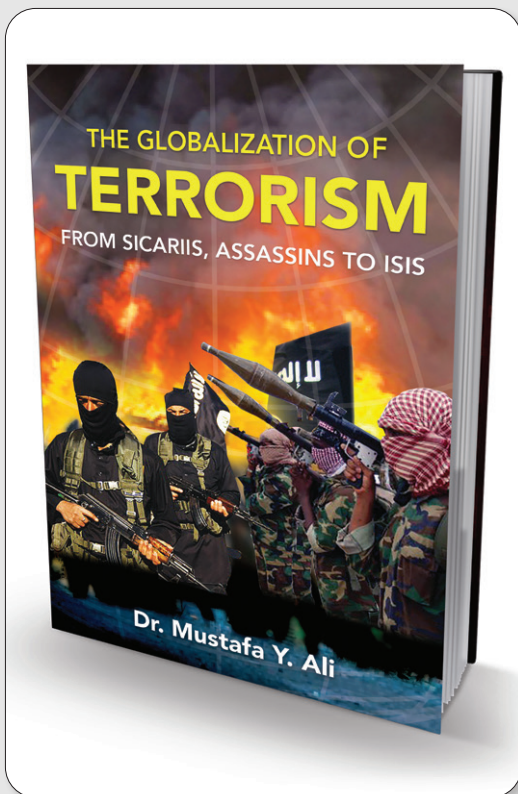
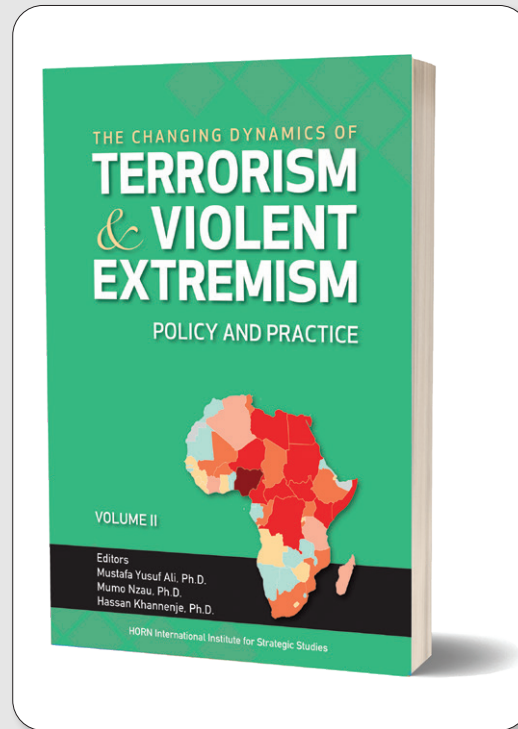
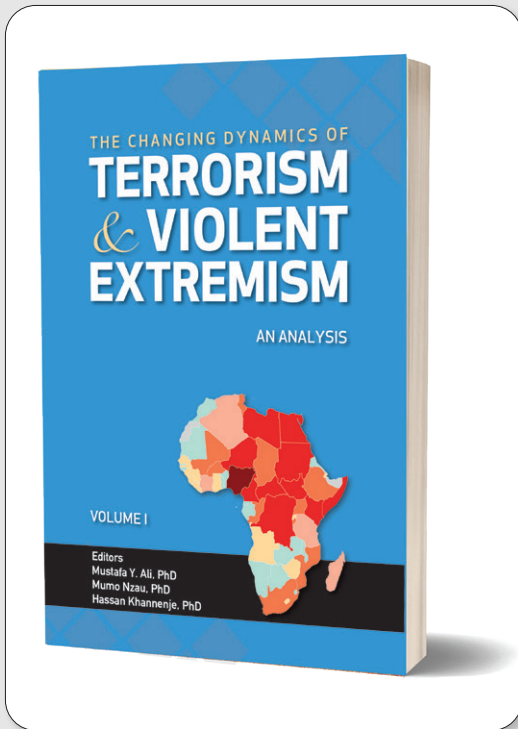
## UPCOMING ACTIVITY

### Experts Roundtable: Contemporary Regional Security in the Horn of Africa

The HORN International Institute for Strategic Studies, in collaboration with Security Outlines, a Czech-based security think tank, will hold a closed-door Experts' Roundtable discussion themed ***Contemporary Regional Security in the Horn of Africa*** in Nairobi (Kenya) on **Thursday, March 2, 2023**.

The forum will bring together scholars and experts to discuss and deepen the understanding of political and security trends in the Horn of Africa and how they will play out across countries in the region. This interaction will be the focal point for experts to share their insights and provide recommendations for subject-matter policymakers and researchers in the region.

# HORN BOOKS





### About the HORN Institute

The HORN International Institute for Strategic Studies is a non-profit, applied research, and policy think-do tank based in Nairobi, Kenya. Its vision is a progressive Horn of Africa and the African continent, served by informed, evidence-based and problem-solving policy research and analysis. Its mission is to contribute to informed, objective, definitive research and analytical inquiry that positively informs policies of governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and spaces.

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