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GEO-STRATEGIC INTERVENTION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

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Abstract

This article seeks to examine the role geo-strategic driven interest politics plays in security, stability, development and democratisation in the Horn of Africa (HOA). It aims to interrogate the various external interventions in the region with the aim of enhancing geo-strategic interest of great powers. The most notorious geo-strategic driven intervention in post-colonial time in the region was the Cold War rivalry of the superpowers that transformed the region into playground of bipolar strife. The end of Cold War brought a brief respite in the geo-strategic driven intervention in the region. The US global war on terror and the war against piracy offshores of Somalia brought again the politics of geo-strategic intervention to the region. What are the consequences of the politics of geo-strategic interest to the region? This article examines the consequences of the geo-strategic interest driven intervention to security, stability, development and democratisation in the HOA.

Key words; Geo-strategic, Cold War, proxy war, war on terror, piracy, Horn of Africa

Introduction

The Horn of Africa (HOA) consisting of Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Djibouti stands out as the region that is most hit by multifaceted problems: festering conflicts, wars, state crisis, draughts, famine, environmental degradation. The dynamics of geo-strategic driven interest politics aggravates these pathologies. The HOA has been the victim of the politics of geo-strategic interest for too long that has wrought havoc to life in the region. All the states, with the exception of Ethiopia, are the creation of colonialism. Even Ethiopia which is widely presumed to have evaded colonisation, traces its modern formation to the genesis of colonialism in which it was four-fold expanded through its colonisation of territories and peoples in the south which makes it participant in the scramble for Africa (Bulcha 2002, Zewde 2001, Hassen 1990, Markakis 1974). This paper critically analyses the role the politics of geo-strategic interest played in peace, security and development in the HOA over the decades.

Overall the paper is divided into two parts. Part one, continuation by other means, examines geo-strategic driven intervention in the HOA pursuant to decolonisation. It examines geo-strategic interventions related to cold war, global war on terror and the fight against piracy. It contends that there is continuation to colonialism by other means. The post of departure is although colonialism ended long ago ushering in political independence domination continued in different forms the socio-economic consequence of which is virtually the same. The second part examines the consequences of these concerted interventions to the people of the region. It examines several consequences that include human cost related to wars, famine and poverty that are direct result of geo-strategic intervention. It also examines the consequences of the division of the states into friendly and non-friendly by big powers. The implications of imitations by the regional states of behaviours of big powers are also examined. The consequence of geo-strategic

intervention to human rights, democracy and state legitimacy is further analysed. The paper concludes geo-strategic interest driven intervention wreaks havoc to the region, therefore should be resisted.

Understanding Politics of Geo-Strategic Interests Driven Intervention

Geo-strategic interest is often defined as national interest associated with security that is 'either threatened in close proximity to the national mainland or in regions of particular national interests abroad' (Krieg 2013:66). The security related threats either are directed on the big power itself or on its sphere of influence that is on states closely related to it. In the latter case the big power feels a sense of obligation to protect its ally. The notion geo-strategic interest may demonstrate the link between security, power and geographical area in the international world order. In this context power implies influencing and controlling territory and resources. Security on the other hand refers to protection of one's own territory and territory of others under the influence of the geo-strategic power holder by means of force if necessary. Since conflict threatens strategic interests or threatens to spill-over to regions where there exist strategic national interest becomes imperative for the geo-strategic power holder to intervene in order to eliminate the threat (Krieg 2013: 66).

Big powers, deriving from their geo-strategic interests would thus intervene in conflicts that they assess have the potential of eroding the power structure and administrative infrastructure of a friendly state and consider it as posing threat to their geo-strategic interest. Another dimension of the threat of geo-strategic interest is one that could come through an indirect way. This refers to a situation where the concerned state would not constitute itself a direct threat, but could create an environment where it becomes a safe haven for others that could

threaten the interests of the big power. There is therefore a general fear that “failed” states would become safe havens for terrorists or extra-legal military forces that operate in a lawless situation. This would constitute legitimate reason for geo-strategic interest driven interventions. Western geo-strategic interest driven interventions quite often aim at regime change and spread of liberal values and democracy (Krieg 2013).

It is also noted that the reasons for superpower involvement are ideological, strategic and military (Makinda 1982: 99). In terms of economic aspects of superpower intervention, to sustain their hegemonic world position, these powers spread their tentacle to different corner of the world and exploit natural resources although they try to camouflage it through providing other explanations. The imbalanced trade relations and dependence on export of primary commodities constitute crucial part of the economic exploitation (Schmidt 2013). In its broader sense it is argued the notion of geo-strategic interest refers to the intention of domination of economic, political, security, resources, energy possessions of the weaker nations by powerful nations. Geo-strategic intervention is here understood as a premeditated, primarily but not solely, military intervention by foreign, mostly powerful states to ensure their security, economic, ideological, energy, resource and political interests.

I. CONTINUATION BY OTHER MEANS

The often asked question by some Westerners is that for how long Africans would use colonialism as an excuse for the dismal performance of Africa. This question certainly leads to raise another question. Has really colonialism left the continent? No doubt that in the physical sense colonialism is gone. Nevertheless, conflicts, poverty, underdevelopment still continue. Are

these only the makeup of Africans? Or they exist because colonialism still continues in a different form? Or are Africans simply using it as an excuse. Certainly no scapegoat should be permitted. Africa should take responsibility of its own situation. But is not there continuation by other means? As Schmidt (2013: 1) notes “as colonial systems faltered, imperial and cold war powers vied to control the decolonization process”. Political dependency was succeeded by economic dependency. The scramble for Africa was eventually also succeeded by the scramble for resources. More seriously, colonisation was succeeded by Cold War, global war on terror and piracy (Schmidt 2013) in the HOA. In this paper I contend that there is continuation to colonialism by other means not to mention the lasting effects on colonialism. Below, part one, will examine the variables of what I call a continuation by other means. These are cold war, global war on terror and war against piracy, proxy war and Bush Doctrine. This will be followed by examination of consequences. Let’s begin by examining cold war.

Cold War

The demise of colonial geo-strategic intervention saw the emergence of Cold War superpowers intervention that rendered the HOA a theatre ground for superpower ideological and military competition for domination. From the very outset of the post-colonial as well as the final phase of colonial era the HOA became the playground for superpower geo-strategic rivalry. Here we can pick the year 1953 as an entry point of what was to be known as the era of Cold War that ravaged the HOA over almost four decades. In 1953 the US and Ethiopia signed a contract. The Contract would allow the US to establish a military communication base known as Kagnev station in Asmara and naval facilities in Massawa, Eritrea (Schmidt 2013: 145). The US would

then be able to control the Red Sea, Indian Ocean, the Middle East and curb activities of the Soviet Bloc. The US geo-strategy was put in the frame of containing communist expansion.

Ethiopia's reward for allowing the US to have the base consisted of two things. The first gain was the support of the USA for Ethiopia's claim on Eritrea. Ethiopia got crucial concession thanks to the US on the debate in the UN General Assembly with regard to determining the destiny of Eritrea (Schmidt 2013: 157). Eritrea was federated with Ethiopia through UN resolution that opened the way for annexation of the ex-Italian territory by Ethiopia leading to thirty-year of independence struggle. The second gain concerned military aid. Ethiopia got military support from the US in the amount of USD 280 million over 25 years that stretched until 1977. The military aid included armaments, military training and advice to the 47,000-man army (Schmidt 2013: 145, Bondestam 1975: 28).

The growing superpower rivalry that characterised the bipolar world order finally set its imprint in the Horn of Africa. The two superpowers jockeyed around for recruitment of client regimes. The self-serving definition of the security that drove the superpowers to be involved in the region, "which to the West imply an absence of communism and to the East liberation from capitalism, do not seem to take into consideration the concrete local situation and the real needs of the people of this region" (Makinda 1982: 93). To the contrary it had the effect of aggravating local situations and undermining the needs and interests of the people of the region

The superpowers armed, trained and abetted client dictatorial regimes that suppressed internal resistance and waged inter-state wars. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s massive weapons from the Soviet Union and USA were delivered to Siad Barre, Mengistu Haile Mariam, and Ja'afar El Nimeri to fight rebel movements in Somalia, Ethiopia and Sudan; and conduct inter-state and proxy wars (Woodward 2006, Cliffe 2004). When Siad Barre came to power

through military coup in 1969 he immediately allied himself with the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union did not disappoint him, they supplied Siad Barre with huge modern armament where by mid-1970s Somalia had one of the strongest armies in Africa. This induced the regime to invade Ethiopia in 1977. The invasion of Ethiopia compelled the Soviet Union to abandon Somalia and ally itself with Ethiopia. This in turn compelled the USA to ally itself with Somalia abandoning Ethiopia. The Soviet shipped billions of dollars' worth of weapons to the military regime in Ethiopia (in 1978 alone 2.23 billion dollars' worth of armament was delivered to the military regime). A decade later Ethiopia was to supersede Somalia in building the strongest army in sub-Saharan Africa under the patronage of the Soviet Union.

In Sudan, Gen Jaffar El Nimeri came to power through military coup with the help of the Sudan Communist Party in 1969. The Soviet Union provided support to Nimeri's regime until a deal was struck between Khartoum and south Sudan insurgents. The deal generated a shift of alliance where while the Soviets existed the United States entered.

These unprincipled shifts and realignments of alliances resulted in untold human death, destruction of property, environmental degradation, draughts, famine, disease, illiteracy, poverty. The end of the Cold War brought regime changes and an end to superpower geo-strategic involvement in the region. This was followed by a brief peace in the region. Nevertheless it did not take long before the region was to witness a return to another round of geo-strategic driven interventions and wars and insecurity.

Global War on Terror and War Against Piracy in the Horn of Africa

The end of cold war heralded the emergence of unipolar world order (Wagner 1993, Krieg 2013) as a result of which the region lost its geo-strategic significance, albeit temporarily. The

Soviet Union was reduced to Russia and began a long journey of a state of isolation, immersing into its domestic affairs, while the US also shifted interest to other parts of the world. The 1990s and 2000s again induced the resurfacing of the politics of geo-strategic interests in the region. This time it is the US global war on terror and war against piracy off the shore of Somalia that spurred the politics of geo-strategic interests. After years of absence, the US interest in the region was rekindled pursuant to the bombing of its Embassy in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam by suspected al-Qaeda operatives in 1998 (Harper 2012: 168). The perpetrators were suspected of having retreated to lawless Somalia.

In addition, Bin Ladin, the al-Qaeda leader was given sanctuary in Sudan 1990-6 (Fluehr-Lobban 2012). Further Sudan was allegedly implicated in the bombing of American Embassies that induced the Clinton Administration to bomb pharmaceutical plant that was alleged of producing chemical weapons. Both Sudan and Somalia were therefore targeted in the global war on terror as hotspots for hunting al-Qaeda. The hunt for al-Qaeda agents took an extreme form in Somalia. The CIA assumed an active role in constituting agents in Somalia that would serve in the fight against terrorism. Such agents was the Alliance for Restoration of Peace and Counter Terrorism (ARPCT) composed of warlords that was formed to fight the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) (Samatar 2013, Harper 2012). The ARPCT threatened by its growing powers decided to attack UIC. The latter easily defeated the former in June 2006. Within six months the UIC brought considerable changes. Security and stability unseen for fifteen years was ensured in central Somalia. Seaport, airport were opened roadblocks were dismantled. For the first time since 1991 a semblance of functioning state was established. Unfortunately Ethiopia which supported the warlords, with support of the United States, invaded Somalia in December 2006 to

attack the UIC. The UIC was vanquished and was replaced by extremist radical organisation known as Al Shebab that fought Ethiopia until it was forced to withdraw in January 2009.

In 2003 a new phenomenon erupted off the Somali coast. This was piracy. Virtually the entire world naval forces converged in the region to fight piracy. The Red Sea is a crucial trade route from and to Far East, Middle East, Europe and the Americas. Since highjacking ships, kidnapping and asking ransoms by pirates disrupted world trade, securing this route became therefore vital world concern. The fight against piracy represented the peak of international militarisation of the region.

In addition to the more than 20 international naval forces operating in the region, drones based in Camp Lemonier (Djibouti) and Arba Minch (Ethiopia) are also employed in the fight against terrorism and piracy. Private security organisations with no accountability either to national states or international authorities also operate, particularly in Somalia, with impunity in the name of protecting ships and aid organisations. This further proliferate the availability of weapons and militarisation of the region.

Bush Doctrine

Following the incident of 11 September the US President, George W. Bush announced what was to be known as the Bush Doctrine. The pillars of the Bush Doctrine are two. These are pre-emptive strike and regime change (Krieg 2003). According to the pre-emptive principle the United States arrogated to itself the right to carry out a pre-emptive attack against anyone it perceives harbouring evil intentions against US geo-strategic interests. The threat has to be eliminated before it attempts to implement its evil intentions. The Second doctrine is regime change. Regimes perceived to be hostile to the United State have to give ways to friendly

regimes. In order to achieve regime change the US administration in tandem with its allies in the region would employ what every means it takes.

The Bush Doctrine is rapidly spreading where regional states are also emulating it thereby assuming universal norm. An illustration of this is Ethiopia's invasion of Somalia in December 2006 with the support of the US (Harper 2012: 171.2, Elmi 2010: 105). Kenya also followed suit and invaded southern Somalia in October 2011. Both actions are driven by the principles of pre-emptive strike and regime change. The Islamic movements in Somalia were perceived by Ethiopia and Kenya as representing threat to their geo-strategic interests. The imperatives of the pre-emptive strike therefore drove Ethiopia and Kenya to invade Somalia to dismantle the Somali Islamists before they could cause damages to those countries. The best way to ensure that the enemy is permanently eliminated would be to change the political system thus the need of regime change. The pre-emptive strike of Ethiopia and Kenya on Somalia had therefore an extended objective of removing Islamists and replace them by friendly regime.

The global and regional exercise of the Bush Doctrine is thus wreaking havoc to the region. The International powers and regional states' collusion for the benefit of global and regional as well as national geo-strategic interest have proven detrimental to the peace, security and stability of the region. The misguided perception of the Doctrine also testifies to the presence of the continuation by other means, though assuming more complex nature.

Proxy War

Proxy war in the HOA has a long history. It has two dimensions. The first dimension relates to regional while the second dimension refers to global. It was and still is utilised by superpowers as well as states of the region since the 1960s. In its global dimension both the

Soviet Union and the United States of America as indicated earlier fought a proxy war in the HOA by supporting opposing client states and rebel groups (Schmidt 2013, Woodward 2006). States of the region also employed the same method of wedging proxy warfare. Ethiopia supported Somali as well as Sudanese insurgent groups. Somalia and Sudan also supported various Ethiopian insurgent groups. Moreover, the proxy wars also drove the two governments to support insurgent groups of the other in the aim of destabilising the enemy. Eritrea is alleged of supporting Ethiopian insurgent groups such as the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), Afar Revolutionary Democratic Unity Front (ARDUF); while Ethiopia is alleged of supporting Eritrean insurgent groups: Democratic Movement for the Liberation of Kunama, Red Sea Afar Democratic Organisation, Eritrea Democratic Alliance, etc.

In the name of combating terrorism and piracy notorious warlords who were wreaking havoc on the Somali people were handsomely rewarded with money from the USA because they were willing to play the game. The CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) formed an alliance of warlords under the name of Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism (APRCT) (Samatar 2008, 2013: 170, Möller 2008, Murphy 2011: 80). The APRCT began to attack the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC). The UIC attacked back and by June of 2006 wiped out of Mogadishu the APRCT. Subsequently the UIC established peace, security and state structure. The first real attempt in 15 years to create a semblance of state in Somalia by the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) in 2006 was thus untimely aborted in order to prevent Islamic fundamentalism from controlling Somalia. The UIC were presumed to be none willing to play the game. Therefore Ethiopia was encouraged to invade Somalia in December 2006 and routed out the UIC. Yet this ill-advised action produced more radical Islamist extremist group called Al Shebab.

Yet the Ethiopia's invasion of Somalia could also be seen as part of the familiar pattern of proxy war. This time relates to the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea. There is widespread understanding that the two countries shifted their conflict to Somalia. The two governments rushed into finding allies in the Somali conflict. Therefore while Ethiopia sided first with warlords and later with Transitional Federal Government, Eritrea found itself on the side of the UIC. The proxy war between Ethiopia and Eritrea further complicated the Somali predicament.

II. CONSEQUENCES

The second part of this paper examines the consequence of the geo-strategic driven intervention in the HOA. As the history of the region of over the five decades testifies, the geo-strategic interest driven interventions drew multifaceted serious consequences to the people of the region. As will be elaborated in the following sections these consequences include: physical human costs, human rights violations, absence or distorted form of democracy, division of states by big powers into friendly and non-friendly that has direct consequence to peace stability and development in the region, imitation of regional states of habits of big powers has also become a common occurrence, loss of state legitimacy as the unavoidable outcome.

Physical Human Costs

The most conspicuous costs of the geo-strategic interventions come in the form of wars. The wars could be discerned into intra-state and inter-state conflicts. In terms of inter-state wars the HOA experience at least three major inter-state wars. The two were between Somalia and Ethiopia. In 1964 and 1977-8 Somalia and Ethiopia went into war due mainly to the Somali

inhabited Ogaden area. The third was between Eritrea and Ethiopia, 1998-2000. Ethiopia and Eritrea went to war in 1998 due to seemingly border dispute that took the life of more than 70,000 soldiers. The war ended through internationally witnessed and negotiated agreement. The Permanent Court of Arbitration delivered its verdict on the delimitation and demarcation of the common border of the countries in April 2002. Ethiopia reneged from its promise to respect the verdict of the Ethiopia Eritrea Boundary Commission (EEBC), thus to date, it has yet to be implemented. Although Eritrea had moral and law on its side, due to the dismal diplomatic performance of its leadership it lost the edge. The Eritrean government's ill-advised confrontation with the US not only cost its legal benefit, but also put it under sanctions.

The second category, intra-state, has also ravaged the region since 1955. The genesis of the intra-state could traced back to the 18 August 1955 Torit uprising when a south Sudanese unit in the Sudanese army mutinied, lasting for 17 years. It ended following the Addis Ababa Accord of 1972 between the Khartoum government and the rebel movement of South Sudan. The lull that lasted for 10 years was replaced by the second civil war when southerners led by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLM-SPLA) resorted to arms against the government in Khartoum that is believed to have consumed the life of more than two million south Sudanese. The war ended when the two parties in 2005 signed a Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) paving the way for the independence of South Sudan. In 2003 the Darfur conflict exploded followed by conflicts in south Kordofan and Blue Nile taking the life of hundreds of thousands.

The intra-state war in Ethiopia began in the 1960s. The struggle of the Eritreans for independence began in 1961 and ended in 1991, 65,000 combatants paid their life. This was followed by insurgencies led either by ethnic movements or multi-ethnic insurgencies

determined to depose the monarch and later the military regime in Ethiopia. The end of the cold war brought change in Ethiopia, yet the intra-state war in that country continued although with considerably diminished scope and ferocity. Somalia's intra-state wars began in early 1980s when clan based insurgent movements resorted to arms to depose the Siad Barre regime causing unimaginable human losses. With the collapse of the state Somalia entered into decades of chaos and carnage that further aggravated the loss of human life.

Djibouti and Eritrea also have their share of the intra-state conflicts. Since independence, Djibouti grappled with intermittent armed insurgencies by the minority Afar ethnic group against the domination of the Issa majority. The Afars feel marginalised and excluded from the state. Various diaspora based groups also challenge the PFDJ government in Eritrea. The Eritrean state is dominated by those who brought independence while other sectors of society find themselves marginalised.

During the Ethiopian occupation of Somalia, in the fight between Ethiopian forces and Al Shebab, it is estimated about 20 000 Somalis have lost their life and more than a million became internally displaced. Amidst this human created tragedy, natural calamity in the form of draught and famine also hit Somalia in 2011 taking the life 250, 000 people. Of course the famine was not merely a work of nature but also the result of misguided policies.

Division of States into Friendly and Non-Friendly: The Politics of Producing Pariah States

The politics of geo-strategic interest necessitated the division of states into friends and non-friends, those who are willing to play the game and those for whatever reasons have fallen out of favour. While those labelled non-friendly states were successively pushed to the unceremonious pariah status, the friendly states were allowed to get away with serious violations. Sudan was the

first post-cold War era, the era of GWT to be located in the non-friendly bandwagon. The frontline countries which were defined as friendly formed a pact against the National Islamic Front (NIF) government in Sudan (Woodward 2006, Möller 2008)

The central defining theme of pariah states is lack of conduct of “acceptable behaviour” of certain states (Preble 2005: 25, Greg Mills et al 1997). The question of course is acceptable to whom. How and by how is acceptability defined and determined. Here the concept of pariah is perceived in two ways. One is the alienation from the international community which is the common normative understanding. In this sense it is external powers with specific interests that designate states pariah, thus the designation assumes political nature rather than academic. According to this conceptualisation the state is considered pariah when it is isolated from the international community, international system. The designation is not based on sound theoretical and conceptual analysis rather it was made fashionable by the US foreign policy (Saunders 2006: 23) and is ‘a term of stigmatization’ (Stork n.d.). The US, since it emerged as a triumphant sole global power, and taking advantage of its economic and military powers, arrogated to itself the right of defining and designating states as pariah. Invoking the designation may sometimes be justifiable when it relates to terrorism and weapons of mass destruction, in other occasions maybe dictated by power arrogance intended to be used for world domination, without incontrovertible evidence as in the Horn of Africa.

The exclusion from the group of normal (Saunders 2006: 24), exclusion from hegemonically defined sphere of interest which quite often is not broadly representative drives those excluded into pariah. Rather, it represents geo-strategic interest of those who possess the power to exclude and designate. It is this geo-strategic driven interest that discerns states into friendly and no-friendly.

The politics of geo-strategic interest necessitated to ignore international law allowing the festering of the conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia. The festering of the conflict has huge implications not only to the peoples of the two countries but also to the region as whole in terms of security, development and regional cooperation. Another casualty of the festering of the conflict became Somalia. The two countries moved their conflict to Somalia where their proxy war aggravated the tragedy of that country. The shifting of the Ethio-Eritrea conflict to Somalia was also induced by the politics of geo-strategic interest that conveniently ignored one of the epicentres of conflicts in the HOA.

Eritrea is under sanction by the United Nations Security Council because of its alleged support of Somali and Ethiopian rebels. This has pushed Eritrea into “pariah” state. Ethiopia on the other hand is tolerated to ignore a Permanent Court of Arbitration verdict, support Eritrean opposition groups in order to destabilise the government in Asmara and recurrently intervene in Somalia, because politics of geo-strategic interests dictated so.

A volatile situation of ‘no-war-no-peace’ exists between Ethiopia and Eritrea for the last ten years. This situation is a source of great tension between them which can explode into war any time. Incidents such as the Ethiopian attack on 15 January 2011 inside Eritrean occasionally actualise the fear of reigniting war between them which will wreak havoc to the region. It has also become the major cause for the flight of the Eritrean youth to Europe and US with tragic consequences on the way. This is the outcome of the misguided politics of geo-strategic interest. While Eritrea is sanctioned for alleged support of rebels groups, Ethiopia could get away not only with supporting Eritrean oppositions but also commit aggression.

The relation between Sudan and South Sudan is also affected by the politics of geo-strategic interests. The classifying of Sudan into non-friendly that pushed it into the category of

“pariah” state, and placing South Sudan into the category of strategic friend of the West complicated the settlement of the post-CPA (Comprehensive Peace Agreement) issues. The lack of compromise from both sides to settle the pending issues could be attributed to the geo-strategic driven uneven and imbalanced treatment of the two states. Moreover, the two governments are now trapped in trading of accusations of supporting opposition groups of the other that is proxy wars. The outcome of this imbalance treatment, in the case of Sudan and South Sudan was the outbreak of war between the two states in March 2012, when South Sudan suddenly occupied an oil producing region of Heglig in Sudan. In marked difference to the Ethiopian attack of Eritrea, on 15 February 2012, the invasion of Heglig by South Sudan generated strong reaction from the AU and UN Security Council, however.

In its internality dimension the strategy of alienation of states through generating dependency on external powers also alienates them from their own citizens. In this sense the state elicits its legitimacy from sources of externality and its accountability also rest on externality. Through a variety of forms of blackmails and threats, the US government has attempted to force states and non-state actors to comply with its crusade of castigating and punishing what it designates pariah/rogue states. The USA has been exercising the role of self-appointed world police by exporting domestic laws abroad (Greg et al 1997). The foul play is how the methodology or politics of production of pariahs is frequently employed. As an illustration we can take Sudan, the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) in Somalia and Eritrea. In the case of ICU the US Administration stood on side of warlords that wreak havoc to the Somali Society. In a nut shell, the division of states in the HOA into friendly and non-friendly thereby producing pariah states is a major contributing factor in the unhealthy relations among the states in the region which reinforces suspicion, conflicts, insecurity and instability.

Imitation of Regional States of Habits of Big Powers

Another concomitant result of the politics of geo-strategic interest is the imitation of behaviours of big powers by the friendly states. Big powers give their strategic interest, whether it is security (terrorism, piracy) or resource (mineral, oil), as reasons for their interference in the HOA. Friendly states have begun to use as point of reference the behaviour of big powers. When Ethiopia interferes in neighbouring countries, it happens with the blessing or even active involvement of the US Administration as in the case of Ethiopia's invasion of Somalia in 2006. If it takes place against the wishes of the US it involves blackmailing. The Washington's fear of terrorism is "played upon by every regime in the region vying for American patronage" (Markaksi 2011: 269). Both Meles and Museveni invoked the blackmailing, Museveni for instance, threatened to withdraw his forces from Somalia when the US Administration criticised his human rights records in 2012.

When Ethiopia and Kenya invaded Somalia they invoked their "right" to protect their strategic interests. The late PM of Ethiopia, recently, addressing the national assembly of Ethiopian on the case of Swedish journalists justified their imprisonment by saying that 'terrorist are killed by missiles' (apparently in reference to the US actions in Pakistan and Yemen), 'but we instead brought them to justice'. Indeed George W. Bush's pre-emptive doctrine¹ inspired the late PM Meles decision to invade Somalia in 2006 with devastating human and material destructions. The enactment of the terrorism law in Ethiopia according to which opponents of government could be indicted with is also another imitation of the politics of geo-strategic interest practices. When criticised, government officials refer to Guantanamo Bay where

¹ For notion of George W. Bush Doctrine see David Held and Kristian Coates Ulrichsen (2011), 'Wars of Decline: Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya'. Items and Issues-<http://itemsandissues.ssrc.org> (accessed on 29-08-2012)

suspected terrorists are kept by the US without due process of law. If the world's powerful democracy could do it why not Ethiopia or Uganda?

As Fisher (2012) notes Museveni of Uganda has also successfully copied the discourse of terrorism in repressing dissenting voices. It becomes morally indefensible for the US to criticise these states for imitating behaviours that it has perfected. The double standard practiced by the leader of the “New World Order” forfeits its claim of upholding universal values and norms which also undermines its moral authority to command others to abide by universal values and norms. Therefore states in the HOA conveniently imitate the US and introduce bogus anti-terror laws that curb fundamental rights of their citizens.

Human Rights and Democracy

Other victims of the politics of geo-strategic interest in the HOA are democracy and human rights. In the case of the “Pariahs” state, indeed they use the hostile world in which they are living as an excuse to introduce democracy and failure to respect human right. They quite often refer to the threat to national security and integrity coming from the hostile world. The friendly states, on the other hand are excused for violations of human rights and lack of democracy because they are valuable for the geo-strategic “universal common value”.

This indispensability, at least as perceived by the friendly states, conferred on them the rights to ignore universal values and norms and pursue their own geo-strategic interests as well as violation of human rights and postponement of introduction or implementation of democracy. This skewed perception of indispensability therefore allows friendly states to get away serious human rights violation and ignoring of democracy.

Both categories of leaders believe in the supremacy of arms and violence as opposed to rule of law and democratic governance. Opponents are therefore met with iron fist. Securitisation of citizens' right leads to perfection of surveillance and control. Harnessing these draconian anti-terror laws is promulgated where civilians and insurgents are equally treated. Civic, democratic governance are replaced with dictatorial, one party and or military rule. The complacency of the politics of geo-strategic interest facilitates such political environment in the HOA.

All this generates in the festering conflicts, wars and instability that are ravaging the HOA. The reversal of the politics of geo-strategic interests, and instead implementation of mutual interest and respect would lead to respect of human rights and fostering of democracy.

Loss of State Legitimacy

The literature on state-society relation stresses the unwritten contract that binds the state and its citizens. This contract is based on the exchange of service and legitimacy. The state will deliver services to its citizens while citizens will confer legitimacy on the state. The convergence of deliverance of services and bestowing of legitimacy connotes the internality dimension of state legitimacy. State legitimacy is also generated by externality dimension. The world system of states duly bestows legitimacy on the state.

Another notion of great saliency in the state-society relation is accountability. The notion of accountability refers to the checks and balance where the state is accountable to its citizens. If this accountability is missing the equilibrium in the state-society relation is disrupted. All states in the HOA display deficiency of one or the other dimension of legitimacy. Western friendly state may possess external legitimacy but suffer of lack of internal legitimacy. Non-friendly states may suffer of deficiency of external legitimacy yet may enjoy internal legitimacy. In the

long run however unless both sources of legitimacy coalesce the state loses its overall legitimacy.

Geo-strategic intervention which most of the time confers external legitimacy on the state at the same time denies it internal legitimacy. This is so because the state fails to deliver services. The state remains suspended in the air without any contact with citizens. Its accountability rests on external powers. The geo-strategic interventions that often cause conflicts, instability, insecurity and poverty erode state legitimacy. Geo-strategic interventions, over the decades, systematically and purposefully, have pervaded state legitimacy.

Conclusion

The implications of the geo-strategic interest driven interventions to the HOA is simply expressed havoc. The region has been suffering for several decades of festering conflicts, intra-state, inter-communal, inter-state wars whose sources could be found in the misguided politics of geo-strategic interests. Moreover, environment degradation; abject poverty, rampant food insecurity often leading to famine; illiteracy and chronic health problems also beset the region. Consequently the characterising feature of the region has become lack of state and human security, instability and absence of peace, state failure and collapse. This in turn generates poverty, illiteracy, migration, internal displacement, environmental degradation, draught and famine. For sure where there are rampant conflicts and wars there could not be socio-economic development, democracy and respect of human rights. To heal the tragedies would take centuries (Wiley 2012: 150).

A question frequently posed is for how long Africans will continue to use colonialism or external actors for all the pathologies the continent is suffering of. Is it not the time for African to

shoulder responsibility for what befall their continent? The question has some merits. What those who pose this crucial question seem to be oblivious of is that however how external intervention and agency is as animate now as it was during the colonial era. Undoubtedly the forms have changed, though persistence has proven to be resilient. The resilience of the persistency could be seen in the managing of finding or manufacturing accomplices. One of the modalities of finding accomplices to implement “noble” civilising mission has been to court corruptible chiefs or even invent them where they remain beholden to their “creators”. Upon independence also, capitalist political economy, found it expedient to create corroborate comprador bourgeoisie that ensure persistence.

International socialism also found it expediency to identify (?) or create comrades in arms against the struggle of international capitalism and imperialism. Both versions of modernisation, socialism and capitalism, suffocated and disarmed the people of the HOA from designing and pursuing their own home grown developmental strategies. Instead political leaders that willingly played the role of clientelism and patronage were manufactured. Those potential waivers of the undignified apportionment of clientelism would effectively be silenced.

The post-Cold War and post-September 11 US global on terror and war against piracy in the offshores of Somalia has further eroded the possibility of designing policies and cultivating of progressive leaders. The leaders of the countries were divided between friendly and non-friendly on the basis of how readily offered their services for powerful states. Non-friends were those who failed to align with the hegemonic external power order. The friendly leaders were those who expressed their readiness to serve the US global war on terror in the HOA. Those seating at the helm of the designation of “pariah state” found themselves increasingly dehumanised and demonised and therefore every step they take critically watched, while those

friendly leaders were idolised, whatever violations they commit are excused and were highly rewarded in the form of highly prestigious international platforms. The act of dehumanisation and demonization further pushes to the edge the targets triggering a vicious circle of reaffirmation or solidification of the status of a pariah state.

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