

Review

The geopolitics and human security of the Afar in the post-cold war period

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This paper draws attention to the new geopolitical dynamics of the Afar-Horn states in the Post Cold War period with respect to its effects on sub regional human insecurity (among the Afar people) in the Afar-Horn. Contrary to hitherto held assumptions about the nature of conflict in the Horn region as central of inter-state relations, the Post Cold War period has brought the Afar people in three political constellations that set the condition for the continuity of old local conflicts and the rise of new ones that in sum caused Human insecurity among the Afar. This underscores the dialectical interpenetrations and complex overlap of local, regional and global actors, issues, interests and contexts that harden the thrust of insecurity on the Afar commons. Accordingly, this study seeks to discern the cultural, structural and direct violence induced human insecurities in the Afar-Horn from the vintage point of the mutual causation of geopolitics and human security. Issues like inter-state war, ports, insurgency, political Islam and terrorism in the Afar Horn states hitherto examined by many academics within the state/national/militaristic security theoretical purview or limited to certain aspects are analyzed within human security paradigm and at comprehensive scope. Therefore, the study provides the nexus between spatial variations of human security and geopolitics of the Afar-Horn. In so doing, the pragmatic collection and analyses of primary and secondary sources is done within the triangulate theoretical construction human security, international relations and peace building. Thus, the claims, self-perpetuation of local and sub-regional violent conflicts in the Afar-Horn are the results of compartmentalized and diachronic orientations of action and reflection that got be addressed in synchronized manner with the bigger picture of the Afar-Horn and its multi-tired contexts.

Key words: Afar, Issa-Afar, Afar-Horn, human security, geopolitics.

INTRODUCTION

The Horn of Africa, in the strictest geographic meaning, constitutes countries in the rhino horn shaped part of North-east Africa that includes Ethiopia, Somalia, Djibouti and Eritrea (*here in after referred as the Horn*).

Geopolitically speaking the Horn covers wider area, including Sudan, Kenya and Uganda (*here in after referred as the region*). This paper addresses the geopolitics of Afar in the Horn- Ethiopia, Djibouti and

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Eritrea (*here in after referred to as Afar-Horn*). Albeit recent shifts to the Great lakes region, the Afar-Horn has remained one of the most instable and insecure sub region in Africa, characterized by protracted violent conflict, disaster and poverty the Afar-Horn (Medhane, 2004:1-3).

The Afar homeland covers a substantial part of Afar-Horn states located at the nodal point of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, which is of major geopolitical significance (Getachew, 2001). This part of the Horn has long been Ethiopia's especial foreign policy and national security concerns, the Afar people are the center of gravity. The French control of Tajoura, Italian conquest of Red Sea coast by the end of 19th century, and the full incorporation of the Awussa Afar into Ethiopian Empire in the Post-Second World War period set the Afar in the Horn in different political structures and dispensations (Harbenson, 1978:481). This has led to the further division of the Afar in to in post-colonial Djibouti and Post-cold war Eritrea. The end of the cold war did not bring them out from the cold instead they remained the most underdeveloped minority, marginalized and vulnerable to disaster and violent conflicts in all the states they formed part. The post-cold war brief period of detent achieved in the Horn atrophied the Afar resistance and geopolitical significance of the Afar-Horn, only to renew world attention with the upsurge of Terrorism, Somalia crisis and Eritrea-Ethiopia war (Shehim and Searing, 1980: 217-9; Abbink, 2003: 407-11). The intensifications of old local, interstate and international conflicts, marginal power coefficient in national politics framed the Afar on the debt side of livelihoods and human security (Tadesse and Yonas, 2002:1-2).

Thus, this article upholds the argument that, therefore, it is in the purpose of this article is to describe the position of the Afar people in the political configuration of Afar-Horn states and link it with their livelihood and in turn show its effect on the security dilemma and political stability of the Afar-Horn states and the Afar people; finally it analyzes the impacts of the ports, Issa-Afar conflict, inter-state relations, insurgency, the comeback and renewed geopolitical interests of big powers, and the threat of political Islam on the livelihood security of the Afar people and geopolitics of the Afar-Horn.

Demographic and geographic overview of the Afar-Horn

The people of Afar are dominantly transhumant Muslims pastoralists of the Southern Cushitic family that has a distinct identity, own vernacular language, contingent territory commonly known as the Afar-Triangle (located in Ethiopia, Djibouti and Eritrea) and are one of the ancient settlers of the Horn. The Afar-Triangle covers in the North from the Boori peninsula to the foot of Tigray and Amhara

highlands in to the West. From East Djibouti city in the south along the railway line through Erer to Awash station; in the west the two joints make the vertex at Namal Fan 75km NE of Addis Ababa (Yasin, 2008: 39-40, 39-43, and 53-6).

The Afar believes in shared ancestor who first settled the Earth, belief in unity and indivisibility of the Afar people. The Afar people are the third biggest livestock producers. Social organization of the Afar is based on decent and affinal ties that a person through patrilineal decent system belongs to a particular clan (*mela*). In addition, loyalty of various clans in settlements to a major clan provides efficient and expedient modality to galvanize support in times of crisis (Yaynshet and Kelemework, 2004: 16). The Afar has some form of clan confederacies. Clan and family lineage with a paternal system of filiations and the practice of cross-cousin marriage (*Absuma*) determine social relations. The formation of hierarchical political system of sultanate over clan based social organization put together through the practice of *Absuma* marriage of social integration are elements of Afar social reality. Power and influence are accordingly dispersed along clan and sub-clan lines that divide some clans to the ruling (*Assaimara*) and others to the ruled (*Qaddoimara*). Some have social and juridical roles and influences *Makabon* (*traditional judges*), *Makabantu* (elders), *Keddoabba* (clan leaders), *Fiqqimaabba* (age-set bond) and the *Shakhist*-category of the *Qadi*, *Sharia* judges.

The clan constitutes almost everything in Afar social and political reality, even *Doroqqu -Muruuso* (crime and punishment) have clan referent. The clan system is believed to have maintained solidarity and social balance; to have contained disaster and enabled rapid resilience from natural and artificial shocks, reduced internal vulnerability and resistance against external threats. At the center of the social system stands a viable system conflict transformation codified into unwritten (until very recently) law the *Mada'a* and the the *Mablo* (Alula and Getachew (eds.), 2008: 4; Mu'uz, 2013:5-6). Their transhumant movement follows regular patters which are also rule governed-*the Hirta*-enforceable by the *Fiqqimaabba*. The Afar view of environment and human relationship is amazingly dialogical as to give legal provisions that lists name of trees and the corresponding punishment over cutting alive tree. Their concept of Environmental protection *par excels* modern theory of sustainable development (Yaynshet and Kelemework, 2004: 5-6 and 15).

The Afar people are located in the most arid but vital geopolitical part of the region. Before the Advent of colonial powers and the expansion of the Ethiopian Empire the Afar had reigned over five Sultanates from the Sultanate of Gobad in Middle Awash valley to Rahayata and Tio' in Eritrea and, Awussa in Lower Awash valley and Sultanate of Tadjoura in Djibouti (Yasin, 2008: 43).

The Afar homeland constituted strategic geopolitical foci and resources endowments of Afar-Horn states; like the most utilized river Awash in Ethiopia runs 700km in the Afar homeland, road and rail life lines to the coast, and multi-million dollar project in Kessem-Tendaho and Tendaho Sugar plantation (Ibid), the biggest game reserves in Ethiopia, undeveloped land, water and geothermal potentials in Ethiopia; the vital ports of Assab in Eritrea and the transshipment regional hub at Djibouti are located in the Afar homeland.

Yet, they have typical pastoralist egalitarianism at all levels of social relations and social roles. Transhumance Pastoral production is the dominant mode of livelihood of the Afar. Although very limited in number the Afar have diversified livelihood, costal trade, fishery in Eritrea, agro pastoralists production and salt trade along the fertile banks of Awash River and in the North Afar of Ethiopia at Aba'ala, and petty commerce in Djibouti.

Currently the Afar people are the most underdeveloped Afar-Horn states, in all human development indexes the lowest, living in fragile and disaster prone environment with deteriorating livelihood, snared in the web of local, regional and international conflicts (Yasin, 2008: 43). Their communality notwithstanding, they exhibit spatial variations across states.

The Afar in Ethiopia

Ethiopian Afar constitutes north and south eastern arid and semi-arid land in the Ethiopian vertex of the Afar triangle facing the state of Eritrea and the republic of Djibouti. Internally they are bordered with regional states of Tigray in the north, Oromia in the south, Amhara in the west, Somali in the South and Djibouti republic in the east. Temperature ranges from 28-48 degree centigrade and rainfall is one of the lowest in Ethiopia. According to the 2008 national census the population of Ethiopian Afar is estimated to 1.4 million (ECSA, 2008). The Afar National regional State is organized under 5 zone, 32 wereda, 365 kebele administrative units over 100, 8670 sq.km of mainly arid land. Less than 9% of the population lives in towns and not more than 6% of the population use modern court services (ANRS, 2008: 6). They have boundary contentions with all ethnic groups they share boundary with; in Middle Awash valley the Oromo (Karrayu and Ittu), Afar, Issa and Hawiya Somali clans, and Argoba are locked in triangular conflict interface: control and access to scarce resources is one element (Getachew, 2001).

The Afar in Eritrea

The Afar in Eritrea are located in two semi-autonomous zones the Southern and Northern Red Sea Zones with

7% of the total population of Eritrea; the Southern known as Dankalia is arid and desert ecological region. The Northern Red Sea Zone has a large population of people of many different ethnic groups. About 800 km of the 2,234 km Red Sea Coastline of the State of Eritrea is in Afar region which is 4% of Eritrea's total area (AfarCommunity, 2007). According to recent reports, the Red Sea Afar has very marginal representation in the strong unitary state of Eritrea (QFARMAROO, 2009: 2-3). Their dominant livelihood is Pastoralist livestock production, fishery, salt production and trade; besides they work as laborers in the port of Assab and Massawa. Annual Rainfall ranges from 150-200mm, temperature ranges from 38-54degree Celsius. The Assaimera--Damohoita clan family in and around Assab and Baulul are engaged in trade, fishing and urban employment, the Dunna clan in the hills of Dino are engaged in agricultural practice (Dinuucci and Zeremariam, 2003: 11). Tradition had it that only the Assaimera can own grazing land and have a say on matters of access to grazing land and water resources; the Addoimera have the use right.

The Afar in Djibouti

According to official statistics the Afar constitutes 20% of the total population and they represent 30% at the National Assembly. Three decades ago the Afar constituted about 60% and was political majority in the country. They live in both the Northern and Western regions, which make up about 87% of the country total area in three administrative districts known as Tadjourah (Hassoba clan), Dekhil (Adarassoul and Debne clans) and Obock (Adail and Badoita Mela clans) and in Arhiba quarter of Djibouti city (Schrader, 1993:204-206). Livelihood of the Afar in Djibouti is of extremely marginal contribution to the GDP; livestock production by the vast majority of extremely poor pastoralists contributes 3-5% to GNP and 10% of the national food requirement; and yet, it is the only livelihood for 33.3-50% of the country's population and 90% of the rural population which constitute 20% of total population size. The Afar dominantly live in rural area engaged in traditional subsistence pastoralists animal production located in the most arid and semi arid part of Djibouti vulnerable to drought and famine (Brass, 2007: 1-2).

Anatomy of Conflicts in the Afar-Horn

Conflict in the Afar-Horn is characterized by linkages among local, regional and international conflicts imbedded in historical and structural fault lines. One such a conflict is the long standing Issa-Afar conflict that keeps channelling itself along ethnic fault lines and pulling state and none state actors into the local-regional spiral of

violence. The existence of networks of trade routes that transverse through uncontrolled clan territories serves as the trajectory of conflict. Besides insurgencies roaming around buffer zone and illicit trade networks serve as supply lines of the arms. Competition to control those trade routes intensifies Issa-Afar confrontations. Moreover, interstate border conflicts and the dire need to secure access to the Red Sea and Indian Ocean ports invites heavy hand state intervention that scale up possibility of interstate war and hence regional instability. Furthermore, threat of international terrorist networks and radical Islamists as well as criminal networks (*Somalia Piracy*) visa-a-vise big power involvement in the Horn overlaps local, regional and global conflict dynamics. However, the underlying factor remains to be the ever worsening deterioration of livelihood engendered by structural marginalization and political oppression of the people of the Horn: pastoralists are the most affected. This pertains to Post-Cold War changes imparted on the nature of the region, the state and external involvement (Leaderach, 2006: 135). In this respect the Afar-Horn states have undergone tremendous changes since the end of the cold war that defined the changing face of conflicts.

The Horn of Regional Security Complex

Conflicts in the Horn have become more of intra-state in post cold war period, and at the same time, except for a brief period of detents that lasted from 1991-1995, inter-state conflicts have not any less been inhibited (Griggs, 1995:5)¹. The super power rivalry in the region that had suppressed local contradictions gone with the end of the Cold War, it sporadically set them free. Against the back drop of regime changes, state (re)formation and destitution and the prevalence of arms resulted in prevalence of conflict; add to it, the prevalence of multitude of armed and grieved groups contributed to the militarization of daily life. Subsequent massive refugee influx and insipient humanitarian crisis resulted in amplification of community grievance and violence (Griggs, 1995:8; Woodward, 2002:1). Despite remarkable intervention by foreign forces/actors, security interdependence of Horn states and the less mutability of conflict and security to external influences characterize the region the peculiarity of a regional security complex. According to Medhane Tadese (2008), 'the Horn of Africa represents . . . a reverse theory of hegemonic stability, in which superpower hegemony deepens rather than lessens political stability.' (Medhane,

2004: 1; Healy, 2008: 138) this used to be true to the extent that, there was no major military and economic hegemonic actor until the recent ascent of Ethiopia as regional power, that there still is web of insecurity factors and no acceptable and viable sub/regional modality of conflict resolution recognized by all states (Healy, 2008: 6-7; Lunn, 2008: 69; Berouk, 2011: 1-4). The Afar-Horn situated at the heart of such security and conflict structure, therefore, constitutes the Horn of regional security complex. Nonetheless, those new developments and accompanying changes in the constituency, nature of actors and relationships were not *sin qua non* though necessary conditions to the prevalence of violent conflict in the Horn. The nature and multiplicity of immediate conflict presenting issues embedded in the context-pattern of relationships and structures rooted in history were determinant in defining conflict dynamics and contemporary geopolitical landscape of the Afar-Horn (Berouk, 2011: 1-4).

The States, Governments and Politics

The Horn states are characterized by multiple anomalies partly owing to the colonial legacy, the process of state formation, the nature of political systems and objective geopolitical realities that in turn defined the continuities and discontinuities of major features discussed in sections to come.

Marginalization, State Fragility and Poverty

The post colonial states in the Afar Horn almost in all of them, including Ethiopia have been languishing under absolutist monarchs, military dictators and semi-parliamentary unity-fanatic political systems. Long history of political oppression, economic marginalization and socio-cultural alienation, given the absence of any viable democratic modality of doing politics, had inevitably led to the prevalence of armed resistance with a range of objectives from fair representation to quest for state of one's own. A case in point is the various Afar ethno-nationalist groups and the EPLF. History of war, drought, declining resource base and slack in institutional capacity to respond to unfolding hazards left the state fragile. Up until the recent phenomenal rising of Ethiopia and its positive effects on Djibouti, the Afar-Horn remained sad news of the world media. Factors debilitating state-society disarticulation has imparted the biggest blow on pastoralist communities' livelihood; and hence scarcity and drought translated through competition to secure basic security needs into violence that often express itself under ethno-territorial banner (Medhane, 2004:5-6; (Prendergart, 2006:161-164). The worst hits always never missed the Afar and the Issa. Nothing proves more than the lowest scores the Afar-Horn is known for all human

¹In this year governments of Eritrea vs. Islamic militants (Government vs. Insurgencies), Ethiopia vs. OLF, Sudan vs. SPLA, Somaliland vs. Issaq (State vs. Nation), Djibouti vs. FRUD, struggle for power among 13 Somalia clan in Stateless Somalia (Government vs. Ethnic insurgencies) represented the inward shift of nature of conflict that also had external referents expressed in interstate conflict.

development indexes dealt at length in the forthcoming sections. Subjective as might so be, the lived experience of the author among the Afar of Ethiopia and proximate to the Afar-Horn underpinned the same.

Borders: resourcing and disgracing

Borders of the post-colonial state as much arbitrary and porous as contested has the spell of rising the zombie of irredentist and ethno-nationalist wars in Afar-Horn states that more often than not has correlates of local conflicts. In addition to factors associated with the arbitrary nature of colonial borders, the ethno-regional anomalies and consequent irredentism, the prevalence of armed groups near contested frontiers creates fertile condition to the development of mutual-intervention utilizing aggrieved local communities in the ungoverned state peripheries like the Afar and the Issa (Abbink, 2003:200-212;Cliff, 1999: 90). Moreover, competing efforts of resourcing borders and borderlands unfolds local conflicts and gives them a regional character. Resourcing and conflict follow few correlates including demographic size and cross border settlement, relatively bigger population size settling along a contiguous territory allows resourcing with less friction. The Issa in the Somali-speaking Horn is an ideal case: owing to its greater appeal to Ethiopian, dominant power in Djibouti, and representation in Somali land and Somalia it traverses four national borders with ease. The Issa, availing itself of Ethiopian governments preferential attraction to the economic return of informal network resourcing borders and boundaries against the Afar believe of non-violability Afar homeland, trespasses the Afar regional 'boundary' in Ethiopia by superior arms power to secure lucrative returns from illicit trade (Dereje and Hoennnd, 2008: 107).²

The hyperbolic imagery of Issa (*whose name shall not be mentioned in the dark otherwise than in masculine reference*) in Afar folk's ordinary dialogue is an attestation of Issa superior manoeuvre *par excellence*,³ add to it, contrary to the *lessees faire* Issa cognition of territory⁴,

²The hot spots of Issa-Afar violent clash at border inlet and outlets, along the illicit trade routes, and in and around the contraband centres is further attestation of the role of resourcing borders and border lands in mediating communal hatred in to protracted violent clashes.

³The author's careful observation for years among the Afar has established that, the Issa has very exaggerated persona and enemy imagery: invisible, meticulous, malicious evil and the sleepless *other* that works to the utter destruction of Afar aspiration. The reference to the Issa in masculine language is vivid avowal of the all dimensional superior manoeuvre of the Issa in the mind of the enemy.

⁴In the Issa world view every yard the Issa and its cattle set feet on belongs to the Issa that often seasonal migration in search of grazing and water points leaves new Issa permanent establishments which in time turns in to contraband trade destinations and finally Issa self administrative units. The track stop contraband centres at Qunduffo, Adaytu and Gedamaytu along the Awash-Djibouti tarmac road, used to be the hot spots of Issa-Afar violence currently under Issa control, were created by the same dynamics of resourcing borders.

the Afar conception of *Qaffar baxxo-the Afar-homeland* highly romanticized attachment to their land and its correlate in Afar code of honor; hence Issa asymmetrical dominance and all time all invincibility means constant aggression, penetration, progressive dispossession and humiliation with long lasting estrangement with and alienation from *Qaffar baxxo* and all that *Afar-ness* is and is about. This frame work bears cruel implications on Ethiopian state conceptualization of sovereignty, human security, national security, rational choice and good neighbourliness- *sic utere tuo*-as well as the value relativism it imposes on the reason for border and its correlates. The government of Ethiopia has tacitly consented Issa trespassing Afar territories to settle and dispense its contraband commodities in the track stop towns. The tragic part of the story is that the Afar, if at all they dare to stop at Issa centres to buy contraband commodity from the Issa while *detouring* to Semera (*watch out! not Awash or Addis, to where the Issa fetch it*) *Federal gendarmerie* on duty is empowered to confiscate. Though the gain to the Ethiopia is debatable, except access to the Issa controlled Djibouti port, Issa border resourcing and government leniency is catalyst of Afar Issa conflict.

Moreover, fragility of national borders is rendering interstate conflicts common to the region (Dereje and Hoennnd, 2008: 107). This pertains mainly to the management of borders and borderlands and not their nature *per se*. The continuity of the plight of the Afar people in the post 1998 period, therefore, is an outcome of disorientation of foreign policy and national security animated by a landlocked country's spell of the sea.

Ethnification of politics and politicization of ethnicity

The history of ethno-national oppression by homogenizing and parochial regimes imposing destitution with inequity, vertical and horizontal asymmetry, and politically engineered communal mistrust that results in polarization of identity is common to the Afar-Horn (Gebbru, 2009:5). The transformation of ethno-cultural structures of identity in to political identity in the post-cold war period has resulted in the dual process of politicization of identity and ethnification of politics (Kaldor, 2005). The Afar carries the scare of these phenomena in Afar-Horn states.

The post-independence Eritrean nationalism radicalized the identity divide between the *Tegaru* of Eritrea and Ethiopia to mold brand new Eritrean identity; the provocative gesture with all its neighbours (except KSA) and its jingoistic foreign policy has contributed to the War with Ethiopia. The outward pointed end of violence meant to forge internal solidarity did not miss its targets at home, the Eritrean people; more so among the lowlanders. The ethnic policy of homogenization of lowland and Muslim eight ethnic groups is in favour of highland Christian Akologzagn and Hamasen *Tigrigna* speaking population

of Eritrea. The Red Sea Afar belongs to those most affected groups, especially after the Ethiopia-Eritrean war (Clapham, 2000:3).

State restructuring in post-1991 Ethiopia enshrined constitutional right for unconditional self determination up to an including secession with alleged reconciliatory intentions and establishing on will based unity of the state (FDRE, 1993). However, the separation of Eritrea brought the separation of the Red Sea Afar from Ethiopia that begot the much protested further dismemberment of the Afar in to three states (Awol, 2008);⁵ even some armed ethnic insurgents like Ugugumo (means revolution in Afar language) emerged under the banner of reunification of the Afar in the Horn. Another important issue lingering up to now is the anomalous demarcation of regional administrative boundary; the Afar of Ethiopia, until the declaration of NDR that gave autonomy to the Assab Red Sea Afar, were divided in to five provincial administrations (of Tigray, Wollo, Shoa, Hararge and Eritrea) during the Derge period had many contentious claims to make under the new state system; of which the most critical was the Issa-Somali occupied territory (Yasin, 2008:48).

The Federalization of the Ethiopian state and devolution of power to the regional states including the right to organize their own institutions, handle conflicts and lead their internal affairs on their own accord set the legal condition for transformation of post-war Ethiopian society (Assefa, 2007: 12). However it has also opened doors for elite manipulation of ethno-cultural divides for political ends: border conflicts sprouted everywhere. The demarcation of regional boundaries was made based on effective control and boundary disputes were left to bilateral negotiated settlements with no recourse to historical claims; few cases where determined on referendum. Cases like the Issa-Afar contested territory which has been the longest conflict in Ethiopia was handed over to the mutual resolution of the Afar National Regional State (ANRS) and Somali National Regional State (SNRS) (Yasin, 2008:48). However, neither bilateral dealing nor federal government mediation or arbitration made non-ephemeral settlement; mean while EEBW erupted changing the already lope sided power equation in favour of the Issa that further polarized the interplay of ethnicity and politics between parties. Furthermore, it made the conflict more intractable than ever and perpetuated violent clashes.⁶

⁵During the referendum the Afar of Assab were forced to show their support for secession. In the public demonstration called for show of support, however, the Afar were singing in protest '*Ayana maca!? Ayana maca!? Ayana tenim hina!*' which means '*What do they mean, . . .!? What do they mean, . . .!? We know not at all! We will never and ever know! For they mean nothing!*'. *Ethiopian review*, 1995, . . . The protest against the dismemberment of the Assab Afar was amplified before hand by the Sultan of Ethiopian Afar, Ali Mirah Mohammed Hanfere in his popular saying '*Even our camels do know the Ethiopian Flag!*'

⁶ANRS, Administration, Security and Justice Affairs bureau Archrivals 23-51, 1998-2011. Survey of the peacemaking efforts and violence incident reports for

In Djibouti the phenomenon has its roots into the colonial period. The French instilled ethnicity into Djibouti politics to postpone independence on grounds of ethno-national conflicts and social disarticulation. The exclusionary ethnic politics began to determine social and political relations since colonial period to date. Inter-Ethnic and inter-clan conflicts between Issa and Afar, Issa and Gadaburssi, and Issa and Issaq are the major ones that have political and economic correlates both at domestic power struggle as well as external referents in neighboring states. The trajectory of ethnic domino effect of Issa-Afar conflict in Djibouti is reflected in ethnic conflicts in the region: Issa and Afar in Ethiopia, Gadaburssi and Issaq in Somalia and Somali land respectively (Schrader, 1993:208-209).

The degree of polarization of identity in Issa-Afar conflict is so immense so, that shared identity markers, social institutions, way of life, beliefs and values are rendered fragile in the face of violent confrontation. A case in point is the Wardick the third Issa clan family in Djibouti; this clan is the direct outcome of historically evolved ethnic fusion of the Afar and Issa; the *Ugas* the supreme traditional authority of the Issa in the planet is by tradition elected from the Wardick clan family which is source of honor and influence to its members (Schrader, 1993: 205-206).⁷ However, such shared structures of identification, the belief in Islam and similarity in pastoralist livelihood are kept hostage of animosity and violence. The social dimension of Issa-Afar conflict in Djibouti politics has got longstanding animosity. At the same time it has politico-economic referents represented by Issa monopoly of political power and ethno-regional dimension that integrate Afar-Horn states and community groups in to what Schrader described as 'the heart of the cauldron'(Ibid, 213). As though writing of Issa-Afar conflict both Jean Paul Lederach and Amart Ya Sane separately pointed out social conflicts having political and economic correlates are easily mediated in to violence that sustain itself feeding on ethnic hatred, social injustice and political grievance (Leaderach, 2006:113; Sane, 2002: 102).

The stability and security of the Afar-Horn in general and the Issa-Afar relations in particular is affected by sub regional and national conflict systems often characterized by protracted civil wars and the politics of insurgency.

the period 1998-2011 showed annual average of five negotiations, three failed settlements, seven violent clashes with 79 death and 110 wounded.

⁷Despite living in different states the Issa pay their unfaltering allegiance to the one and only supreme authority of the *Ugas* that they are unified by the *Ugas* and obey its ruling more than any sovereign state constellations they formed part. In a region engulfed by crisis of legitimacy sharing common ethnic ties via such a powerful institution should have created non-ephemeral capability for peace between the Issa and the Afar. Yet, the ethnicity-politics nexus rendered it impossible.

Protracted civil wars and the politics of insurgency

At the end of the cold war, Ethiopia and Eritrea came out of long period of civil war, though unfortunately, it did not take much time to get themselves back to the dirty water of interstate war and mutual insurgency that in turn fuel internal communal conflicts. The upsurge of the ONLF and OLF for the self determination of the Ogaden Somalia region and Oromia of Ethiopia, the various Afar insurgents and the Issa-Afar violent conflict unabated for over seventy years in Ethiopia are major cases (Clapham, 2000:5).

Eritrea, due to its parochial ethnic orientation, undemocratic system of governance and war monger external policy, continued to fabricate insurgents. Some of them are from period of armed struggle and others fighting for self determination (Lyons, 2006: 13). Since, EEBW Eritrea has continued to be the African capital of insurgents, not a few areas spear-headed to destabilize the Afar-Horn.

Protracted civil war in Somalia led to protracted State collapse. The state imploded in to unprecedented anarchy and radicalization of differences across clan lines that lead to the emergence of new actors along South Eastern frontiers of Ethiopia, Southern Djibouti and Eastern Kenya posing security threats; the quasi-state of Somaliland to the south of Djibouti is outcome of Somali's protracted war (Medhane, 2008b: 113-116) that provide additional bastion to Issa power in the Afar-Horn. Also, the problem of Somalia has continued to beckon the involvement of Eritrean, Ethiopia, big powers and extremist forces like the Al Shabab.

In early 1990s major changes in the region triggered Djibouti's all time all Issa-Afar tension that yielded in to Djibouti Afar led armed resistance FRUD galvanizing all the Afar in the Horn. The post-cold war period, however, did not exacerbate all long standing conflict in the bigger horn region; in some cases it had temporarily contained violence (Kaldor, 2002b:5); a case in point is the long standing conflict between the Government of Sudan and South Sudan Liberation movement (Abbink, 2003: 409). This was due to the brief detente assumed among Sudan, the EPLF government in Asmara and the EPRDF led Ethiopian government postponing the old game of proxy-war and mutual destabilization until the NIF-led government of Sudan awakened cold war zombie by sponsoring and promoting political Islam to its neighbours (Ibid, 410-412). Thus Sudan took religious fault lines to serve its post-cold war policy of attaining regional hegemony that left it much weaker than ever.

The FRUD-led Afar rising was outcome of antecedents of protracted conflict and state coercion. Despite negotiated settlements in 1994 and the 2001 peace and power sharing agreements the government did not manage to achieve more than cooption of the factions of the FRUD. Hence, a successor Afar insurgent group

FRUD-*Renaissance* is still in arms struggling for self rule and fair power sharing. Ethnic, social, economic and political asymmetry notwithstanding, the two peace agreements has to a large extent contributed to mitigating violence, however. Thus, Djibouti currently is more stable than its northern and southern neighbours (Abbink, 2003: 410-412). The conciliatory role of Djibouti in Somalia and its pragmatic alliance with Ethiopia, in turn, is reciprocated by the Eritrean government's continued harboring of FRUD-*Renaissance*, a second generation post-war Afar dissidency against Djibouti. Informats from the Ethiopian Afar ex-rebels confirm the same in sharing military camps with FRUD-*Renaissance* at Rahato, *south of Assab*. In sum, the regional instability has become supply line of arms and human trafficking that exacerbates local conflicts in the Afar-Horn.

Ethiopia: vigilance and dependency

In a historical perspective Ethiopia is positioned in its various attempts-ranging from cooperation through cooption to domination-to link the hinterland with the coast. The post-Adwa Victory Ethiopia had brought territorial and political restructuring of the Horn. Imperial expansion brought vast territory under its influence (Harbenson, 1978); at the same time froze trans-generational divide between Ethiopia and the remaining Africa, especially the fault line that runs between the hinterland and the coastal territory, Christian and Muslim, Agriculturalist and pastoralist. Moreover, Ethiopia epitomized tragic paradox of continued independence and geopolitical dependency on coastal territories and outlets under colonial or unfriendly power dispensations. Clapham pointed out these developments to have "[] defined the current territorial structures of the region and intensified the cultural and political divisions between the coast and the hinterland (Clapham, 2008b:138).

According to the same author, contemporary patterns of relationship in the geopolitical context of the Horn is mainly shaped by the continued independence of Ethiopia in maintaining "[] pre-colonial economic and political relationship far less interrupted []" that gave the region 'micro-regional' interdependence (Ibid, 137). The state of peace and security in the Afar-Horn and Issa-Afar relations is rooted in Ethiopia's quest to ensure access to the sea.

NATIONALISM AND THE NORTHERN ROUTE TO THE SEA

The Federalization had also external implications on neighboring states especially the state of Eritrea on account of party level relationships that dated back to the time of armed struggle against the Derge. Competing Tigray nationalism and Eritrean Ultra-Nationalism went

from post victory euphoria, through uneasy relations to bloody interstate war; and hence, reactivated the question of Red Sea Afar and Ethiopia's land locked status in post-1998 period making the Afar homeland the center of contention. FDRE's federal formula was looked with mixed awe of threat and suspicion that it was designed to create a pole of attraction for Red Sea Afar to rejoin their brethren in Ethiopia there by restoring Ethiopia's historical outlet to the Red Sea. This thesis adds, prospect of greater democracy and ethnic federalism might have destabilizing effect to the one party state (Abbink, 2003) of Eritrea, as the more democratic parliament in Asmara during the Ethiopia-Eritrea federation was abolished by the emperor on same grounds (Zewide, 1993:47).

Given the unitary and undemocratic system of governance that characterized the Horn states, the new federal state system in Ethiopia had imparted '*anxiety of democratic demand*'. Yet the inability of the Ethiopian federal system to address the promises of democratic political pluralism and the frightening ethno-political polarization set the context for Eritrean political elite to make miscalculations; inter-state war took center stage. As a result, nationalism took best of the Ethiopian leadership which up until then was harping on deconstructivist narratives for 'particularism'. Ethiopia's historical quest for access to the sea via the northern route once again discontinued and shifted to the south; outlets on coast of the Afar and Somali Horn states in general and the Afar-Horn in particular came under the lime light of national security concerns; that in turn inflated ethno-nationalist power coefficient of Afar and Somali nationalist in Afar-Horn state. Therefore, state nationalism and ethno-nationalism as complimentary and contradictory forces kept in tandem exacerbating human insecurity in the Afar-Horn. In the new geostrategic shift, Djibouti along with its Issa-Afar story emerged as the vital piece in the geopolitics and human security of the Afar-Horn.

Djibouti: Multiple fault lines and fragile balance

Djibouti, since independence has been facing keeping optimal balance among internal and external divides. It got trapped between, the Issa vs. Afar struggle and the interest of its Western patron(s) (France) and big neighbors. The struggle to maintain Issa dominance has justifications in their leading role for independence and is more populous, though the result of post-independence social reengineering. Immediate outcomes of regime change in the Horn have been observed in mounting communal violence as it happened in Djibouti during the wave of regime changes that hit the Horn hard (Schrader, 1993:204-206). It rekindled Afar-Issa direct violence at war scale. This conflict has got its roots in the history of

marginalization and oppression of the Afar people. Despite the nomadic egalitarianism and consensualism that characterized the Somali social system (Markakis, 2003), the inter-clan conflict among Somali clan families accounts to the highly ethnified politics and polarization of identity. One of the Somali clans involved in sub-national and trans-national conflicts with the Afar are the Issa-Somali clan. The continued dominance of the Issa over the Afar since independence of Djibouti and the trans-national character of conflictants groups links local conflicts to regional system of conflict. The consanguinity of ethnic or/and clan territory, consequently, gave internal conflicts and ethno-regional dimension expressed in multiplicity of issues and actors (Schrader, 1993).

The presence of vast uncontrolled territory and clan corridors expedient for rapid movement of people in case of conflict similarly yields to contraband trade and illicit trafficking of arms and infiltration of insurgents that beckons the involvement of states on grounds of security concerns (Clapham, 2008b). Therefore, the Afar of Djibouti are snared among web of multi-layered conflict dynamics; in all considerations elaborated above the Afar political gauge reads the highest contradiction and paramount distractive impact than any other conflicts in Djibouti that rendered the Afar inferior political role, social and economic deprivation.

GOOD GOVERNANCE AND EXTERNAL ACTORS

The nature of governance and external relations of Djibouti has major part in explaining the unabated political dominance and sustained political violence. Djibouti has maintained a semi-republican republic with shared legislative powers vested on weak parliament and powerful executive that legally formalized one party state through the 1992 constitution (Shehim and Searing, 1980: 209-226).

The economy of the republic is mainly associated with port-service; except small fruit producing state farms in the northern and western plains of Djibouti, no other production activity contributes to the national economy. Especially, nomadic Pastoralism is dominant. According to WFP report the republic is rated as one of the most food insecure states characterized by intermittent drought, famine and epidemic disease (WFP, 2008; ICRC, 11 December 2008). Similarly, 2004 and 2008 reports have rated Djibouti's status an extreme food insecurity and health crisis-that required UN intervention and national response to drought, and nutrition crisis (Lawrence and Hadija, 2004; UNICEF- Djibouti and Republic of Djibouti, 2008).

Another major source of revenue is foreign aid and growing sources of revenues from port services associated with (developments at global and regional level) its geopolitical and military strategic position.

France the patron state has been Djibouti's military guardian and economic benefactor. The Ethiopia-Eritrea war rendered Ethiopia dependent on Djibouti port that brought fortunes. Since 2000 Djibouti has leased the French military base for a US-France joint military operation, allowing US war ship to dock in Gulf of Tajoura, as part of the US led 'war-on-terror' and operation 'enduring freedom' that attached Djibouti's economy with the USD. The emergence of new benefactor and creation of symbiotic relationships, in addition to old ones, has introduced as much economic and military benefits as multiple foreign policy dilemmas and bridging fault lines that require careful equilibrium among actors and issues. This includes the US presence in the region projecting polarized power configurations; its Middle East strong ally Israel has an interest in Djibouti arid land for depositing nuclear wastes (Yasin, 2008) vis-à-vis oil rich gulf state KSA, Somalia Islamist radicals, Eritrea and its new guest Iran (Reporter, 2009; Medhane, 2008): the latter mortal enemy of the West in global discourses.

The Horn states have multiple memberships to multi-tiered constellations that, in case of non-cooperative orientation and objectives, contribute to tensions in inter-state relations in the region; this partly explain the absence of durable peace in the region (Medhane, 2004). Djibouti is member of a group of constellations that have at best non-cooperative at the worst adversarial relations; this includes Arab League, OIC, CENASD on the one hand and AU, IGAD, EASB, COMESA (Lunn, 2008: 42)⁸, CJTF (CJTF, 2008;⁹), and *La Francophone*.

Djibouti is also caught in the fault lines between Eritrea and Ethiopia, Ethiopia and Radical Somalia Islamists. The same is reflected at domestic and foreign policy orientations and its role in the region; in general Djibouti's role in regional relations is located between passive security consumer state and active agent of peace. In between its role is expressed wide continuum of myopic measures and well articulated stances: at times pro-Ethiopia, Djibouti antagonizes its big neighbor, for instance, it held the founding conference of the Ethiopian Wahabbi radicals movement, imposed unfair Port service charges on Ethiopia, even back in the 1991 war with FRUD it declared Ethiopia and Eritrea *faite accomplice* (Clapham, 2008).

⁸According to Lunn, Djibouti joined COMESA-Anglophone dominated organization to France-as response to the dominance of Francophone West African States in *La Francophone* which became source of tension that shows the need to craft stable balance.

⁹Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) is part of US 'war-on terror' in-Horn of Africa comprises Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya and Yemen as its members, and has been expanding its coverage since 2002 to encompass Eritrea; conducts operations and training within the Combined Joint Operations Area (CJOA) to assist Host Nations to combat terrorism in order to establish a secure environment and enable regional stability. According to Lunn (2008: 42) in 2003 it moved along with 2000 military personnel in to camp Lemoneir former French Legion Post owned by Djibouti government and since October 1, 2008 it has formed part in the Africa Command (AFRICOM).

In domestic politics failure to strike lasting balance between Afar and Issa, Issa and Gadaburssi, and Issa and Issaq is interlocked in reciprocal causation with afore stated relations Djibouti founds itself. The Afar struggle for substantive and procedural justice is situated in this context that, therefore, shapes and reshapes, and is by determined by more of not its working but other actors' out manoeuvre that have geopolitical undertones.

Eritrea: Belligerence: fear of not being 'great'

Eritrea perused a heavy handed state policy under a homogenizing dictum-'*Hade Libi, Hade Hizibi*','-one nation one heart-than any other country in sub-Saharan Africa. It shut down any form of democratic modality of expression, association, power sharing or participation other than EPLF/latter renamed as PFDJ regime. It perused policy of repression at home and militarism with its neighbors. Consolidation of Eritrean statehood and nationalism guided internal and foreign policy orientation that articulated itself economically grand vision of creating African Singapore, militarily emulated Israel and Eritrean national character identified itself with a historical duty of supreme young state. It defied the continental organization OAU and perused of military jingoistic policy against all its neighbors except Saudi Arabia (Clapham, 2000).

The Red Sea Afar had actively taken part from early stages (within ELF and later EPLF) to the end in the war for liberation. However, the post-independence state of affairs did not give them due recognition. Instead PFDJ from the outset persecuted Afar politicians, traditional leaders and denied them of self administration. The obligatory national military service severely antagonized Afar girls to accomplish their duty against cultural and religious norms of Afar. Still enraging to the Red Sea Afar was the neglect of the region socio-economic development relative to the rest of Eritrea; the Afar fighters who have spent their life in the struggle were not venerated in any way that their opposition was responded with inhuman measures, torture, extrajudicial killing and extortion. The most important economic engagement for Red Sea Afar, fishery, was prohibited by the state leaving them with miserable livelihood conditions (QAFAR-MAROO, 2008).

The war with Ethiopia brought the worst time for Red Sea Afar; their area were the frontal battle fields in the east that exposed them for great hazards of being suspected for spying for Ethiopian government while fighting for their country. After the war ended PFDJ has began massive imprisonment of Red Sea Afar that forced them into forced exile in Ethiopia, Djibouti, Yemen and Sudan (APDA, February 4th, 2007; Medhane, October 2008).

The Afar people are snared by multiple overlapping

factors that continued to deteriorate their livelihood and hence their security and stability.

LIVELIHOOD SECURITY AMONG THE AFAR

According to Jean Paul Lederach all conflicts constitute structural, relational, cultural and personal dimensions that are effects of immediate conflict presenting issues, and peculiarity of contexts (*in our case the Horn in general and the marginal political position of the Afar people*) and at the same time that are underlying sources, mediating and triggers of the overall epicenter (*where set of conflict episodes are embedded in*) (Lederach, 2003). The livelihood insecurity of the Afar people is rooted in structural marginalization and destitution mediated by ethnicity, bad governance and skewed resource distribution, often sustained by environmental fragility, triggered by climatic hazard and multi tiered violent conflicts. Thus, it is argued that livelihood insecurity has overall insecurity and instability correlates.

Security: classical vs. the 'New Security'

The classical conception of security underscores politico-military factors that are often articulated in terms of military threats to national interest and security. This perspective gives almost complete monopoly over matters of security to the state as a viable international actor; hence, the state appears as the sole referent and agent of security by virtue of which it dictates obedience from its citizens.¹⁰ Thus, it rarely in practice encompasses human security.

However, growing humanitarian crisis and violation, the death of millions from drought famine and the spread of HIV/AIDS, from non-political and military factors in post-cold war African brought basic security rethinking. First, the state emerged as the biggest agent of human insecurity in addition to non-military risks it endangers own population too. Second, the unilateral conception of security as states sovereign matter has become anachronistic; wars, conflicts, drought, famine and humanitarian-refugee crisis going cross-national indicated the imperative for common security frontier beyond state limits. Thus, it requires ending prohibitions, deprivations and threats that compromise the enjoyment of freedom

¹⁰The dictum that 'I protect therefore I exact obedience' that reflects state monopoly of power has got its ideological justification from realist theory of international relations and history of undemocratic rule. However, such statist and threat oriented conception of security in domestic politics and international relations could not sustain the fact that the state has unparalleled record of posing the greatest threat to its own population. The concept of new security which mainly focuses at the human element of security apart from the state-centric view developed in response to this theoretical and practical paradox.

and rights as well as comprehensive human safety and security. It also implied reducing vulnerabilities and risks involved in the fulfilment of basic human needs, freedoms and rights; this metaphorically is Koffi Annan's Freedom from fear and Freedom from want that requires addressing classical threats and ensuring peoples' right to sustainable development. Second, state security/ regime security concern cannot be attained unless otherwise human security concerns are fully addressed (Anann, 2005).

Therefore, security concerns have shifted from statist to more human security-oriented, from politico-military threats to more of socio-economic, environmental and climatic hazards; in terms of modalities from national to regional and international constellations. Hence, in here, the reference to security is made in the more comprehensive sense of human and state security; the realization of human development needs as human security is dependent on sustainable development¹¹ which in turn presupposes a state of affairs where peace is not an exception to allow livelihood security. Accordingly, aspects of HDI and MDGs are partially noted in assessing livelihood.

Political stability

Democratic governance is prerequisite of human security as much as it means rule of law, answerability, accountability, responsibility and transparency. Moreover, peace and stability require tradition of institutionalization and limitation of power by law, formalization of relations to regulate arbitrariness and spontaneity. Creating Impersonal public service and civil trust to govern the citizenry is of vital importance (Burman, 1999:185).

Accordingly, political stability refers state of affairs where group and individual interests and relationships are governed by impersonal enforcement of popular and institutionalized laws, norms, rules and regulations to govern behaviors, actions and reflections. This implies a bulk of issues concerning good governance and the protection of basic human rights and freedoms as well as freedom of participation, action and reflection, procedural and substantive rights *sine qua non* of equity, equality

¹¹Sustainable development addresses, in the spirit of the 'New Security', the attainment of material, physical, spiritual, psychological and mental needs of society without compromising the right of future generations to fulfil their basic needs by their own means. In terms of threats, it means the capacity of societies to fulfil their needs, with stand artificial and natural disasters without engendering other harms on natural, human and social constituency or their relationships. Hence, it presupposes a democratic political system wherein equity, justice and fairness are observed and formalized through institutional and legal arrangements. In this line of argument Amart Ya Sen's conceptualization of development as freedom (Development as Freedom, pop/CoP, 1998) and his conceptualization of insecurity as deprivation of entitlement are important developments in peace and security studies. What is the problem??

and justice. Therefore, the existence of democratic platform for adversarial politics and political pluralism is an indispensable aspect of politically stable society (Bruce Burman, 1999:36-37)¹².

Against this backdrop, livelihood security is one element of human security that is a core aspect of sustainable development in utilization, access and preservation of material and non-material aspect of a community's livelihood. If development is basic freedom all human beings are entitled to, livelihood is nothing but the application of such basic freedoms in a particular context (Sen, 1999:61-63; Barry and Stephen, 2002). Therefore, livelihood is an expression of human security/insecurity which reflects the type of governance and comprehensive security and stability. Nonetheless, livelihood by itself constitutes aspects of threats and vulnerability that are central to the new security approach.

DIMENSIONS OF LIVELIHOOD: AFAR PASTORALISTS

Livelihood refers to sum of available means, capabilities, resources, assets and strategies people acquire over time to reduce the risks, vulnerability and hazards in fulfilling immediate needs and sustaining long-term means of living. As strategy livelihood refers to the mode of access to and mobilization of resources to attain present and future goals; this includes not only degree of access to resources and assets of a given household but also capacities to manage risks and reduce vulnerabilities. There is no standard model for integrating livelihood perspectives with security and political stability; however, an attempt is made to relate the two dominant dimensions of livelihood ownership of, access to and control over assets on one hand and the policies, institutions and practices (PIP) (Sue Lautze et al., 2003: 18 and 77-78). Most factors that determine the long-term trend and strategy of livelihood and outcomes are determined by factors exogenous to households/groups' sphere of influence. Hence, the content and form of assets, access to and control over resources are inevitably influenced by PIP which require power over political decision making that directly or indirectly affect livelihood, choice of livelihood activities, response to vulnerability and disaster coping strategies (Ibid). Choice of livelihood activities and responses to hazards relate to insecurity and instability in reciprocal causation.

Assets, vulnerability, human security among the Afar

Assets refer to five types of resources known as capitals:

¹²Anthony Giddens argues that, investing trust invariably involves untying social relations from the bounds of exclusive particularism. John, Dunn takes it further asserting that it should enable a system to "deal with the freedom of others, to predict the behaviour of other free agents in a way that facilitates strategic choice and rational agency."

human, physical, natural, financial and social. Human capital shows the quality and quantity of people in a community in terms of contributing to collective well being; level of education, skill and technical knowhow, physical and mental health, energy and nutritional status as well as social network. Physical capital includes availability of means of production, structures, infra-structures and services for use. Financial is money sources generated from major livelihood engagement or any other subsidiary revenue generating schemes, including salaries, remittance and pension. Natural capital includes the quality and quantity of the natural endowment of resources. The fifth capital is social that relates to relationships, institutions and norms as well as networks of voluntary association and self that project hazard coping strategies. The greater capital in any one of the five capitals relates if not safety, but lesser vulnerability but still the degree of risks involved in a particular context determines the outcome of livelihood strategy (Ibid, 196).

Decline of pastoralist livelihood

Pastoralism involves mainly animal production and stocking based on communal ownership of natural resources; the allocation and management of which involves traditional authority in a clan-based system of social organization. A Pastoralist system of animal production requires two basic elements to sustain. First, it needs a multiplicity of ecosystems to allow diversified animal production, adopt and cope up resource base depletion. Freedom of movement and agility allow natural replenishment of resources (Getachew, 2001). Moreover, social harmony, synergy and the coping strategy are rooted in pastoralist production and reproduction system of freedom of movement and agility of choices. The stability of social, economic and political institutions and relations is predicated to sustainability of pastoralist livelihood. This fact makes conflict among the Afar as much economic and social as political. The decline of pastoralist assets and blocked access to them are major features of livelihood insecurity. Moreover, multi-tiered referents affect it to the degree national economies are influenced by internal and external factors. Continuity of Structural alienation and marginalization is universal of the Afar.

GLOBAL DIMENSION

The dominant discourse on development and civilization that knows not other systems of production, knowledge systems and social organization than market logic has set sharp contradictions between commercializing new economies and the pastoralist system (Melakou, 2007).

The asymmetrical and quantum Leap-integration of peripheral states to the global system has worsened off the pastoralist system. Global forces got fertile ground in backward and poor economies of the Horn to grab pastoral resources without a fight: history of national-marginalization and alienation has already done their chore. Yet, Public investments are not advisable in the periphery-in profit parlance. Pastoralists continued to be underserved, vulnerable and incapacitated.

National dimension

The marginalization of pastoralist has got central economic and political features. The Ethiopian state has maintained low opinion of low-land pastoralists since their integration to date: uncivilized, ungovernable elements sleeping over strategic resources of the state (Getachew, 2001). In light of their 'primitive' production system and the marginal place of their ethno-cultural essence and political role, pastoralist are minorities of the minority (Melakou, 2007). Hence, Pastoralism of the Afar could be said a peripheral knowledge and production system of a minority group that has fallen victim of double political marginalization in the sense that they are impoverished and incapacitated to resort to *the right to revolution*¹³.

Pastoralist land alienation in Ethiopia is the result of this process of double oppression. The Afar lost their traditional grazing lands to the state through the Imperial decree on grounds of failure to generate land tax to the empire (Harbenson, 1978:486; Bekele, 2006). The Derge did no better except yielding to ambiguous declarations of pastoralist use right that asymmetrically equalized the Afar pastoralist with any other new comer agriculturalists; the reform brought by the Ethiopian revolution could only be any different from the *ancient regime*, it cautiously approached the issue to win the legitimacy of the Afar (Bekele, 2006). However, neither it won their support, nor left their nomadic self intact or save them from new threats. Issues that kept being threat to viability of Afar Pastoralism like the Issa incursion into Afar traditional grazing lands, growing poverty, famine, destitution and political incapacitations have their underlying causes in land alienation of the Afar people (Markakis, 2003).

The Afar pastoralist livelihood was inflicted with unparalleled damage even by Development schemes (Pantuliano and Wekesa, 2008)¹⁴ that contributed to the national economy. This brings the aspect of

marginalization that involves alienation from decision makings that affected their life and issue of substantive justice: distribution of benefits and opportunities.

Marginalization of Afar Pastoralists in Djibouti has different dimensions. It begins from the rationale for the French colonial rule; the French interest in Djibouti has got nothing to do with its natural resources and agricultural potential; instead Djibouti's strategic significance (Schrader, 1993:281). Hence, pastoralists were almost left oblivious to limited changes that underwent in and around Djibouti and Obok cities that continued through post-independence to date. The post-independent Issa dominated (two in twenty two years) governments furthered the marginalization of Afar people, pastoralist commons in general and yet with much griever impact on Afar pastoralists. At broader divide the Afar share 30% of the total population of which eight out of ten live in rural areas that covers 2/3rd of Djibouti's total area. More than 85% of Djibouti's population resides in the two major urban centers of Djibouti and Obok where social services, basic amenities and infrastructures are exclusively centralized. The Somali ethnic group in general and the Issa in particular constitute 60 and 40% total population of Djibouti, 80 and 90% of urbanite population.¹⁵ In contrast to Afar urbanites, scholars like Scheder contend that Issa over all political dominance that guarantee continued dominance in over all life of the republic has got to do with their sociological majority status in the capital city and major urban centers (1993).

An aspect of dominance is reflected in the preponderance of the Issa in civil services, military, political power, private and public strategic service sectors like the ports; the informal sector both licit and illicit trade, trans border transfer of goods (replacing insurance, bank and transit) the Somali in general and the Issa in their corridor are dominant. Issa pastoralists whose geographic setting and political status in Eritrea and Djibouti is marginal, have viable place and role to play in such group dominated opportunities that provide with alternative mechanism of supporting their livelihood: financial returns from engagements as guides and offering security services for trafficking goods and commodities (Abdi, 2007). Such economic arrangements compliment subsistence Issa pastoralist livelihoods unfortunately the Afar are short of.

Afar livelihood in Djibouti

The Afars of Djibouti are located in the central pastoral lowlands, highlands and the North western pastoral zone

¹³Every democratic constitution has unwritten provision to be invoked where stipulated rights and procedures are not observed or citizenry is incapacitated to avail themselves of, John Lock in *Two Treatise of Government* conceptualized as *the right to revolution* is deemed justified. Double oppression, Amartya Sen argues, renders it impossible (2002).

¹⁴The report states that "... much of the land in the Awash valley in the riverine zone has been turned over to large irrigated farms. Land alienation continues, with 150,000 hectares reserved for irrigation schemes.

¹⁵The Afar in Djibouti city are located limited to the city quarters called Ariheba. The Somali-Issa majority are known for their capacity in trade and their strong social networks, even in education they have superior profile than the Afar that guarantee greater quality of human capital vis-à-vis the Afar.

near Ethiopia-Djibouti border. These pastoral zones have poor natural resource endowment with almost no sustainable pure water sources and watering spots for their animals. The North Western pastoral zone is the most food insecure and the lowest food purchasing power in the whole of Djibouti. The Central highland and lowland pastoral earn their main sources of income from activities related with urban centers, employment, pension and remittance from urban dweller relatives. In terms of assets in the highlands of Tadjoura pastoralists keep small size of cattle and in the lowlands camel respective to the ecologically favored species of animals. Recent studies have revealed that gifts from relatives' covers almost 10% share of minimum food access which exceeds access to food from milk production both in North West and Central lowland Zones (UNICEF- Djibouti and Republic of Djibouti, 2008).

In the highland pastoral zone food access from gifts constitutes the lowest which is complimented by very insignificant share by far less than the contribution from gift to the three zones. In general, at national level North West pastoral zone is the most vulnerable to drought and other livestock and human hazards. Next to livestock and livestock products, sale of the *Onga* (leaves of doom palm tree) source of finance that has, however, deteriorated due to over exploitation. In terms of physical infrastructures the North western pastoral zone is located far away and detached from district and sub-district centers, market areas and road network to sell their products at good price or to have someone in urban centers that benefit from pension and remittance (Lawrence and Hadija, 2004).¹⁶ Hence the zone is the most frequently affected by food insecurity and vulnerability.

In both lowland and highland Central zone most households are for most of their food supplies and livelihood dependent on pension and remittance followed by sale of fuel wood and charcoal for those communities along the main coast road. Although livestock production is the major livelihood engagement, but their products are of poor quality to derive good market return given the availability of high quality Ethiopian and Somali livestock available at a cheaper price in Djibouti market. This is mainly due to poor fodder availability and poor health condition that relates to the poor resource endowment and availability of physical infrastructures that negatively affected pastoralist livelihood. While dependency on

urban employment opportunity is dominant aspect of livelihood in the zone, due to scanty education coverage the Afar pastoralists do not have the required qualification or skill to secure viable employment/ a living. Fire wood as a strategy is further devastating the already scarce natural resource base that exacerbates the productivity and quality of livestock dependent on this very resource and hazards of drought that risks famine. In both pastoral zones discussed above human capital rated in terms of education/skill, health, physical strength (*determined by access to minimum food requirement*) is of the worst profile. The only skill, if any, available is rudimentary salt exploitation at Lake Assal. Self employment capability is restricted to firewood, charcoal and *Onga* extraction that appears not worth of even short term panacea, yet still worse, detrimental to livelihood in long run. According to recent study the Afar pastoralists of the two zones are reported to have been the most affected by disease and critical food shortages accompanied by a major national health and nutrition crisis (UNICEF- Djibouti and Republic of Djibouti, 2008:2).

The absence of Physical assets that include access to market, infrastructures and transport facilities that determine pricing, and hence, pastoralist trade of balance are rudimentary in all Afar pastoral zones with the North West pastoral zone almost deprived of any. In a country where rural livelihood in general and pastoralist livelihood in particular is strongly tied with urban-*monopoly of basic facilities, services and amenities*- linkages like Djibouti, the position of the two pastoral zones is an aspect of livelihood marginalization. To socio-economically tarnished pastoral livelihood this implies the double blow of poverty and destitution: in such ecologically fragile regions it set recipe for disaster. For instance, in rural Djibouti only 49.1% of the population has access to protected water sources out of which 30% are dependent on unsafe sources like unprotected rain water. The appearance of huge Acute Watery Diarrhea (AWD) during the 2008 major food, nutrition and health crisis in the two zones attested the high degree of vulnerability to famine and health risks that account to human, physical and natural capital negative outcome (Ibid,3).

Given the poor and unrealizable financial capital, poor and narrow self employment strategy and the negative pastoral trade of balance, the pastoral dependency for over 80% of house-hold access to minimum food requirement on purchased food items is another dimension of insecurity that include food shortage and far reaching impacts on other livelihood assets too. The global food crisis that caused 60% unemployment in Djibouti has severely undercut food sources and deteriorated, at least tentatively, social solidarity and family support networks most houses holds livelihood in the central zone depended pension and remittance from urban centers. During this major crisis 16.8% of children between the age of 6-59 months were exposed to Global

¹⁶According to USAID FEWSNET report, the only available response mechanism they get use of is their proximity to Ethiopian sorghum markets at half price than it is sold in Djibouti market. Moreover, the minimum food requirement of 2100KCal/person for both poor and middle households is derived from direct purchasing, exchange from salt and gifts. Milk production adds to the table less than 5% of minimum food requirement. Unlike other places in the country there is no school feeding (*one meal per child per day*) or any other direct food production like vegetables as in South Eastern Road side districts. Even so the North West pastoral zone seldom qualifies access to minimum food requirement.

Acute Malnutrition (*GAM WHO defined Critical Threshold is 15%*) and 2.4% of them to Sever Acute Malnutrition (SAM) at national level. In the North West pastoral zone GAM rate of 25% was recorded, which is the worst at national level 10% beyond critical threshold (Ibid, 5).

The acuteness of food, nutrition and health crisis furthered by the aridity and drought prone nature of the two zones that limit dependency on natural assets; rainfall is limited to 50-300mm annual range which is very insignificant to the average annual rainfall requirement of 300mm to pastoralist livelihood dependent on livestock production. The intermittent nature of drought followed by a brief period of rain that affected Djibouti for the last three decades has robbed Djibouti of its arid and semiarid once ideal climate for pastoral production. Moreover, the absence of fresh water sources and the curtailed movement of pastoralists across state boundaries caused death of livestock and made livelihood unviable. As a result, the average TLHR declined below 3.4% the required standard for a viable pastoral livelihood (Ibid, 5-8)¹⁷.

Social capital in both Afar and Somali Societies is major system of sustaining social safety and solidarity. However, multi-layered destitution and loss of livelihood assets up-on which social relations are embedded in have set it at a test. The greatest impact of the 2004 crisis is reported to have been the decline of social solidarity and familial support that relay on remittance (Lawrence and Hadija, 2004).

In sum, the decline and deteriorating level of livelihood implies greater vulnerability and hazards that risk of health and nutrition of poor and middle households. Under the new security securing such livelihood of chain reaction of vulnerability, hazards and risks in the context of non-existent or weak early warning system pastoralist livestock production which is most ignored as in Djibouti (Brass, 2007)¹⁸ constitutes grievance source of human insecurity. The incapacity of influencing decision making on distribution of resources, opportunities-*political in nature*-on the part of the Afar in Djibouti therefore is often cashed in to humanitarian crisis. In addition, the absence of any viable coping mechanism or livelihood strategy has caused the concentration of greater than 85% of the rural population in urban areas that provides additional tension to the already politically and ethnically charged politics of urban centers making the latter susceptible to

political instability and conflict. Moreover, the influx of refugees from neighboring countries exacerbates the pressure on urban centers. Refugee pressure from Eritrea, Somalia and Ogaden region of Ethiopia inflated The population of the needy in urban centers that unfortunately coincided with the Eritrean-Djibouti border conflict resulting in rise in food prices. Consequently, the incipient food insecurity turned into major health crisis and that in turn engendered the social crisis in Djibouti. Similarly, the World Bank has ranked Djibouti the most food unsecured country and high probability of social unrest next to Haiti (WFP, 2008).

In the Afar Horn great famine and humanitarian crisis are precursors of regime change; this is more often true when there are armed opposition groups rallying around issues of justice and freedom with the support of rival neighboring states. Djibouti stretched from north Eritrea's swing to supporting all armed groups in the region, south volatile conditions in Somalia and skeptical relationships with its quasi-state Somaliland add to it the Afar armed resistance led by FRUD or any possible urban social unrest that could win the support of any one of the above actors in destabilizing Djibouti. Eritrea's dramatic swing in supporting the FRUD, an ex-threat fought against by both Eritrea and Ethiopia, in post-1998 period and its continued links especially in the recent Djibouti-Eritrea border skirmish is a case in point (Medhane, 2008). More over the ethno-regional dimension of Afar armed resistance in Djibouti with state referent in the Afar-Horn has great a propensity of attracting Afar-Horn states and hence big power intervention in to the whirlwind of regional conflict the limit of which is hard to imagine.

Afar livelihood in Ethiopia

Ethiopian Afar pastoralists are transhumant; they follow periodic and regular routes between home base and satellite camps searching for pasture depending on the prevailing climatic condition. Such transhumant movement is governed by customary Afar clan laws and norms (the Afar *Hirta*) noncompliance of which is punishable by slaughtering of camel (the *Daereba fine*) (Yaynshet and Kelemework, 2004:136). Seasonal cereal production is also an aspect of Afar pastoral livelihood in mainly Lower and Middle Awash Valley, in some Afar frontiers facing Highlands of Tigray and Amhara regional states. Ecologically, there is no as such clear cut division among the Ethiopian Hari Afar; and yet, the Awusi zone and the Gebi zone located at Lower and Middle Awash Valley do face peculiar livelihood challenges. This is mainly the result of a prototype ecology-conflict nexus; on the one hand the high level of state mega project interventions since 1950s to date along with the introduction of the wild reserves and parks have decreased the availability of multiple ecosystems; climate change and artificial

¹⁷Livestock assessment made for four years before the crisis showed 40-70% livestock loss that resulted in major famine. The 2007 humanitarian crisis in Tadjoura zone of Central pastoral zone was one of the severely affected areas along with the Southern Dikhil and poor sub-urban areas of Djibouti: 20,000 people, including 22, 000 children under five and bout 60, 000 pregnant and lactating women.

¹⁸The author has indicated the centralized nature of the state and its public policy 79% of the urban and 97% rural population lives in relative poverty while the Issa dominated elites monopolize power, wealth and decision making in a context of polarized identity divide could reignite Afar grievance in to violent clash.

ecological imbalance exacerbated the shortage of resources; so does competition over control of and access to scarce resources in turn involving the Afar of these zones in violent conflicts with neighboring ethnic groups. The Afar at the frontiers of Highlands of Tigray and Amhara that includes the Afar of Kilibati (Aba'ala and Berahile in North zone) and Hari (zone five Afar facing Amhara and Oromo of South Wollo and Semen Shoa) are taken in one Kilibati-Hari pastoral zone; the Afar of zone four located between the largely arid area between Awusi and Kilibati zones from South and North, South Tigray and Djibouti from the West and East respectively is Yalo pastoral zone.

The Awusa and Gebi Afar had had profound pastoral livelihood before the advent of development schemes and the Issa. This accounts to the monopoly over the riches of Awash valley-absence of intervention, the abundance of wide ranging natural capital and the sustainable management of natural capital through the enforcement of the *Hirta* that ruled over other constraints of livelihood (Getachew, 2001). The Gebi Afar benefited from the cereal markets of their neighboring Amhara, Oromo and Argoba ethnic groups in the Highlands of West Hararge, East and North Showa. Financial capital and food security is mainly linked to sale of cattle and production of small cereals for own consumption.

The Hari Afar mainly live on small TLSU (of camel and goats) used to trek far greater number of livestock in the lowlands of the Gebi Afar sharing the blessing of Awash. Access to food is similarly achieved through the availability of cereal producing highland (Amhara and Oromo) neighbourhood and vast supply markets at smaller prices. While the Awash is the only fresh water source both in the lower and middle Awash valley, the Hari Afar are endowed with river basins and green watersheds and catchments of rivers from the highland of Showa and South Wollo. The Dessie-Addis Ababa road is also vital physical capital for sale of pastoral products besides its outreaching importance to health services in highland weredas (Berhanu and Gebregziabher, 2003: 71-72). Yalo has perennial rivers overflowing the highlands of Amhara and vast irrigable land suitable for agro-pastoralist production. During drought and food shortages, affected weredas send their livestock to their neighboring highland in Tigray and Amhara regions. This splitting strategy, however, during rainy season often fails to be effective due to their highlander hosts get engaged in farming activities that leave them no feasible land to graze at; at times live stocks become weak to travel and pastoralists are forced to sale at cheaper price in a nearby markets. Chefarobi in Amhara region Oromia zone is one of drought period destination for Afar of Awusa and Zone four to stay until Karma rain began (Ibid).

The Kilibati zone is located at south of the water shade dividing the lowland from the highland of Tigray and has

fresh water sources and forest reserves that have ample potential for livelihood diversification. The traditionally extracted tablet salt of Berahile provides financial capital and social capital in terms of interlinking the Tigray traders with the Afar.

The development of strategic infrastructures that linked the center with coastal outlets and inlets has superimposed itself on social and historical entities whose marginalized integration maintained conflict among themselves and the center (ሀዘን ወ/ቲ.ቆስ, 1956: 314; ቤተ-መዝገብት, 1975: 90; (Dereje and Hoennd, 2008: 107).¹⁹ Only in the years between 1956 and 2006 the Afar pastoral livelihood has suffered under ill planned and executed development projects. Not less than 10 000 hectares of grazing land from Golina in Zone four were used as state farm. The amount of land that disappeared from the Afar in to the commercialized economic system as of 1999 had reached 399 000 hectares this does not include parks and wild life reserves (*the greatest in all of pastoralist systems in Ethiopia*) as well as sanctuaries were established leaving Afar pastoralists of the Middle Awash Valley 353 730 hectares poorer than before (Berhanu and Gebregziabher, 2003). Informants from Lower Awash Valley reiterate the reserves and parks to have deprived them of vital dry season retreat lands and to have contributed to the violent interface with the Issa around the Hielaydegy planes (FGD-Awasharba, 2011; FGD-Amibera, 2011). Denial of accesses to such wide and socially placed (*because it is not used only for production, spatial variability of ecosystems in pastoral communities do bear social, religious and political services*) resource speeded up Afar livelihood down the slop (Beruk, 2006). Soil and environmental degradation is another dimension of loss of more than 10 000hectares of potentially suitable land from a total of 60 000 hectares in the middle Awash valley only. Out of the total 60 000 hectares range lands in Amibera, MelkaWerer and Melka Sedi only 32 000hectares were utilized leaving the remaining 28 000 hectares unutilized and inaccessible otherwise could have averted the death of livestock in Gebi zone (Getachew, 2004; APDA, 2006; Tefera, 2006).

The Absence of proper pastoralist and environmental policy introduced 11 years after the fall of the Derge regime has risked the invasion of more than 20 000 hectares of land by alien species of weeds that reduced human and livestock food access. Owing to the invasive expansion of *prospopis Julifora* (Dubale, 2008; Pantuliano and Wekesa, 2008) in the region in 1999 out of 1,215 255 people 204 115 were exposed to acute food shortage (Beruk, 2006). Moreover, the number of camel, cattle goat and sheep in an average house hold of six

¹⁹Imperial decree was issued in 1963 to arm the Afar-frequent victims of Issa violence-with 500 semi-automatic rifles (M-1) against the Issa. Similarly the Derge used one against the other until all possible permutations offer conditions are exhausted.

from 1981-up to 2001 reduced by more than 48, 16, 89 and 71.4% respectively; this left the minimum TLU per person-estimated at 4-5 TLU in the Afar-for the year 2002 was 3.98 TLU insufficient to qualify the threshold. The final effect of deterioration of livelihood in terms of food security measured against the annual average of people in need of food aid in a decade from 1993-2002 was nearly 163 500. Inability to access food sources and livestock feed due to local factors like the Issa-Afar conflict that left 75 000 hectares of dry season grazing land-in the *Hilaiedegy planes is just tip of the ice berg- a no man's land* (ANRS-AJSAB, 2007; ANRS-AJSAB, 2003-2006) condition is another dimension of livelihood challenges.

Therefore while conflict in the Awash valley triggered by scarcity in the face of shrinking resource base but among the underlying causes of scarcity lies the invasion of Afar and Karrayu lands by neighboring ethnic groups. Thus, conflicts in the areas bordering the Afar are effect of pre-existing memory of violence and contemporary food insecurity at the same time triggering and catalyzing episodes of new conflicts.

Policies, institutions and practices (PIPs)

Policies, institutions and practices are the second broader dimension of assessing livelihood: how for instances PIPs relate to pastoralist livelihood in post-1991 federalization of the Ethiopian state. The separation of the Red Sea Afar and the question of genuine autonomy of the Afar of Ethiopia notwithstanding, the federalization processes have empowered Ethiopian Afar for the long awaited self-rule. In terms of ending the divide and rule over the Afar, the new arrangement has won popular applaud which is indeed is worth of it. However, the redrawing of ethnic and administrative boundaries of the new federal and regional constituents, and the intervention from the center and the management of ethno-territorial conflicts (Assefa, 2007) that continued up to 2003 but did not outlive the party crisis in the TPLF block accompanied by the historical land alienation of the Afar are the major challenges of the Afar society and their livelihood.

While it remains logical to address the historical roots of ethno-territorial claims the cautious approach that excluded them from the bundle of negotiable issues during the transitional period has contributed to the escalation of conflict that circumscribed the Afar along shared boundaries. In effect, affected livelihood issues discussed above. In lieu of politicization of ethno-cultural boundaries (Nicol et al., 2000:11) that catalyzed conflicts, resource based and hence livelihood conflicts has got the impetus of not only intertwining politics with competing claims in Resourcing boundaries but also settling historical scores through redefinition of ethno-territorial

identity. This constitutes the aspect of transformation in major conflicts involving the Afar, particularly with the Issa (Mu'uz, 2010: 151-167).

At policy level the Pastoralist Community Development Program (PCDP) that emerged in mid-2002 has established pastoralist standing committee in the federal house of peoples representatives empowered to ensure the representation of pastoralist interests in the formulation of national policies; to oversee activities of eight ministries, commissions and agencies directly and indirectly; to ensure financing pastoral activities through affirmative action and influencing national poverty reduction strategy to benefit pastoralists as well as promoting their participation and empowerment (FDRE, 2002). However, the pastoralist and rural development policy's commitment to sedentarize all pastoralist in 15 years time is an aspect of continuity from the past unfavorable to pastoralists given the low level of work not yet done to prepare pastoralist for sedentary livelihood and other institutional short comings (Ministry of Federal Affairs, 2002). According to Mohamed Mussa's observation, the FDRE Pastoral Affairs Standing Committee (PASC) lack proper representation of pastoralist interests and vital expertise in the field. He attaches the 'sedentarize' orientation in the policy is much influenced by the inclusion of non-pastoralist and members with insignificant exposure to pastoralist reality. None the less, the realization of acute problems in basic facilities of health (Tefaye and Roy , 2006: 2)²⁰, water supply, natural conservation, range land development and livestock marketing are important departures worth of admiration. Despite the economic deterministic tone that prescribes economic development to resolve conflicts, the recognition of conflict as detrimental to livelihood is positive policy changes that have to be complimented with political and identity considerations, and more compressive frameworks of conflict transformation (Mohammed, 2002).

The Afar region PCDP and the regional bureau are well financed organs established to improve the livelihood of the people of Afar. Various local and international NGOs like Afar People Development Association (APDA) and Farm Africa, Save the Children UK are engaged in this very effort to expand social services and amenities to rural population; for instance, in health and education approaches typical to pastoralist reality (*movable alternative education and movable health service promotion*) are set in place. Moreover, Drought Early Warning System has been developed by external financial support up to wereda level to enable timely response to hazards. And yet, the existence of rampant corruption and absence of accountability and impunity

²⁰This 'encompasses rural base and sector based development strategy, decentralization and capacity building. And yet it capitalizes pastoralist settlement as the only means of securing pastoralist livelihood.'

Table 1. Destocking rate among major pastoralist groups of the Ethiopia by season and cause of loss of herd.

	Afar		Borana		Somali	
	Normal year	Drought year	Normal year	Drought year	Normal year	Drought year
Starvation	0%	19.5%	0.7%	13.1%	0%	15.5%
Disease	10.1%	16.7%	12.5%	11.9%	12.6%	7.3%
Sales	6%	6.5%	8.4%	8.5%	7.0%	5.1%
Slaughter	0.6%	0.4%	1.7%	1.8%	4.1%	3.1%
Predation	4.7%	5.1%	6.8%	6.1%	6.1%	4.6%
Others	6.1%	5.3%	7.0%	6.2%	2.9%	1.2%
Total	27.5%	53.5%	37.1%	47.6%	32.7%	39.8%

Source: Adopted from Gerald J. and Dorothy R. Pastoralist Livelihood initiative, Policy Brief, Number 2, November 2007. Freedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy. USAID/Feinstein International Center/Tufts University. Website: <http://fic.tufts.edu> p.1.

has opened door for embezzlement of public funds to enrich the interest of few elite. What has practically been done for the poor pastoralist without ways to influence practices done on their behalf to their detriment is insignificant. Lack of competent expertise to solve complex problems of Afar pastoralist continues to witness multidimensional suffering. Where there are better institutional and expertise like the Disaster and Drought Early Warning, hope is lost by the lack of sufficient personnel to carry out tasks that need to go against tide (Philpott et al., 2005).

In effect basic service coverage remained still primordial; the Afar of Afambo still trek twice a year 380 km to Amhara in search of pasture, children and expectant mothers die of malnutrition, absence of prenatal health care and delivery, absence of water supply and animal health (Rufsvold, 2007: 3);²¹ the very few are located at remote areas from the pastoral homestead; in sum, annually more than half a million people are needy of food supply otherwise they resort to desperate measures that include eclectic responses. At the center of the Afar response to failing livelihood stands their social capital known for its wide reaching networks of mutual support and kinsmen solidarity maintained and nourished by the believe in indivisibility and oneness of the Afar (Ibid).

Nevertheless, even the time old cherished value of social solidarity among the Afar cannot withstand the devastating impact of drought, outbreak of disease and massive livestock death often followed by humanitarian crisis. Let us look at the scale of the problem by taking herd loss as one variable of pastoral insecurity; the official data from Ministry of Agriculture compares the level of loss among the three major pastoral groups in the Ethiopia.

²¹Rufsvold's (a medical doctor) observations explains the Afar health condition with no further ado, 'though too intractable, too overwhelming to dispel even a small part of it [] just being present, fully present, may be enough.'

As clearly put above (Table 1), the Afar are the worst hit during drought season and the second in terms of the average that showed the failure of policies to support pastoral livelihood. The high degree of loss on the part of the Borana and Somali during normal season might be owing to the environmental marginalization induced starvation and disease.

Afar Livelihood in Eritrea

Afar livelihood in Eritrea has a bit diversified form of trade, fishery, salt production and employment in the ports. Red Sea transport and the coastal economies; due to the interdependence of these livelihood activities are addressed as one livelihood category. Sea-Coast and Transhumant Pastoralist livestock production is the other.

Livestock production

The Afar in Eritrea are located in the *Semen(North)* and *Dehub(South)* Red Sea zonal administrations ecologically at the Coastal Plains Zone (CPZ) in altitude range between 600 m to below sea level with a hot desert climate that receives less than 200 mm of rainfall per year which is around the Bahir (April-March) season. The Afar live in the hottest, especially the South Red Sea, part of Eritrea, the dominant majority of which are transhumant Pastoralism. In the face of harsh environment covered with sub-desert shrubs and grasses constituting kind of vegetation with scarce and unpredictable precipitation, Pastoralism is practiced within a tight corner to scrutinize the physiological and nutritional needs of humans and live stock to the very scarce water and feeder resources. Some area covered with volcanic stones near Djibouti and Ethiopia border is more of an archeological interest than agricultural or pastoral production in the sense one talks of the Middle

Awash valley or Aba'ala Afar. The areas proximity to the coast and hence long exposure to ancient caravan trade plus the inhospitable (መከንን, 2001;) environment corresponds to dependency on camel subsistence that indeed appears to rectify the Afar Mythogenesis:'. . .and at the beginning there was camel.' In the north Red sea zone, however, some form of crop production is practiced that amounts to tentative leeway to hazards than a livelihood to the degree Pastoralism is. Given the scarcity of resources such structure of hierarchy might appear to constitute inequality on matters of access and control to resources that determine clan livelihood. Yet, in reality social relation is hierarchical as such; there are other horizontal trajectory like the *Afar Mada'a*, roles and specializations that counterbalance it. Every clan weak or strong, sociological majority or minority has got some powers, social roles and division of labor (*socio-culturally defined specialization*) to put on the table in exchange for a joint alliance on matters of security, trade or social matters like marriage. Also, very tight social solidarity among Afar clans provides wider frame work of security (Chefena et al., 1999:480).

Livestock production is diversified depending on spatio-temporal variations climate and ecosystem: camel, cattle, Goat, Sheep and donkey: the first and the last are basic to support the transhumant movement, especially camel for its multi-functional milk production and drought resistant nature. Near the highlands the Afar trek cattle, donkey and sheep; on the Southern Red Sea zone camel and goats, few cattle are much preferred to other livestock. Although the major outlets of Eritrea Assab is located in the Afar homeland, services basic to successful livestock production like water, veterinary, range land development services are almost non-existent; or they have to trek their livestock a long distance far away from their home stead in which case huge live stock death is imminent; during movement conflict, especially when nearing the highland, with agro-pastoralists and yet, seasonal movement remained to be the major strategic response to major drought as so it is now a regular annual pattern (Dinuucci and Zeremariam, 2003:15). Therefore, seasonal migration has been way out with long established patterns and routes almost 3/4th of which used to lead and get refuge in Ethiopia (Ibid, 35).

The need to trek long distance and manage risks in this areas requires regular attendance and care of livestock by capable labor force; both quality and quantity of labor is a requirement. The quantity of labor refers to the availability, not in a way that requires high population or school dropout but of population undisrupted from livestock production by factors outside of the production system like state or armed group forced recruitment, war or migration. In the Red Sea Afar family labor is the main source except children, women, and the aged and handicapped otherwise there won't be any ideal labor to

be left behind; women and children back home take care of milk giving cows, herd goats and sheep. Community/clan /village labor is the next source to ensure production going; at last, hired labor (*the Ben Amir have class of 'professional' herders*) could be put in use (Ibid). Any factor that reduces the quality and/or quantity of labor in the family, the community or the market constitutes a great vulnerability to water and animal feeder that results in risk of livestock death, which is a precursor of food access shortage and famine in short run, and chronic food insecurity owing to the lethargic process of restocking (Abdi, 2007).

Health and education as requirement of quality of human capital, the Afar are the second most illiterate at the national level next to the Hidareb (94%) at 76% and the Tigre at 71% (Ali and Ismail, 1998). In terms of health, veterinary service is a rarity located at far distance travel and the government has planned to institutionalize and promote ethno-veterinary approach of the Afar and Ben-Amir. According to observers, the policy shift was not genuine appreciation of grass root wisdom, (*had it been so, children would have been allowed to in their own vernacular language*) but an overt recognition of unaffordability of modern Veterinary service and indeed the usual defensive mood of denial 'their side effect is dangerous' (Ibid). Human health is closely linked to nutritional status; according to WFP assessment of 2009 Eritrea is one among Horn states with the highest population with the lowest nutritional threshold which indicated high vulnerability to water-related diseases like AWD. The map of vulnerability has depicted the Afar-Horn area, including the Red Sea Afar in red representing danger. Taking into account the minimum level of pure water supply, the lowest nutritional level in a pastoralist context where early warning systems and infrastructures are non-existence, a minor change in market price of food items could immediately lead to acute food, nutrition and health crisis.²² A study by AMREEF Ethiopia has shown a study in the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Ethiopia Afar town near by military camps and settlements to have greater percentage of exposure to the disease. Most of the South and North Red Sea bordering Ethiopia and Djibouti, and major urban centers have been accommodating same increase in HIV/AIDS pandemic although awareness efforts have been underway for the last three years. The fact of malnutrition, illiterate and poor health pastoral Afar children is an indicative of not only the current crisis but also the overshadow hanging on the future fate of the next generation of pastoralists (AMREEF, 2010).

Eritrean government military policy in the Horn and the forced conscription and mandatory national military service is the major factor that deteriorated both the quality and quantity of human capital in a pastoralist

²² Health and Educn: the language policy, scholarship. . .

context. The forced conscription that does not take into account cultural and religious peculiarities and gender context of the Afar and other Muslim pastoralists has on the one hand caused disgrace to the Afar society by forcefully taking Afar women and girls to military training. People scared by state punitive measures of being caught of evading military obligation and being taken to military barracks in thousands have chosen forced exile to neighboring countries. According to some sources report is being made of the Eritrean government to have availed itself of the crisis in the Afar region of Red Sea to smoothly promote its objective of homogenization policy to mold the 'one nation-one heart' dogma out of nine ethno-cultural groups. A more recent press release by the Afar armed resistance group RSADO has threatened to avenge the eviction of the Red Sea Afar and the alleged transfer of ownership to Northern Tigrigna speaker Agropastoralists. Against the verifiability of such allegations, the migration of tens of thousands of Afar youth is a disaster to the quality and quantity of the human capital of pastoral production system.²³ Among Afar Academics, Yasin Mohammed Yayo have went far to show entrapment of the Afar as, '*the Afar in the newly born Eritrea are trapped in a situation, which is the worst of all tragedies [] either to flee to neighboring [countries] [] or to bear the unfair burden of the new Tigrigna-highlander political as well as socio-economic hegemony.*' (Yasin, 2008:62). Similarly, Abbink argues PFJD's move as an attempt to alienate Red Sea Afar from their kinsmen in Djibouti and Ethiopia (Abbink, 2003:12).

The social capital of the Afar is threatened with unprecedented scale in Eritrea in no other Afar-Horn states. This has got to do with the marginalization and destruction of Afar traditional institutions and their replacement by monolithic alien structures of power and control; also, severe persecution of clan leaders and elders revered for their temporal and spiritual power and influence for real or perceived dissent. This has been going on since independence by way of denudation to the destruction of the economic, social and ethno-cultural bases of traditional institutions, practices and social networks, and the human, value and material element that epitomizes peculiarity of the Afar. Pastoral land Tenure and institution of clan leaders and elders, whose power over and influence to command compliance /obedience is vested partly on tradition, values and norms, and partly on command over pastoral or other instruments of production and the social network of relations imbedded in there. Economically the new uniform Land Tenure *Deassae* (John, 1998) introduced after independence has dangerous implications of being overtaken by PFDJ hard core highlanders. In the face of changing names of towns from Affaraff to Tigrigna and the domination of Afar local

administration by individuals of the highland origin, traditional power domains are being effectively destroyed (Dinucci and Zeremariam, 2003:15). Plus the alteration of Latin Afar alphabet along with socio-Cultural domination of Afar urban centers by new comers is part of the homogenization agenda in crafting the new Eritrean nationalism that antagonizes transnational, as much as trans boundary, the nature of Afar political, economic and socio-cultural connectedness. The political alienation of the Afar from matters like local governance as at national level is an aspect of inhibition from deciding in any way on policy matters; the policy to accelerated Sederization of all Pastoralists in a post war state where there is no even enough service, access to food and basic amenities to serve the center is and an attestation of the incapacitation program (Ibid). On the other hand, sedentarization has political purposes to serves in dismantling the socio-economic bases of traditional Afar institutions; it turns local resistance in to rubbles. Gun is highly valued in Afar society for its cultural, security (of the family, clan and cattle) and economic utilities.²⁴ The forceful disarming of all Afar in Eritrea was devastating economically, morally and on matter of honor; among the Afar forcefully disarmament is as humiliating and disgraceful as rendering a man's worth (*gender correctness excepted*) to a woman, as so is to grab a highlander of his wife for which one does not restore honor unless avenged in death. This appears, making note of the forced mass conscription, to be carefully scrutinized agenda of impoverishing and incapacitation to render the Afar just one nameless key to the political symphony of PFJD (FRD, 2005:9).²⁵ The forced conscription of Afar in Eritrea is considered among the Ethiopian Afar as a stratagem of introducing bloodshed among Afar brothers that widens fault line with more blood until unbridgeable gap and animosity totally set us at each others' throat in which the Eritrean Elite has succeeded in concretizing the Tigray-Hamase divide through blood during the Badime War. This corresponds to Dereje and Hoehne observation that "State borders may also be used to consolidate collective identities as the identity politics of Somaliland and Eritrea show" (2008). This is indicative of the effect of war on Djibouti would have severed the second arm of Afar transnational ethnic solidarity.

Moreover, the separation the Afar in Eritrean from their brethren in Ethiopia and Djibouti by the War with the former and the military bullying on the latter that rendered it fatal to cross-borders as usual has on purely livelihood terms in general and livestock live stock production in

²³ This view is widely promoted among the following groups: APDA, APRF, AFAR FORUM and RSADO.

²⁴ Arms are economically useful in Afar in addition to securing cattle safety but also to do contraband as smuggler or an escort that required being armed. The monetary value of losing such highly values asset is economically damaging.

²⁵ Eritrea still has the second largest army in Africa. According to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, an estimated 1 million antipersonnel mines remain in Eritrea.

particular has prohibited the Afar of its traditional transnational network of resource sharing and ethnic solidarity which constitutes one aspect of social capital (Dinucci and Zeremariam, 2003:15).

At personal level tens of thousands of Afar women and elderly people are reported to have been robbed of everything they owe and after a brutal biting were forced to leave Eritrea to take refuge in Djibouti and Ethiopia. Forced eviction of the Afar from Eritrea had damaging effect not only on the displaced but also on the Afar of host country; according to informants from Berahile locality bordering Eritrea, they are affected by the destruction caused by the war and the immense economic pressure of harboring the Red Sea Afar refugees within the scarce arid resource base (Haydra, 2007). The arrival of 10 000 Afar refugees in Kilibati zone of Ethiopia has caused the loss of remaining scanty livelihood assets; refugee aid program came long after the economic damage on the host community was done (Afar-Forum, 2008:3).²⁶

Sea and coastal livelihood

This aspect of Afar livelihood has got a mix of modern and traditional, licit and illicit, national and international dimensions that includes trade across the Red Sea to the Arabian Peninsula as well as cross border trade with Djibouti and Ethiopia. The Tio, Baylul and Rahaita Afar on the North coastal areas of the Red Sea have long history of trade and even during the Derge period used to have own medium size motor boats engaged in trade and some form of illicit business and human trafficking to Arabia. The EPLF confiscated their belongings, put those who fall by bad fate on its hands into underground incarceration in the inferno of Danakil and imposed strict prohibition on any private rowing or fishing and practically adhered to shoot to sink on non-compliance. By so doing, it ended the life expectancy of a viable long history of trade and fishery livelihood of the Afar on the Red Sea. Even among the Ethiopian Afar community they bore traces of distinctive visibility and respect for their dignified past (RSADO, 2009).

Refugees from Tio in Aysa'eta indicated that state monopoly on fishing, trade across the Red Sea and Salt production has badly weakened Red Sea Afar livelihood (Bourhan, 2009). Independent reports too showed that, denying access to the Red Sea Afar, the Eritrean

government has turned the Sea into an exclusive state and foreign campaigns' gold mine earning millions of foreign currency. The war mutiny in 1995 with Yemen was partly a failed aspect of imposing the same inhibition on an international actor (FRD, 2005:9).

The ports of Massawa and Assab in the Red Sea Afar region are the most complex facilities that only from Ethiopia import and Export service up to the war in 1998 had maintained a return of 200million US Dollars per annum. In terms of employment opportunity the ports, oil refinery which was exclusively leased to Ethiopia oil import demand and the salt production were the not only national but regional medina of laborers. The Afar in the urban centers of the Red Sea and coastal Areas had been benefiting from engagements in and around the two ports; in the middle of 1990s early before the war Ethiopian job hunters had looked forward and secured descent life in Massawa and Assab which many of them retroactively regret the war wishful of going back should peace be restored. From the joyfully reminiscence of almost all deportees of Ethiopian origin from Assab invariable of their period of stay and their wish to go back despite woeful news of hunger and deprivation in both international and local media is much telling what a livelihood the war has coasted the Afar natives of Rahayta, Baylul and Tio' among others. Immediately after the war to date the port of Assab collapsed and did not recoil back to life thereafter (Many Deportees bitterly detest 'what an ill-omen of him-Premier Meles-to wish Assab, a camel water point!') (FRD, 2005:10)²⁷. Currently, only Massawa the second largest port is operating to support the staggering national economy of Eritrea. Salt production has been a good contribution to Eritrea's economy through export mainly to Sudan that also sustained large labor force, though few the Afar too, used to earn descent living. However, the major importer of Red Sea salt threatened by military arms of its salt provider scornfully reoriented its search for reliable provider deteriorating the financial and labor market of Eritrea since 2000. Hence, the financial asset of Afar livelihood in Eritrea which was mainly on these Red Sea and coastal livelihood activities and the diasporas remittance sources growing hatred for the system and the war and insecurity choosing to divert to their families destinations in neighboring countries, the possibility of gifts and social networking with those back home deteriorated. Add to this the impossibility of accruing from the political system like PFDJ, the total livelihood outcome the Afar in Eritrea continues to exhibit extremely negative outcome as discussed above (JRC, 2008:7)²⁸.

²⁶In a press release, Afar Diaspora Forum has condemned Eritrea's act as "Again, the conference condemned the appalling human rights abuse that is driving Afar out of Eritrea asking the government to urgently address the needs of the refugees in the Afar Region." According to John Abbink, this phenomenon of unbounded state lunacy has engendered the fleeing of the productive male that left "Afar settlements (villages) only with aged men, women, and children. We are now found under cruel suppression and our very survival is threatened."

²⁷Since the onset of hostilities with Ethiopia 1997 to date the port of Assab, the largest and well-furnished port facility and the oil refinery in Eritrea are left unused.

²⁸The report has depicted the worst food insecurity in Red Sea coast and warned against potential health and nutritional crisis. USAID, FEWNET, 2009 has assessed Eritrea in general and Red Sea Afar in particular as the most insecure,

In the final analyses, the type of livelihood strategic choices or activities people in such cases of failing livelihood to avert risk and reduce vulnerability contribute in filling the last piece of the jigsaw. Accordingly, the Afar in Eritrea has followed three major directions in response to their entrapment. The dominantly women, children and elderly near the border under military scrutiny and who cannot risk in trying to go across the border are sticking to what is left with the March brief rain restoring hope and the scanty food aid despite WFP's insistence comes after month of painful awaiting (Geba, 2008). Others have chosen joining various armed groups of Ethiopia, Eritrea and Djibouti Afar located in the buffer zones of the Afar-Horn. Illicit armed groups provided narrow way out of the entrapment between famine and political violence for few young men; however, growing insurgency intensified state coercion that in effect caused greater human insecurity. People in armed group occupied areas are purposely cut out of humanitarian and aid food in time of acute food and health crisis (Ali, 2009). Governments take armed groups' presence in an area as justification to respond obliviously to peoples' plight; even worse, armed groups provide pretext for and solicit military attacks against innocent civilian by state forces as might themselves yield to. Moreover, actual military confrontation between state forces and armed groups lays the public liable to be implicated for *faïte accomplice* that often worsens off insecurity (Harun, 2009).

The male adults of Eritrea Afar are migrating to refugee camps and relatives in Ethiopia and Djibouti. The Afar refugees in Djibouti have engendered socio-economic tension in its urban centers; for the second quarter of 2009 WFP has appealed international community to supply Djibouti with sufficient refugee food aid. Similarly, refugee influx in Shimelba, Dicho'Otto and Ayisa'eta camps in the Tigray and Afar regions has overstretched available resources and facilities (Siyum, 2009; ENA, 2009).

Meanwhile, on the other hand, Eritrea insurgents keep to swear more attacks; Ethiopia State Media hoists subversive TV program *Dehay Eritrea*; crisis in Somalia is simmering; UNSC resolution against Eritrea-spoiler; Secretary of State Clinton warns Eritrean intransigency; opposition in Ethiopia forms coalition (*Ex-FDRE President and TPLF old guard are in*); Assab resurges to be major opposition issue for the next election; (Addis-Neger, 2009; The Reporter, June 2009; Addis-Adimas, September 2009); Issa-Afar relations is no less tense

Afar livelihood is the direct outcome of marginalization, alienation and oppression of the Afar people that are embedded in historically memories, political structures and policies of Afar-Horn states that perpetuate conflict, vulnerability and human insecurity. Therefore, intractable

instability and insecurity of the Afar is marginalization, alienation and oppression in reverse process: imparting on those political structures, policies and practices that caused and sustained them; hence, human insecurity is the state of being helpless and defenceless in this reciprocal causation. Thus, the three vertexes of the Afar-Horn stab and link Afar-Horn states with political instability and insecurity, interlocking the local with the regional. However, its entropy and atrophy is also influenced by the spell of other factors. Therefore, correlate of ports, insurgents, foreign intervention and Issa-Afar conflict on the *Ebb and Flow* of (in) stability and (in) security of Afar-Horn is dealt below.

ISSA-AFAR CONFLICT DYNAMICS: PORTS AND INSURGENTS

Ebb and Flow in conflict Transformation underscore the relational features of various issues and conflict, presenting factors in conflict episodes at various levels of analyses relate to each other and in turn interlock with the epicenter (*the historical, structural and attitudinal constructions*) in reciprocal causation (Lederach, 2003).

The issue of ports in the Afar-Horn is rooted partly in the structural socioeconomic and geopolitical fault lines of the hinterland and the coastal, agrarian vs. pastoralist, Christian vs. Muslim, colonial vs. imperial. Engagements to secure as much freedom from fear of (*traditional*) threat and of access to the sea have continued to dominate Ethiopia's domestic and foreign policy orientation (Clapham, 2008). Yet, not up until the secession of Eritrea did Ethiopia got in to decoy of vigilance and dependency; especially, the post-1998 war period and its dependency on Djibouti port disclosed the degree of vulnerability its historical quest culminated in; more so is noting the instability of the region that precluded viable alternative access. Ethiopia's security dilemma in this respect has socio-economic and politico-security referents at local as much as at (*trans-*) national level. The Assab issue and the Issa 'invasion' of Afar land are bone of contention that engendered resistance against FDRE government, the state of Eritrea, Republic of Djibouti and conflict with Issa pastoralists, and political struggle in Afar regional state. Especially the latter is believed among the Afar to have impeded the restoration of traditional Afar grazing lands. Structural problems of pastoralist land tenure alienation as per the imperial decree partly contributed to Issa request for referendum on grounds of effective control achieved through arms (Markakis, 2003). Issa invasion in turn resulted in conflicts with neighboring groups (Karrayu, Argoba, Hawiya, Ittu and Amhara) and Afar clans.

Assab and Massawa (Eritrea), Djibouti, Berbera (Somaliland) and Bosaso (Punt land) ports are, as though undeserved, in the hand of fragile, unpredictable and instable states and quasi states wriggled by internal strife

acute food and hygiene problem, with threat of drought with high propensity of massive famine and humanitarian crisis.

and external threats. Their significance to regional and national economy is undermined by peacelessness and statelessness (Somaliland and punt land). Even so, they continued to be of premium importance to owners and clients alike (Dima, 2007; Byrne, 2002);²⁹ Djibouti had been mainly dependent on port services, remittance and foreign aid long before the war brought Ethiopia to its bosoms (Markakis, 2003). The Southern ports of Berbera and Bosaso are located in the troubled region of the quasi state Somaliland and the Northern Somalia, Punt Land; though lack security and proper effective control; they are the main outlets to Ethiopian livestock from Somali region and the only outlet to central Somalia (Abdi, 2007:87).

The position of these ports proximate to the bless and inferno of Middle East, the ample potential of harboring and falling prey to terrorist transit and the growing economic importance, especially Djibouti's aspiration to turn into the regional transshipment hub as well as the growing maritime criminal network in the Indian ocean (Somali piracy) have increased great power interest and presence in the coast (Shinn, 2002).

The ports are connected through net work of trade routes, maintained for several hundreds of years, with pastoralist and contraband markets in Ethiopia and Somalia traversing patch work of clan controlled corridors. The Issa corridor extending from Shinile zone along Dire Dawa-Ayisha-Deweale Triangle to Somali land is controlled by Issa-Somali clan Ethiopia and Djibouti; the Berbera-Corridor through the Harar-Jijjiga-Hargesa-Berbera route is controlled and managed the Issaq dominant in Somaliland, Eastern Frontier of Ethiopia and Somaliland. Both routes involve numerous actors from international companies (*Shirkades*), through clan security guards to livestock trekkers; these routes support the livelihood of hundreds of thousands of pastoralist as far greater number of contrabandists (Abdi, 2007).

The social and political structure these routes were constructed and they serve to relay is the junction point where Afar-Horn security concerns of the Afar of Ethiopia and Djibouti interface with that of the Issa of Ethiopia, Djibouti and Somali land. In similar fashion, the extension of the huge level of contraband trade to Eritrea through the formally barred traffic integrates all state and societal actors in these routes to the sea (Clapham, 2008). The absence of similar Social alchemy, of formal and informal commercial and infrastructural networks, has grave security implications at all levels that appear to seamlessly fuse: risk and advantage.

Competition over control of the trade routes and infrastructures connecting the coast to the hinterland has been part of the Issa-Afar conflict. The gradual

penetration and eviction of the Afar in the Middle Awash Valley by the Issa that brought the loss of Afar grazing land, the resultant misery and destitution has this competition at its center (Markakis, 2003). The unabated dominance of the Issa in Middle Awash Valley, in traditional strong hold of Afar, has inter-state characters as much local and national expression. This pertains to the differential political power coefficient of the Issa and the Afar, port services and security considerations. Ethiopia's dependence on mainly Issa dominated Djibouti port and in the Berbera port of Somaliland where the Issa has political representation have made the Issa more appealing to the government of Ethiopia. This is attested in the leniency with which Federal government matter-of-factly look at the plight of the Afar in the face of drought, famine and cattle death triggered by the confinement Issa imposed on them inhibiting transhumant pastoralist mode of response (Dereje and Hoennd, 2008: 107). According to the Afar claim, there is Djibouti government military backing the Issa invasion of Afar traditional territory and has established contraband hubs at Gedamaytu, Adaytu and Qundafuqqo on Addiss Ababab-Djibouti tarmac road. These towns are set in higher altitude connected with land bridges to the highlands of Amhara beyond Awash River in the middle, for the preservation of which the Afar are at cut-throat struggling, gives the impression of military strategists making than pastoralist commons. This is true in light of the intransigency the Issa stick to these areas, despite the absence of pastoral resources to survive let alone dry even wet season. One would ask why a pastoralist would stick to barren land unless he has resources to protect otherwise. The diligence with which government committed itself to provide water by truck to a contrabandist centres rings louder than a bell. Another possible common dimension is Ethiopian government common interest in recruiting the non-Ogadeni clans living in Ogaden (Hawiye, Dolbahante, Issaq, Issa, Gurgura, Gaddabursi) have often been anti-ONLF which is completely sponsored by Eritrea (Prunier, 2008). Moreover, Ethiopian government involvement in the FRUD vs. Djibouti war against the former, the Eritrea-Ethiopia joint military measure against same and the signing of the joint security and military agreement as per which Djibouti extradited Afar Muhyadin Muftah, deputy general secretary of ARDUF operating in Djibouti and other seven ONLF supporters even earlier than issue of the port (Tobia, 1996; (Amnesty-International, 1996; Yasin, 2008:36³⁰) opens even wider military-security considerations to make note of.

The Afar are dominant only in Afar region of Ethiopia; even so on matters that matter most, (*the Issa-Afar issue*

²⁹Eritrea used to get 30% of total refined oil from Ethiopia for using the refinery of Assab. According to Hugh Byrne, there were 100 000 Ethiopian Employed in Eritrea most of them in Red Sea port of Assab.

³⁰The imprisonment of the ARDUF leader had led to the subsequent negotiation between the *Ugugumo* armed forces and the TPLF and (400 militants) disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and end of the first ARDUF up until succeeded by the Second ARDUF.

is one), central government involvement is determinant. The involvement of regional executives and Ugugumo insurgents in the 1996 Issa-Afar major clash culminated in political purge and imprisonment of regional executives (Yasin, 2008). Uncompromising Political stance against the Issa is the strongest trump card as much effective as clan power to secure political office; such individuals though they end up in short lived political career they earn popular public support in the Afar-Horn equally as those insurgents resisting division and aggression.³¹ In short, local conflict of ethno-regional character interlinks to regional political equation: Issa-Afar conflict has come to determine who comes to power and who does not or who plays shadow man's job.

Afar popular perception has it that, the separation of the Red Sea Afar and the dispossession of the ports of Assab and Massawa has asymmetrically changed Issa-Afar power relations to Afar dismay; the Afar self-perception is that of a sacrificial lamb of a state rendered land locked by myopic political orientation (AHRO, 2008). The extreme end of this popular perception, cognizant of the marginalization and destitution of the Afar in the Horn, is that no state power even their mentor EPRDF government, the first to recognize their right for self-rule, wants to see strong and united Afar. The other end of the continuum, even the most optimist person tells literally same but with innocent self-glorification: united Afar may redefine the regional state system. This has also implication in the pan-Afar and Federalist insurgency such as the emergence of the RSADO and the *Arab-Ugugumo* (Prendergart, 2006). To wind up, the port among Ethiopia Afar is inseparable from their view of the relative deprivation they are in; hence it is the most popular rallying agenda for all Afar in the Afar-Horn to restore their alleged lost status of honor and security.

Ethiopia-Djibouti strong interdependence spoiled Eritrea and Djibouti relations that deteriorated into violent clash (AHRO, 2008). Given the non-compliance of Ethiopia to the binding and final decision of the arbitration commission and leniency of the international community to get Ethiopia implement it has set Eritrea to frustration: dissented against at home and abroad. Growing better achievement in Djibouti and future prospects of even far greater maritime investment in Djibouti port seems to oppress Eritrea elites with tangible loss over Ethiopia in the present and future imminent loss of maritime opportunities. As usual, Eritrea moved in to supporting

FRUD against the Djibouti government. It provided arms and training both to FRUD and ARDUF against Ethiopian and Djibouti (AHRO, 2008). As the result it turned the government security and military forces against the Afar of the Northern Djibouti, where the armed forces of FRUD are assumed to have taken refugee, exacerbating insecurity (Medhane T., The Djibouti-Eritrea Conflict, October 2008). For the second time Eritrean forces eroded the Northern Ras Damera region of Djibouti on June 2008 that appeared to look like the Badime of Djibouti on birth: Eritrea a mid wife. Despite various explanations and speculations, the confronting Ethiopia in multiple fronts, forestalling Ethiopia's safe way to the sea and compromising the future construction of the highway along the Bab-el Mandeb straight and Djibouti's effort to promote itself in to regional transshipment hub are plausible to this topics consumption. In short no real gains to Eritrea but gains secured on rivals demise (Mesfin, 15 September 2008). Ethiopia's premier must have smelled sent of same malice to make immediate warning against any threat on the safety and security of the lifeline to the sea which Ethiopia takes it up to her legal right to secure (Medhane T., 2008). Therefore, future Eritrea-Djibouti conflict dynamics can get Ethiopia into regional war and hence is a potent threat of regional destabilization.

The Eritrea-Djibouti border episode has demonstrated how the regional dynamics correlates to local conflicts: the Issa-Afar. Issa-Afar violent conflict erupted in Ethiopia a couple of days after the outbreak of Eritrea-Djibouti border skirmish on 8 June 2008: on the 10th of June 10 at Leedi Kebele near Mille and the 12th of June, 2008 at Adaytu where 30 Afar causality, 26 wounded and unspecified death of Issa side were reported (AHRO, 2008). The subjective versions of the story of the episode and interpretations thereof by the conflictants atr much telling about the grass roots security dilemma engendered by inter-state conflict, this time Eritrea-Djibouti.

The Afar version, the Issa killed two regional health workers in cold blood who were at Leedi Kebelle of Afar on a vaccination campaign and they took their vehicle; same day Issa attacked Adaytu village and inflicted the above mentioned damage on Afar civilians; moreover, the Afar allegedly accuse government army for attacked the Afar who came to collect their dead. The extremely emotional version of the story has it that Ethiopia government army is killing the Afar at home to console the Issa whose kin are under fire by the Eritrean regime which was also undertaking targeted killing of the Afar in Djibouti (AHRO, 2008).

The Issa version gave radical polar opposite of this; the Afar, in the wake of Eritrea attacking Djibouti, wrongly for saw Issa would inevitable recoil its arm to rescue their brethren in Djibouti leaving the Issa occupied hot spots on the highway unguarded; thus, they mobilized in

³¹Nonetheless, key informants indicated that the continuous cooption and disarmament of various armed groups up on securing political appointment in Federal and regional offices have put the popular assumption of 'protector of the true cause' under shade of doubt and even slander. Others suspiciously look at the ease with which powerful individuals commence and withdraw from armed resistance as secrete strategy of the regional leaders to keep the *Ugugumo* abreast to do the job they cannot do it otherwise as incumbents. The involvement of *Ugugumo* during the Afar-Karrayu conflict in 2004 inflicted heavy damage on Karrayu and on the Issa similarly supports this line of speculation.

unforeseen manner, fighters including police and security members; they moved in to invade and chase us out of our domicile. Tragically, the Issa conscious of their intention prepared strategic military fortification and they unaware fell victim of their own erroneous art of war and Issa snare. Government involvement is common Afar fabrication (Mohammed, 2008). The Afar capitalized on associating the government army with Eritrea linking with *the killing of the Afar in both countries*; while the Issa (*instead of emphasizing the killing of Issa in both countries*) pictured the Afar as opportunist Eritrean war booty collection. Both conflictants' effort to out maneuver the other in associating the episode with Eritrean government attack on Djibouti are indicative of the extent local actors attempt to manipulate Eritrea connection to score revenge over the other and avert insecurity.

Foreign involvement in the Afar-Horn bears partly due to the prevalence of regional and international sources of insecurity. However, US mission in the Horn in general and its policy on front line states (*Ethiopia and Djibouti, Ethiopia-Eritrea relations*) have fallen victim of its excessive witch-hunt military strategy: sacrificed the political to the military and security that often served the interests of its leading ally Ethiopia best. On the other hand, US has deteriorated the democratic pace of its allies at home and tarnished its image and relations in the region (Shinn D. , 2004).

In post 9/11 period American military assistance to Djibouti has increased forty times more than it received in five years prior. Similarly, the French shared military base camp Lemonier with American joint force and anti-terrorist force; financial returns and aid from both powers has boosted its financial status (CDI, 2007). Nevertheless, symmetrical to Djibouti's multiple fault lines and its fragility in keeping balance, anti-French, anti-American and Anti-Ethiopian states and non-state actors have posed challenges. KSA and Qatar responded against Djibouti's pro-American move caused great displeasure to its oil rich benefactors. These states kept on importing radical Islam into Djibouti (Schermerhorn, January 2004). The TNG-TFG politics of Somalia plunged Djibouti into the challenge of keeping a cautious balance among adversarial actors in the region. This was seen in many counts; mediating the Somalia peace process, especially for being chosen to set the first US military base in Africa antagonized Eritrean aspiration to win over American support; it made relations harsh; Djibouti befriending Ethiopia a sign of alliance on building to the Eritrea security perception. Eritrea in the 'coalition of the willing' was perceived by some analysts as disadvantage against anchoring the support of moderate Muslims in the region (Lunn, 2008). The indiscriminate elimination orientation against all Muslim opposition on grounds of 'war on terror' constituted a major setback that loomed over and magnified American foreign policy weaknesses on Eritrea: unqualified support as an ally and mere disapproval on its

political intolerance (Schermerhorn, January 2004). Keeping balance between France's dominant position in economic aid and military support to Djibouti in addition to the challenge of maintaining French-American equilibrium at home exposed Djibouti to persistent anti-French orientation of Eritrea. Such multiplying dimensions of disconcert contributed to the loss of peace in a region by narrowing areas of communality and widening divergence that often take other pretexts to ignite violence. Given the deteriorating economic and political conditions in Eritrea and the relative healthy advance and bright prospect in Djibouti, the Eritrean-Djibouti border clash in June 2008 could partly be a reaction to the isolated status of the former and effects of foreign actor induced polarization of positions.

Terrorism and radical Islam are aspects of foreign intervention that invite other forms of intervention in the Horn. The resurgence of anti-Ethiopia radical Islamic groups linked to the Al Qaeda East Africa in Somalia has made Ethiopia's frontier against Somali the Frontier of Britain, the US and the EU. Hence, UK support for protecting the Ethiopia's southern border and internal stability made sense to the UK: Britain harbors a large population of radicalized Somalis reported to have been taking trainings in the new center of Al Qaeda. Given the persistent terrorist attacks in Ethiopia in either border areas or i 2005-2008 over 20 – 25 bomb attacks in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia happily accepted western involvement in regional politics and security (Dewar, 2008: 7 and 8). The blurred boundary between Islamic movements and national insurgencies set the ground for justified state use of force in the name of ensuring national security and agenda of 'war on terror'. Eritrea unabatedly engaged to eradicate National Islamist Movements supported by Sudan that gave the former solid ground for supporting rebel groups in Darfur. Moreover, it has endangered gross human rights violations of Muslim citizens, which until then had only been raised by the EIJM and ENA, provided a new basis for the realignment of all PFDJ opponents (Iyob, 2004).

Further more, one major implication in the (*Afar-*) Horn almost in all states that justifies foreign intervention is aid dependency which, according to Alex de Wall, has 'democratic disempowerment' resultants. States are irresponsive to their people in as much strongly tied as to the aprons of paymasters (Prendergast and Thomas-Jensen, 2007). This line of argument corresponds to the various measures governments in the Afar-Horn peruse affecting good governance at home. This in turn affects conflict managements and transformation as well as the dynamics of insurgent politics in the region. 'Justified' resort to violent means of resolving difference and shrinking down democratic adversarial politics gained momentum from complications involving foreign involvement, dissident politics and terrorism (Lunn, 2008).

In the context of growing local grievances, mutual

intervention in the Afar-Horn has taken the form of instigating ethnic conflicts in addition to insurgent-state military clash along disputed border lands. The Eritrean Television ER TV hosts offensive propaganda programs of Ethiopian insurgents OLF and EPF in Asmara; reports have shown Eritrea involvement in Ethnic conflict in the Gambela region of Ethiopia; Eritrea's involvement in Somalia supporting groups fighting Ethiopian forces, analysts strongly argued, was with the intention of bogging Ethiopia down in protracted war; still more, sponsoring 'terrorist' attacks on Dire Dawa and financing Nationalist armed groups and Ethnic insurgencies are three major dimensions. Ethiopia reciprocated financing all Eritrea insurgents, including Red Sea Afar groups (Clapham, 2008; Berouk, 2008).

Afar insurgents have certain peculiarities so illusive to make categorical statements about. Most insurgents befriend the Eritrea regime to bring Afar region politicians into the compromise of certain political concessions minor to their program which is often accompanied by factionalism. The first insurgents, the South and North ALFs that resisted the Derge and TPLF respectively had only a brief period of friendship that turned into bitter enmity. Ousted from power leaders of the South ALF molded ALF into ANLF to take refuge in Eritrea for a brief period and joined PFDJ with an alleged armed resistance against EPRDF government while the remaining body of ALF joined the APDP ruling coalition; yet, their friendship did not last longer than ALF leaders' rejection of PFDJ plans for a common front in arms against Ethiopia during the border war. At this time factionalism hit hard at the core of the leadership sending one segment to Diaspora politics; the Habib Ali Mirah the ousted president segment took it back home to apolitical life. The ARDUF was founded in 1993 forming coalition out of the ARDU and the first Ugugumo. ANLM was the first armed group with popularity around Assab founded by the Son of Sultanate of Bidu latter succeeded by the ARDU in 1991 in Djibouti. The coalition to form ARDUF from the start set the momentum of zygotic division of the *Ugugumo* that continued to date. The factionalism in *Ugugumo* caused the emergence of factions bearing the names of self-appointed leaders prefixed to *Ugugumo*, as is the case with *Arab-Ugugumo* (Yasin, 2008). Thus, lead *Ugugumo* to the shadowy existence it is now in.

However, both successive factions of *Ugugumo* and ARDUF in their political programs underlined the unification of all Afar in to an independent Afar territory; they vehemently oppose the legitimacy of the state of Eritrea encompassing Afar territory within it; only during the kidnapping of Europeans tourists and their accompanying Afar is heard the alleged collaboration of the *Arab-Ugugumo* with Eritrean government. What might the independent Afar territory, they struggle for, constitute, include and exclude is totally ambivalent; so does the connotation 'independent': as to whether it

mean sovereign state of Afar triangle or not. Yet, the zygotic factionalism keeps on going; for instance, during the war, founder of ARDUF declared cease fire to join the Ethiopian side against Eritrea and disarmed the second *Ugugumo* to civilian life. Consequently, the *Mohameda-ARDUF* joined the government of Ethiopia to be state minister; *Salih-Ugugumo* succeeded *Mohameda-Ugugumo*; the former dissolved to be succeeded by *Arab-Ugugumo* which took arms for a while and in 2005 made settlement to form legally registered party known as ANRDF (ARDUF, 2005)³²; it was in turn succeeded by the fourth *Arab-Ugugumo* that continued maintaining secessionist agenda from Eritrea and Ethiopia, and recognizes no boundary of the two state. Consequently, it joined an opposition alliance UEDF; the new front warned foreigners against any attempt of entering the Afar to demarcate Ethio-Eritrea border before the kidnapping of Europeans and their accompanying folks (Yasin, 2008; BBC, March 2, 2007).³³ The cooperation of *Arab-Ugugumo* with Asmara did not last any longer for the group was shortly thereafter reported to have joined the Afar Ruling party in Ethiopia, APDP.³⁴ Another aspect of peculiarity of Afar insurgency is that they have very few fighters but of greater capacity when ever so needed. This pertains to having armed supporter from pastoralists where rifle is a matter of honor and livelihood. Afar insurgents are financially dependent on solely their own sources from Diaspora, community support and from small scale banditry against government facilities and traders. However, with financial support from a reliable source they would constitute formidable desert rangers. Moreover, their time tested experience in guerilla warfare from the cold war days and adaptability to the inhospitable desert climate makes them a significant force of destabilization in the region (Prunier, February 2008). Especially the chance of involvement in local conflicts Afar and other ethnic groups as in the 2002 Issa-Afar and 2004 Afar-Karrayu conflict is of immense destabilizing effect that awakens local and transnational ethnic pool. The Afar regional state and Shinile Zone are said to get use of their licit and illicit armed groups and transnational ethnic connections as reserve forces for

³²The Mission statement of ANRDF ambivalently indicates a shift from the ARDUF program of United Afar and framed its goal to self determination from the Ethiopian state. While recognizing the Federal system and its constitutional guarantee under article 2(5) of its NDR it made Article 8(1-5) detail description of setting up defence and security forces of the Afar state and Article 10(1 & 2) with strange tone talk of relations with peoples of Ethiopia as international relations which is set as foreign policy section of the program. The NDR gives the impression that ANRDF is turning the spear inside in a democratic fashion.

³³The Arab-Ugugumo fully adopting the vaguely defined secessionist program and denying state borders is full proof to the impossibility of winning the alleged EPDJ-support Ethiopia government media made public.

³⁴The Afar regional TV program of ENA has began to display the Afar flag with Red strip and a triangle added on it. Speculation has it that this could be the twilights of the days of zygotic succession of *Ugugumos*. However, without committing in to a historicity that determines future trend such a prognosis holds no water although the opposite view too cannot be any far better.

critical security situations (Markakis, 2003); in this regard the lingering Issa-Afar conflict kept unaddressed and growing Afar resonance can provide the condition for the worst episode involving these forces.

Ethiopian Afar insurgents are also different on their relations with various Ethiopian insurgents, the states and themselves that reflect the anomalies the Afar of Ethiopia. This is expressed in paradoxical partnership of principles for own state-Decentralization, for Ethiopian unity for Federalism, for Ethiopian Red Sea Coast Reunification, for pan Afar, for Pan-Afar Pan Ethiopian-Greater Afar land (Afar-Community, 2007).

Eritrea has its Afar insurgents starting from the ELF times; the ELF and EPLF were born among the Red Sea Afar region. Pre-independence Afar-insurgency in Eritrea had managed to inhibit ELF and EPLF presence in the Afar region. This relates to the availability of abundant arms and the war of independence gave the Afar state of *laissez-faire*. In Post-Independence EPLF had preemptively disarmed all Afar. Moreover, the TPLF-EPLF bond has rendered insurgency almost impossible modality of resistance (Yasin, 2008). The Afar Red Sea Front (ARSF) was Ethiopia's creation meant to reinforce for the eventuality of attacking Assab during the war border war in 1998. When the war ended this group was left alone, but did not get demobilized. ARSF men were tested against all odds to launch an attack over military garrison in Eritrea and proved effective; and won the favor of Ethiopian government. From ARSF raid into the Assab direction, it might be deduced they were promised for Assab. This is most popular view among Ethiopian Afar.

Their program, however, is not declared; some writers even describe them as Ethiopian military legion in Eritrea. Then after, they stayed low profile conducting small scale military operations without financial support from Ethiopia. RSADO found during the war time have gained Ethiopia's favor and received military training, logistics and arms to counter balance Eritrea hostility along the buffer zone (Prunier, 2008). This group have well organized and trained fighters and fight for democracy and self-rule within Eritrea. RSADO have joined hands with the ENA in the making of *Government in Exile* in Addis Ababa. The group has made public its military victory over Eritrean garrison the past three months. It has threatened to scale up its attack up until the Asmara regime quite killing and evacuation of innocent Afar civilians in the Red Sea region (The Reporter, 'RSADO, Eritrean Afar rebels vow to scale up military action' 18, July 2009). This aspect of Ethiopia's involvement in Eritrea through the Red Sea Afar constitutes biggest security threat to Eritrea that exacerbates the misery of Red Sea Afar. It also impedes the possibility of negotiated settlement on border issues and access to the Sea vital to Ethiopia. Although the Eritrean government is doing its level best to plunge Ethiopia in crisis, nevertheless, in light of the vitality of peace between the

two states to the regional peace, noting Ethiopia's long diplomatic legacy and as a regional hegemonic role aspiring state, it is in the best interest of Ethiopia to refrain from proxy for concerted diplomacy.

In this respect, the role of big powers and the international community in guiding to such a direction is blinded by monomania of threat mentality and terror anxiety (Shinn, 2004:1-8). On the other hand, such development of insurgency to stand for the Assab and Red Sea might contribute to the decline Ethiopian pan Afar insurgents; RASOD could have a part in the recent change around the last Ugugumo; in terms of tactic disagreements between the like of RASOD and other Ethiopian Afar insurgents cannot be affordable by any measurement. Strategically, undivided Afar power block in Ethiopia could provide stronger leverage for smooth changes to happen in Eritrea.

Since independence up until FRUD armed rebellion in 1992 that nearly toppled the government of Djibouti, insurgency, armed and clandestine resistance have been dominant mode of resistance by the Afar against coercive control. Promises for power sharing and decentralization failing to realize resort have been made to arms. A case in point is FRUD in post-1994 power sharing agreement. Instead the government focused mainly on inducing factionalism and the political calculus of cooption. The Mainline FRUD joined ranks with (*among four*) official known political parties. A new political military organization called FRUD-Renaissance emerged among old-guards of the FRUD (IONL, 1996). The strategy worked out well to get FRUD support for the current incumbent to come to the office. In 2001 it signed an agreement and formed part with the ruling party RUP: set requirements of getting its approval for participation in election precluding unrestricted involvement in politics; as a result the national election of 2005 was boycotted by all political parties, including those from the current incumbent's clan, and President Gale came to office in a one-man race accompanied by land sliding victory (BBC-News, 09). From then on FRUD renaissance continued to challenge as an insurgent; but, for all practical purposes, up until the food and health crisis in 2008, it shut itself and hibernated in the most remote North West part of Djibouti. Active military operations of FRUD most often synchronized with internal instability and external dynamics; in 1996 it resumed attacks against military facilities with PFDJ's support which was in showdown with Djibouti over Ras Damera. Similarly, PFDJ attempted to revitalize it into action before its soldiers eroded the border (Medhane, 2008). FRUD active presence in the area is reported to have exposed Afar elders to abusive treatment by Djibouti military. Other possibilities notwithstanding, if Eritrea action was a display of invincibility to Ethiopia then FRUD in this case has served as an internal threat to Djibouti in a context of major crisis hanging over the region had Ethiopia acted

too soon (Prendergast and Thomas-Jensen, 2007). All in all Djibouti Afar insurgency constitutes a minor threat, but with an external element in it might beckon the worst.

Conclusion

Nonetheless, unless factors underlying the continuity of insurgency that inhibited self-determination of the Afar people, Equity and Equality among Ethnic groups in Djibouti, good governance and livelihood in Ethiopia are not improved, regime change in all capitals cannot out date the vernacular of Kalashnikov. At state level decreasing Ethiopia's *land locked status-vulnerability* has to lead the resolution of Ethio-Eritrea border stalemate; the resolution of Eritrea-Djibouti Ras-Dumera episode could give the chance to try a different approach that could be adopted to Ethio-Eritrea Epicenter: the nature of the border lying between the Afar provides an opportunity non-existent in the former case where radicalized nationalism divides the TPLF Tigray and EPLF-Eritrea. The significance of Ethiopia and Djibouti in the 'war on terror' has the potential to overshadow on proper positions these states need to uphold for sustainable regional peace. Moreover, towards greater human safety and larger freedom domestic reforms and promoting good governance are mandatory. Interventions and aid conditionality in this respect will have a positive outcome if many emphases are made on the grassroots conflict resolution: basic to this is ensuring livelihood security and decreasing the vulnerability of historically marginalized groups. Should this require structural changes like land tenure and livelihood transformation the need for empowerment should define the contours of decision making.

Although Ethiopian Afar are by far better off than their Brethrens elsewhere, and yet, lack of good governance and government reluctance on Issa-Afar ever deepening conflict has the potential of alienating the most loyal periphery Afar away from the center. Similarly, the livelihood challenges of both Afar and Issa in Ethiopia, and state macroeconomic necessities unless carefully scrutinized, at least to benefit the pastoralist commons, current development efforts in the middle and lower Awash Valley could risk repeating previopus tragedies. Imbedded in the fore stated local, national and regional fragile relations, the tragedy of the pastoral commons in Afar-Horn is impregnated to pose state security threat.

Thus, efforts towards ensuring comprehensive security (of the state and humans) requires quick response to real human needs and averting immediate challenges through resolution of conflict episodes and transformation of structures and relations of asymmetry, inequity and inequality.

Conflict of Interests

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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