

## Chapter 5

# Conflict Plagued East Africa Region and its Global Impact

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### ABSTRACT

*East Africa is one of the most politically complex, unstable and poorly administered parts of the world. The region has been such insecure and chaotic since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Somalia is a failed state. Sudan is still in state of both intra and interstate conflicts. The newly born South Sudan recently is in a deep crisis that already has resulted in the widely anticipated ethnic based civil war. The recent terrorist attack in Kenya is a signal of the long standing of its vulnerability. Ethiopia has been in border conflict with its former member state, Eritrea in addition to their perspective domestic political ups and downs. It is impossible to find a single country with a history of free-conflict both internally and beyond its territory. Horn of Africa is the quintessence state of conflict and remains to be center of research. This paper further investigates closely these conflicts in the region and its global impact in such away the region becomes the focus of the major global actors and international organizations.*

### INTRODUCTION

The East Africa region, which this paper focuses to scrutinize, includes countries such as Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, and South Sudan based on established assumption these countries are, one or other way, the main contributors of the instability of the region. In fact all these countries together make up to 60% population of the region (Population Reference Bureau, 2013). The region is well known in chaos and void of sustainable peace and stability since, especially, the end of the cold war 1991. Its geo-political location was strategically the field of the tension and confrontation between the great powers by making the regional countries their respective alliances. During the Cold War, Africa served as a proxy area of competition between the United States and the Soviet Union, in the Horn—Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan—and in southern Africa—Angola, and to a lesser extent Mozambique, Namibia, and South Africa. After the defeat and dissolution of Russia the region stroke by changes in regimes. Ethiopia and Somalia, given their influential mighty in 1980s, were on the side of the Soviet

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Union despite their fierce enmity amongst themselves. The over throwing of the Somalia Government turned the fate of country in to state of chaos and instability which finally lead it to be a failed state. The nature of failed state is uncontrollable. It spoils the status quo of the neighborhood countries if not the region and the globe in many aspects.

Chaos and Conflict in the region directly affects the global social, political and economical phenomenon because of the fact that the region, geo-strategically, is one of the most important locations where globally enormous political and economical activities are taking place.

This paper focuses on East Africa as a case study to analyze if the theoretical assumptions are on the ground of substantial realities. Discussing on the solution of security problems in the region is not the objective of this small scale research nor to recommend the way outs. Countries taken as a case study are in focus because what is happening in either of these states cannot be confined rather it has direct impact in the region and the globe.

This paper scrutinizes to what extent this is true by analyzing what researchers come up with in relation to the established theories of International relations especially realism, liberalism and constructivism. It comes to a conclusion by asserting that the East African region is one of the regions that its instability is the source of destabilized and insecure globe.

## **SECURITY AND REALISM**

The Westphalia agreement, in 1648, gave entities bound by sovereign territory called states an absolute power as the most powerful actors of the international system. This phenomenon scaled up the concern over self interestedness in such a way that states become sovereign to self determinism lacking a universal standard of political legitimacy with no higher authority to regulate their relation with each other. What does this mean? This means that states are the higher authority concerning their security in a system where no other responsible actor or group of actors, with superior autonomy, to protect. This kind of a system is a system in which each actor is responsible for its security which raised the level of mistrust and created unhealthy competition.

Realism has been taken as a predominantly powerful and highly applicable theory of international relations. In fact this is more sounding when it comes to studies related to security, war and conflict. Security is always in comma where there is anarchy and a sensitive issue of states. States are self interested. National interest becomes States motive to make decisions on how best to secure them. This gears the state towards seeking and acquiring military power and to be strong enough to keep its national interest secured. There is no other best way for states to secure their national interest but by military might. In short summary, the realist paradigm insists that sovereign states create vital interests that may sometimes collide with the interests of others, often creating scarcity, or the perception of scarcity. This scarcity creates a relationship in which the two states will use power as a means to resolve their conflicting interests because scarcity represents a threat to state survival.

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