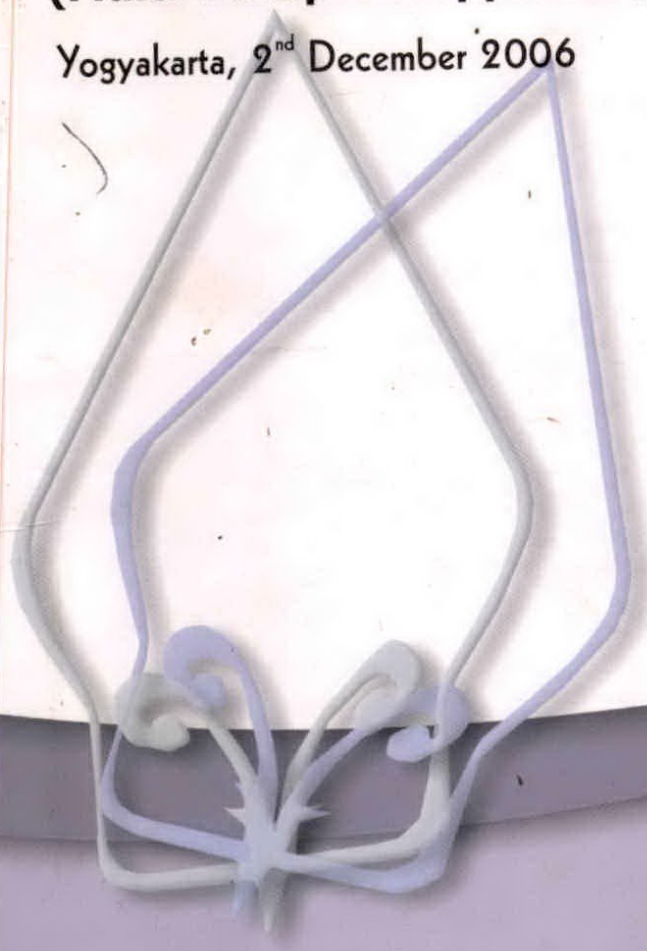


# Proceeding

## International Joint Seminar

**Muslim Countries and Development :  
Achievements, Constraints and Alternative Solutions  
(Multi-Discipline Approach)**

Yogyakarta, 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2006



**Organized by:**



ISBN 979-3700-10-6

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Universitas  
Muhammadiyah  
Yogyakarta



International  
Islamic  
University  
Malaysia



Education and  
Cultural Attache  
Embassy of The Republic  
Indonesia in Malaysia

**MESSAGE FROM THE RECTOR OF  
UNIVERSITAS MUHAMMADIYAH YOGYAKARTA (UMY)**

*Assalamu'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh*

All praise be to Allah SWT, Lord of the world. Peace and blessings on Muhammad SAW, His Servants and Messenger.

First of all, as the rector of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (UMY), I would like to welcome to the honourable guests, Rector, Dean of Postgraduate Studies (CPS), Dean of ISTAC, Dean of IRKHS, Deputy Deans and Head Departments from various Kulliyah, lecturers, postgraduate students of International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), and all participants in this joint seminar.

Academic cooperation between UMY and IIUM started several years ago. The cooperation between us is based on a solid foundation; both us are Islamic universities having same missions to develop Islamic society, to prepare future generations of Islamic intellectuals, and to cultivate Islamic civilization. In fact, improving academic quality and strengthening our position as the producers of knowledge and wisdom will offer a meaningful contribution to the development of Islamic civilization. This responsibility is particularly significant especially with the emergence of the information and knowledge society where value adding is mainly generated by the production and the dissemination of knowledge.

Today's joint seminar signifies our attempts to shoulder this responsibility. I am confident to say that this joint program will be a giant step for both of us to open other pathways of cooperation. I am also convinced that through strengthening our collaboration we can learn from each other and continue learning, as far as I am concerned, is a valuable ingredient to develop our universities.

I sincerely wish you good luck and success in joining this program

*Wassalamu'alaikum Wr, Wb.*

**Dr. Khoiruddin Bashori**

*Rector, UMY*

**MESSAGE FROM THE RECTOR OF  
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA (IIUM)**

*Assalamu'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh*

In the name of Allah, the most Gracious and the most Merciful. Peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W).

First and foremost, I felt honoured, on behalf of the university to be warmly welcomed and to be given the opportunity to work hand in hand, organizing a respectable conference. Indeed, this is a great achievement towards a warmer bilateral tie between the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) and Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (UMY) after the MoU Phase.

I would also like to express my heartfelt thanks to Centre for Postgraduate Studies (CPS), Postgraduate Students Society (PGSS), contributors, paper presenters, participants and our Indonesian counterpart for making this program a prestigious event of the year.

This educational and cultural visit is not only an avenue to foster good relationship between organizations and individuals and to learn as much from one another but a step forward in promoting quality graduates who practices their ability outdoor and master his or her studies through first hand experience. The Islamic platform inculcated throughout the educational system namely the Islamization of knowledge, both theoretical and practical, will add value to our graduates. This comprehensive excellent we strived for must always be encouraged through conferences, seminars and intellectual-based activities in line with our lullaby: The journey of a thousand miles begin by a single step, the vision of centuries ahead must start from now.

My utmost support is with you always. Looking forward to a fruitful meeting.

*Ma'assalamah*

*Wassalamu'alaikum Wr, Wb.*

**Prof. Dato' Dr. Syed Arabi Iddid**

*Rector, IIUM*

**MESSAGE FROM EDUCATION AND CULTURAL ATTACHE  
EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA  
KUALA LUMPUR**

*Assalamu 'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh*

All praise be to Allah SWT. This is the moment where implementation of MoU between Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (UMY) and International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) comes in the form of action by organizing this Joint Seminar. The efforts of both sides to implement the MoU are highly appreciated, especially, in the context of which both universities effort to enhance the quality of education.

Substantially, I believe that this Joint Seminar will bring many benefits. In term of the development of knowledge, it is a means for developing academic quality, for exchanging of information on academic development, as well as for constructing intellectual atmosphere at both universities. In term of international relations, both universities have taken part in increasing close relationship between Malaysia and Indonesia. RUM and UNY as well are using 'soft power' to increase bilateral relations among citizens which brings a lot of benefits for both nations.

Therefore, I hope that both RUM and UMY can make use of this program as a 'kick-off' for other programs in the future, especially in using UMY's vast networks with other Muhammadiyah Universities in various cities in Indonesia as well as IIUM's network. The support of IIUM for UMY also means a progress for IIUM and UMY. I hope such joint program will continue in future for betterment of both Indonesia and Malaysia. Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Kuala Lumpur will always support these efforts.

To our honorable guests, Rector, Dean of Postgraduate Studies (CPS), Dean of ISTAC, Dean of IRKHS, Deputy Deans and Head Departments from various Kulliyah, lecturers and students of IIUM, I warmly welcome you to Yogyakarta. I hope you enjoy your stay in the cultural city of Yogyakarta.

Finally, as the Attache of Education and Cultural, Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia, Kuala Lumpur, I sincerely wish you good luck *and a successful program with unforgettable memories.*

*Wabillahit Taufiq Wal Hidayah  
Wassalamu 'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh.*

**M.Imran Hanafi**

*Education and Cultural Attache, Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia*

## MESSAGE FROM DEAN CENTRE FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

*Assalamu'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh*

Praise be to Allah. May the peace and blessings of Allah be on the last prophet and messenger, our master Muhammad and on his household and companions. It is a great privilege for me to foreword this message to this wonderful event that is jointly organized by the Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (UMY) and International Islamic University (IIUM).

First and foremost I would like to record my special gratitude to management of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta for their co-operation.

In order to obtain comprehensive excellence, the Centre for Postgraduate studies has always facilitates postgraduate students of the university to achieve the highest quality in their academic work. This seminar is one of the many programs that Centre for postgraduate studies has to ensure quality graduates.

I would therefore like to thank all the participants and programme coordinators who have worked hard to realize this event.

May Allah SWT shower His blessing upon us.

*Wassalamu'alaikum Wr, Wb.*

**Prof. Dato' Dr. Wan Rafei Abdul Rahman**  
*Dean, Centre For Postgraduate Studies*

**MESSAGE FROM THE ACTIVE  
PRESIDENT OF POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS'**

*Assalamu'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh*

On behalf of Postgraduate Students' Society (PGSS), my gratitude and appreciation to our beloved Dean of Studies, the Embassy of Indonesia in Kuala Lumpur, Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta and the organizing committee of IIUM and the Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta for their huge success. Postgraduate Students' Society (PGSS) under the supervision of the Center for Postgraduate Studies (CPG) is pleased to host this event.

As I strongly believe that the initial stages of unity are the key to building the new generation, who will represent the future. Therefore, such programs, not only achieve the mission of our universities but to achieve the global mission and vision. Therefore, I believe today, we have to have understanding and then only we can appreciate our diverse cultures. We should acknowledge the different strengths and weaknesses through knowledge in this age of information. I am sure this joint seminar will initiate unity among the future leaders along with integrating them.

Thank you,

**Mohd Nabi Habibi**

*Active President Postgraduate Students' Society (PGSS)*

## MESSAGE FROM PROGRAM DIRECTOR

*Assalamu'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh.*

Praise be to Allah. May the peace and blessings of Allah be on the last Prophet and Messenger, our master Muhammad and on his household and companions.

Honestly speaking, we are pleased to be trusted by Postgraduate Students' Society (PGSS) and Centre for Postgraduate Studies (CPS) to organize the programme named Educational and Cultural Visit to Yogyakarta, Indonesia. For this, We express our gratitude to the management of both PGSS and CPS. This programme is of immense value. It has the potentials to promote intellectual endeavor, develop leadership capabilities and enrich cross-cultural understandings. We sincerely believe and hope that program of this kind will be organized in a regular fashion in future.

It is a great privilege for us to play twofold role in organizing this event: *as a host* and *as guest*. In fact, this is a fascinating experience to manage this event. Since our inception here, we have found meaningful interaction of students in an interweaving of cultures into complicated, yet beautiful, embroidery of social fabric. We are proud to say that this dearly loved university has produced graduates of high quality, who are distinct from those of the local universities.

Finally, we wish to express our special thanks to Bapak M.Imran Hanafi, Education and Cultural Attache of Indonesian Embassy, Bapak Herdaus, S.H., Assistant of Immigration Attache of Indonesian Embassy, Bapak Tharian Taharuddin for their immensely valuable assistance and co-operation in making this program a success. I sincerely appreciate all local committees at Yogyakarta, the colleagues and program coordinators and committee members who worked diligently to materialize this event. We wish to pass on good wishes to the PGSS for their valuable efforts it expended for this event.

May Allah s.w.t shower His blessing upon us.

*Wassalam,*

**Nasrullah**

*Programme Director*

**Todi Kurniawan**

*Co-Programme Director*



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**Muslim Countries and Development "Barriers to Development:  
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## The Struggle for Regional Dominance in The Horn of Africa; Its Historical Roots and Future Scenarios

Ahmed Omar Abdalleh@fahad\*, Nurhashimah Mohd Yassin  
Ahmed Ibrahim Kuliyah of Laws  
International Islamic University Malaysia

### Abstract

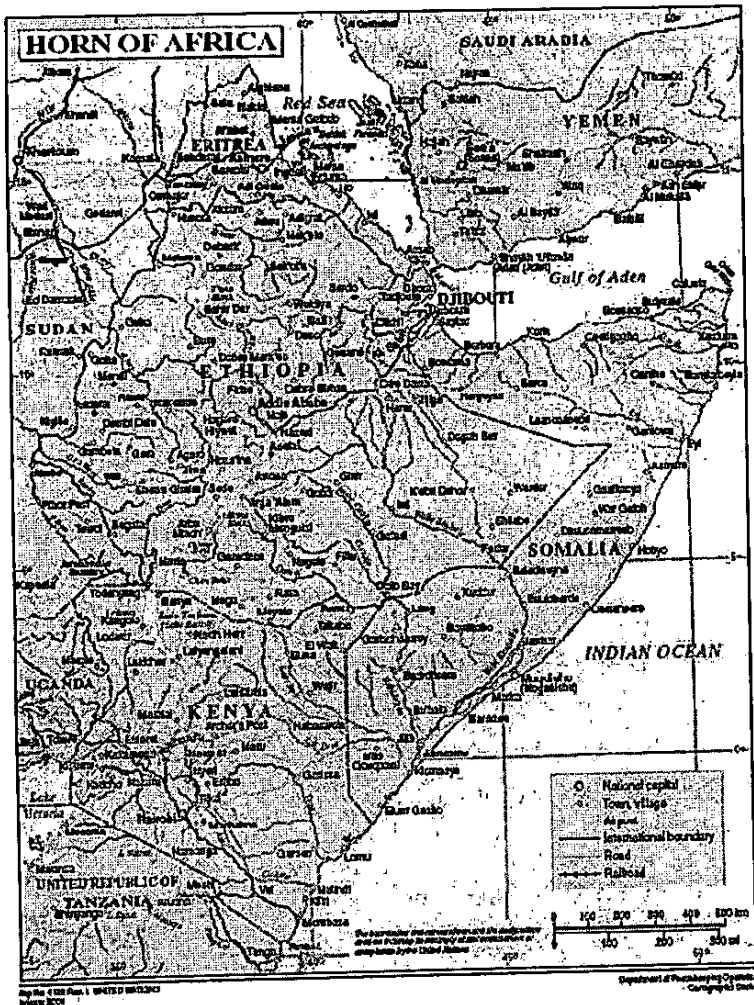
*It is a historical fact that the horn of African region was the second birth place of Islam in its early inception, even before Madina al-Munawarah, and also the second to accept Islam after Mecca. It started with the first Hijrah of the companions of the Prophet (PBUH), to Habshah or Abyssinia as it was known, and the subsequent conversion of the king Nagashi (king of Abyssinia) to Islam. With the expansion of Islam, the major part of Abyssinia had since then became part of Islamic territory. Ethiopia was the heart of Christianity in Africa, and the Ethiopian Church has a long history. Its formal name is the Ethiopian Orthodox Union Church. The church traces its history from about AD 330, when Saint Frumentius was consecrated its first bishop by Saint Athanasius, patriarch of Alexandria, Egypt. After the 6th century, however, Ethiopia was practically isolated from the rest of the Christian world by the surrounding Muslim power. The expansion of Muslim territory had threatened the existence of Ethiopian Christian Empire that had also faced its internal conflicts. After long struggle Ethiopia managed to redefine itself as a one unified kingdom again in 1889 under the rule of Emperor Menelik II. Since then Ethiopia had somehow manage to restore its regional dominance, having successfully resisted colonial powers, conquering more territories, and positioning itself as a regional powerhouse. But the losing Muslims did not give up the struggle to contain Ethiopia and regain the territories that it had conquered, that struggle is ongoing up to date. On one hand Ethiopia is trying to maintain the redeemed dominance of the region, or may be expanding it more to get access to the sea ports, and on the other hand there are neighboring states trying to resist Ethiopia and get back their lost territories. These states that have active confrontation at the moment are Eritrea and Somalia. Djibouti may also feel the threat though it is not imminent. This regional struggle has both political and ideological faces, and it is hard to predict the direction of this conflict. For that, this paper explores historical roots of the current situation, and the future scenarios that people of that region may expect*

**Keywords:** horn of Africa; Islam birth; Hijrah; Habsha.

### Introduction

In Abyssinia (nowadays Ethiopia) there was a Christian kingdom at the time of rise of Islam in the Arabian peninsular. When the Prophet realized that the companions could not take any more the pressure of Meccan infidels, He ordered them to migrate to Habshah (Arabic name for Abyssinia) because there was a just king there. They have got the protection of the king and thereafter Islam spread gradually in the region through peaceful means at first. The establishment of Adal Islamic state in about 13<sup>th</sup> century and it's continues expansion made the confrontation between the tow states of two faiths unavoidable. That struggle continued up today, in different forms. It is apparently political or territorial disputes, but there is undeclared ideological struggle behind it. That is especial clear in the case of traditional Somali-Ethiopia's hostile relations.

### Where is the horn of Africa?



## How Islam came into contact with that region?

During the first inception of Islam, Muslims faced tremendous pressure from pagans in Mecca, and that was when the Prophet (PBUH) realized that it was unbearable for His companions to stay longer in Mecca. And the Prophet had decided the companions to migrate to Abyssinia. Muhammad Haykal author of the "Life of Muhammad" said that the Prophet Muhammad trusted that his followers and relatives would be better off if they migrate to a country whose religion was Christianity—a scriptural religion whose Prophet was Jesus son of Mary. He was convinced that they would be better protected under the just king of Abyssinia. The companions conveyed a letter to the king Negus of Abyssinia from the Prophet (PBUH) which reads as follow: in the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Gracious, from Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah to the Negus Al-Asham, King of Abyssinia.

Peace, I praise Allah to you, the king, the Holy, the Peace, the Faithful, the Watcher, and I bear witness that Jesus, son of Mary is the spirit of Allah and His Word, which He cast to Mary the virgin, the good, the pure, so that she conceived Jesus. Allah created him from His Spirit and His Breathing as He created Adam by His Hand and His Breathing. . I call you to Allah, the Unique without partner, and to His obedience, and to follow me and believe in that which came to me, for I, am the Messenger of Allah. I have sent to you my cousin Jafar with a number of Muslims, and when they come, entertain them without haughtiness, for I invite you and your armies to Allah. I have accomplished my work and my admonition, so receive my advice. Peace be upon all those that follow True Guidance”<sup>1</sup>

So the companions were well received there, and they were given a full protection from oppression in Mecca, the Prophet later invited the king to embrace Islam, and the king did embraced Islam despite the objection of his family and the Church. When the Prophet received the news that the king Negus of Abyssinia had passed away, He offered the first funeral prayer in absentia in Islam ( salatul-Ghaib). Since then, though I did not see a recorded formal contact, the interaction continued through trade and business. Arab traders brought Islam to the coastal ports by the 9th century and founded the Islamic sultanate of Adal at Zeila, a port to the southeast in what is now Somalia<sup>2</sup>. The locals were exporting hides; skins, precious gums, ostrich feather, Ivory, the Arabs and Persian traders were bringing cloth, dates, iron, weapons, china-ware, and pottery<sup>3</sup>. These commercial interactions continued for centuries, and Islam spread in that region particularly in the coastal area peacefully throughout that period.

## The start of religious wars

After Islam's peaceful spread of that region for centuries, it had gained a strong hold on most of the costal areas in Read Sea and Arab Sea, establishing the Islamic state of Adal. The Islamic state blocked the Abyssinian state from access to the sea, and that constituted a major threat to the maritime trade of the Abyssinian kingdom as well as the strength of

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.muhammad.net/bio/ethopia.htm>.

<sup>2</sup> Microsoft © Encarta © 2007

<sup>3</sup> I.M. Lewis, *The modern History of Somalia*, p. 10

its navy. In one hand the Abyssinians had realized the threat, and they had to find means to stop that threat, as well as the gradual expansion of the Islamic influence in the region. On the other hand, the Islamic state felt the threat towards its territories by the Abyssinian desire to get back and maintain their access to the Sea. So, they had got to defend the state's territorial integrity, and protect Muslims there. Faced with these circumstances, war became inevitable, and sporadic clashes started in 13<sup>th</sup> century. In 14<sup>th</sup> century, Haq-ad-Din, sultan of Adal, declared a full-scale holy war against the Abyssinia. The Muslims were the victorious at first seizing more territories, and later on many had converted to Islam. In 1415 the Abyssinian fought back and managed to defeat the Muslim army, killing the ruler ( Haq-ad-Din), and occupying its capital Zeila, an occupation that did not last long, as the son of the killed sultan sought assistance from the king of Yemen<sup>4</sup>. He came back with an army and successfully driven the Abyssinians out of the Muslim territories.

The next episode of the major wars started about hundred years later, when the great Imam Ahmed Ibrahim al-Ghazi (he known Ahmed Gran or Guray among the Somalis) took over the leadership of Adal Islamic state, and started his campaign against the Abyssinians. This campaign started about 1527 and it had devastated the Abyssinians, the emperor appealed to Portugal for aid. Christopher da Gama, the son of Vasco da Gama, landed at Massawa in 1541 with 400 men but was killed with most of his soldiers in a battle with the Muslim army. Subsequently a new army equipped with firearms was built up with the cooperation of the remaining Portuguese, and in 1543 Grañ's forces were defeated and their leader killed<sup>5</sup>. The Muslims continued to struggle with Harar as their capital, but the glorious victories of the Imam never repeated, and the strength and effectiveness of the Islamic state had been weakened. But the raid and counter raid continued for the rest of the following centuries. The Abyssinian kingdom had finally experience a succession problem, and of much its territories disintegrated into fragment states. But Muslims were not in position to take advantage of the Abyssinian internal power struggle, as Muslims too had their own internal conflicts, which was mainly motivated by pastoral dispute and ethnic differences.

### **The reestablishment of the Abyssinian monarchy (modern days Ethiopia)**

In the mid-nineteenth century the fragmented Abyssinian states were reintegrated by strong monarchs like TewodrosII, Yohanis, and MenelikII. In late nineteenth century Menelike had succeeded in establishing control over much of the present day Ethiopia, even conquering Harar the last capital of Islamic state of Adal in 1890s<sup>6</sup>. But the king that was behind the modernization of Ethiopia was emperor Haile Selassie, the Lion of Judah who was described as the most hard-working citizen in his country<sup>7</sup>.

Ethiopia at the end shared with the other European powers the partition of Somalia, and later refused Somalia and UN demand to grant the people living the Somali territories occupied by Ethiopia the right of self-determination. It had also oppressed the

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<sup>4</sup> ibid

<sup>5</sup> Microsoft © Encarta © 2007

<sup>6</sup> Ethiopia; a country study, edited by Thomas P. Ofcansky and Laverle Berry, Federal Research Division Library of Congress, 1991.



demonstrators demanding reunification of their independent Somalia. The suppression of the Ethiopian government against the Muslim Somali people living the occupied territory was something that the Somalis in the newly independent state of Somalia could not accept. Within six months after Somalia's independence, military confrontations occurred between Ethiopian and Somali forces along their mutual border. This confrontation later escalated again in 1964 after Ethiopian air forces raided villages inside Somalia. There was a major onslaught by movement called West Somali Liberation Front (WSLF) assisted by Somali National Army (SNA) on Ethiopia in 1977 to liberate the occupied Somali region from Ethiopia. This massive attack routed out Ethiopian forces, and gain control over 60% of the occupied territory. This campaign continued for about tow years from 1977-1978, but the attempted liberation was denied by the Soviet and Cuban rescue to the loosing Ethiopian army where they supplied military equipments and more than 10,000 troops<sup>8</sup>. The Somali victory was therefore reverted.

### **The aftermath of the 1977 war**

Psychological effect, opposition of the regime, this later conflict had immensely devastated Somalis as they felt that their victory was robbed by foreign powers in favor of their adversary Ethiopia, where they had got no support of any country. They were highly disappointed, to the extant that some had turn to their government of Somalia in frustration and restive, notably when some of the soldiers attempted to overthrow the government in April 19678. In response to that, President M. Siyad Barre fearing for his government adopted the policy favoritism appointing his close circle of tribe and loyalties to the key passions in the army and government. That had ignited the feeling of distrust and dissatisfaction among other tribes. Some had opted to armed rebellion against the government.

Meanwhile Ethiopian realized very well that a strong neighboring Somalian state will always be a source of imminent threat to its national security, and the territorial integrity of Ethiopia. The history of Somalia and Ethiopia is marred by distrust, animosity and war. Suspicion of neighboring expansionism and political extremism is deeply rooted in both states<sup>9</sup>. Therefore, by all means there have to be ways to weaken Somalia, so that it could not think of invading or inciting Ethiopian Somalis to revolt against Ethiopia again. So, they have to look for means to incite internal conflicts within Somalia itself. But the Somali people are common almost in everything, they are all of the same ethnic, they are Muslim Sunni, Shafie in mazhab. The only way of doing so is to incite tribal rivalism, as the Somalis have quite a number of different tribes and clans. So they have utilized that, and supported those who were not satisfied with the government. The Ethiopian government provided training camps and other military support for the Somali rebels. In 1988 Somali rebels have attacked government position in the north, former president Muhammad Siyad Barre responded that by bombing the region including civilian populated areas, which led to a massive flow of refugees. That was the beginning of the Siyad Barr's downfall until he was overthrown in 1991.

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid

<sup>9</sup> <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/5201470.stm>

Since then, Somalia had plunged into a complete chaos and internal fighting struggling for power. The country had fallen into the hands of warlords. These warlords started to fight for their personal interests at the expenses of the innocent civilians. Definitely, that was a good opportunity for Ethiopia, as it became the sole authority to run the direction of the regional policy for its interest. It had adopted the policy of empowering any warlord who is loyal to Ethiopia against the other. It had imposed its position in any attempt of reconciliation either at regional or international level. It has got the opportunity to cross the Somali borders militarily at will, and quell any move that it considered against its interests. By doing so, Ethiopia is not worry of greater Somalia, at least for the time being, and it only has to worry about dealing with its internal problems. So, one may fairly argue that, at least for the time being Ethiopia has regained its regional dominance after centuries of struggle. Because it is politically and militarily superior than any other state in the region. And it is always has the backing of the superpowers. The only country that would have challenged Ethiopia is Somalia, but it is now in ruin.

### **The rise of the Union of Islamic Courts and future scenarios**

With the warlords controlling the capital and the powerless interim government is in exile, in Kenya. The Union of Islamic Courts has been established in Mogadishu, primarily to curb the minor crimes in the Mogadishu. But subsequently they have gained substantial support from public, and they expended their role as the only reliable law enforcement authority in the capital. This had invited the unhappiness of the warlords about this development that may alter the balance of power in the capital. They have collectively declare war against the Islamic Courts, with strong backing from the US that considered UIC, as a Islamic terrorist organization which has link to al-Qai'da network. But the outcome was not pleasant news, for the warlords and the US. The Islamic courts have decisively routed the warlords out of the city, with the public support. The warlords fled out of the city, and their militias disintegrated. The Islamic courts control most parts of Somalia. They are now squeezing the powerless interim government of Somalia in Baidoa. Ethiopia which is strongly backing the secular warlord-based interim government had vowed to crush the UIC if they attack Baidoa in which the interim government is based. Ethiopian troops are already in the Baidoa in sizable numbers, which clear violation of Somalia's sovereignty, but Ethiopia insists that its troops are there to protect the interim government, and to provide training the government army. In fact Ethiopia, had made no secret about its intention to fight with the UIC, even if that means to go into Somalia, ignoring the warning of the United States, its strongest ally. In an interview with Reuters, the Ethiopian Information Minister Berhan Hailu assessed: "We will use all means at our disposal to crush the Islamist group if they attempt to attack Baidoa"<sup>10</sup>.

The Union of Islamic Courts has also responded Ethiopia by declaring a holy war or Jihad against Ethiopian forces in Somalia. According to the news reports each side is massing troops to counter the other. With the region bracing for war, one may wonder why Ethiopia is making all these maneuvers on the bases of protecting the transitional government. We have discussed earlier the root of the historic animosity that existed

<sup>10</sup> "Ethiopia: Islamic Courts Take over the Interim Government"

between the two countries, which has ideological and territorial motives. Ethiopia is and will never be a true friend or ally of any government that comes to power, that assumption is based on the historical facts mentioned earlier. So, it is only the dictate of its immediate interests that led to coil around the transitional government. Ethiopia finds hard and unimaginable to survive beside Islamic Somali state, so they consider the rise of the Islamic Courts who are propagating the application of Islamic law in Somalia as a threat and present danger. And therefore, they can't let Somalia to fall into the hands Islamic courts. They know well the devastating effects that a holy war could have against their country, as it had at beginning of this centuries old conflict during Ahmad Grén's time. So, if the Islamic Courts manage to form a central government in Somalia, Ethiopia is worry that the Islamic government in Somalia may not compromise with occupied territories in Ethiopia and influence its large Muslim population to stand against the minority Christian rule and empower its internal rebel groups. That is apparently the reason why they are preparing to go all-out war against Islamic Courts under the pretext of protecting the interim government in Baidoa.

With all signs of war looming in the region, and fruitless diplomatic efforts not bring any result, one could imagine what the future scenario of this region would look like. We may broadly categorize the future scenarios into two. One possible and better scenario would be the success of diplomatic effort that could calm down the tension. But the success of that diplomatic effort would depend on Ethiopian's adherence to the regional and international appeals not to meddle and stay out of the Somalia's internal politics, and to withdraw its troops out of the Somali border. It also equally important that the Islamic Courts and the interim government to end the hostility and come into terms to form a unity government that represents all, and merge both the government and Islamic courts militia as a one national army. The Islamic courts should also convince Ethiopia and the rest of the world that they are threat to anyone. The government should eventually engage negotiations with the other regional authorities to bring about the state of Somalia again. Of course that would require sweltering efforts, but it is indispensable.

The other scenario would the failure of diplomatic negotiations, and start of war. If the later happen (we hope it will not happen), it will be disastrous to the people who have suffered enough under the warlords and natural disastrous. It will be dangerous not only to Somalia, but to the whole region as well, as the neighboring countries may be flooded with more refugees. And the fighting may spread to other countries and become regional conflicts. This assumption has its own reasons; the fact that Ethiopia has sizable number of Somalis has to be taken into account. Because other armed rebels within Ethiopian border including Somali ethnic rebel group may side with Islamic Courts if Ethiopia initiate its war in Somalia. The other possibility is, Eritrea may use Somalia as a proxy to fight with its traditional enemy Ethiopia, or may even open a new front in its disputed border with Ethiopia, taking advantage of the situation. The war against Islamic Courts would be considered by many Muslims in the world as a war against Islam, as Ethiopia is Christian state, and that may attract many volunteers to pour into Somalia to fight along side Somalis against Ethiopia. That fact may eventually change the war into a global phenomenon. It seems that no one will benefit from war if it starts under these circumstances, but rather the dream of dominance may at the end drag into disastrous consequence. So lets hope that this unpleasant scenario will not be

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