Mapping National Security Interests in the Horn of Africa Summary Report

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• National security interests in the Horn of Africa reflect a complex interplay of “traditional” security interests and other national interests defined by the political elites. These other interests include economic incentives, trade and development goals, regional influence, concerns of ideology and identity, as well as the personal ambitions and relationships of political decision makers.

• Regional actors’ perceptions of other states’ national security interests in conflicts in the Horn of Africa can vary greatly, as do their views on how useful multilateral organisations are at addressing security crises in the region. To what extent and under which conditions states are able, and willing, to cooperate in frameworks such as AMISOM is unclear.

• This report makes a case for strengthening political dialogue on national security interests in the Horn of Africa with the aim to identify and build on converging interests of regional actors, and to address competing interests where they hinder a cooperative approach to conflict in the Horn of Africa.
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<tr>
<td>AMISOM</td>
<td>African Union Mission in Somalia</td>
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<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
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<td>AU HIP</td>
<td>African Union High-Level Implementation Panel on Sudan</td>
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<td>CAR</td>
<td>Central African Republic</td>
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<td>CFA</td>
<td>The Nile Basin Cooperate Framework Agreement</td>
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<td>CPA</td>
<td>Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Government of Sudan and the SPLM/A</td>
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<td>DRC</td>
<td>Democratic Republic of the Congo</td>
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<td>EAC</td>
<td>East African Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>GERD</td>
<td>Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam</td>
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<td>HOA</td>
<td>Horn of Africa</td>
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<td>ICC</td>
<td>International Criminal Court</td>
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<td>IGAD</td>
<td>Intergovernmental Authority on Development</td>
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<td>IGASOM</td>
<td>IGAD Peace Support Mission to Somalia</td>
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<td>LAPSSET</td>
<td>Lamu Port Southern Sudan - Ethiopian Transport Corridor</td>
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<tr>
<td>LRA</td>
<td>Lord’s Resistance Army</td>
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<td>NBI</td>
<td>Nile Basin Initiative</td>
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<td>RECs</td>
<td>Regional Economic Communities</td>
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<td>SADC</td>
<td>Southern African Development Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPLM/A</td>
<td>Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army</td>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>UNAMID</td>
<td>United Nations Mission in Darfur</td>
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<td>UNISFA</td>
<td>United National Interim Security Force for Abyei</td>
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<td>UNMISS</td>
<td>United Nations Mission in South Sudan</td>
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1. Introduction

Regional responses to security crises in the Horn of Africa (HOA)\(^1\) take place on the backdrop of a long and complicated history of conflict in the region, including interventions by neighbouring states, border conflicts and the support of insurgencies in neighbouring countries. In response to insecurity and threatened instability in the region, many states in the HOA – foremost Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda – have intervened militarily in intrastate conflicts. Recent examples are Ethiopia’s intervention in Somalia in 2006, Kenya’s intervention in Somalia in 2011, and Uganda’s intervention in South Sudan in December 2013. States in the region have also played a key role in mediating peace agreements, such as the 2005 Sudanese CPA that paved the way for the South Sudanese independence referendum. The HOA has been described as a “regional security complex”, in which the security problems of each country impact on the security of all.\(^2\) The decades of conflict in the HOA have resulted in deep-rooted mistrust amongst the actors in the region. Foreign policy decisions are consequently often based on narrowly defined national security interests of individual states.

Despite this, however, a tentative trend towards more regional cooperation between states in response to security crises in the HOA can be observed. Governments in the HOA have expanded multilateral regional organizations and mechanisms significantly over the last two decades, and increasingly use them to respond to conflict in the region by facilitating mediation between conflict parties (e.g. the current mediation process led by Ethiopia and Kenya to end the civil war in South Sudan) or by contributing to multilateral peace operations (e.g. Ethiopian, Kenyan, and Ugandan troops in Somalia under the auspices of AMISOM).

While the national security interests of individual states are articulated in closed discussions in these regional fora, there is little – and in some states no – public debate or discussion on national security interests in the region. This situation is seen to limit the possibilities for increased cooperation in response to security crises in the HOA. An open and inclusive debate on national security interests could increase transparency and thereby build trust between actors in the region, enabling them to identify areas in which cooperation is realistic, and address competing interests in areas in which these hinder a cooperative approach to regional security crises.

In 2013 the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) Addis Ababa Office launched the project “Mapping National Security Interests in the Horn of Africa”, which seeks to address this challenge and to support a more open and transparent political dialogue on the topic. Between August and November 2013, FES Addis Ababa facilitated roundtable discussions and interviews in Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda, which focused on the national

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\(^1\) The HOA is defined here to include the states of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda. The project also includes Tanzania, a state that would otherwise be considered part of East Africa, in order to explore its involvement in the HOA and how it is affected by conflicts in the region.

security interests of countries in the HOA with regard to security crises in the region. Unfortunately, FES was not able to implement roundtable discussions in Djibouti, Eritrea and Somalia in the framework of this project. FES Addis Ababa worked in cooperation with three international experts who moderated the discussions, Sally Healy (Rift Valley Institute), Prof. Ulf Engel (University of Leipzig), and Dr Jonathan Fisher (University of Birmingham), and the other FES offices in Eastern Africa: FES Dar es Salaam, FES Juba, FES Kampala, FES Khartoum, and FES Nairobi. The participants of the roundtable discussions and interviews were policy makers and advisors, as well as independent experts and academics from the respective countries.

This discussion series has focused on assessing the interests and perspectives of state actors in response to two major security concerns in the region: Somalia and the conflict between Sudan and South Sudan. In addition, the roundtable discussions and interviews addressed the perspectives of these actors on regional institutions and regional approaches to conflict resolution, as well as touching on additional regional security concerns and areas of cooperation, such as conflict in the Great Lakes Region and the use of the Nile Waters. Developments in security and economic regionalism were also addressed. As a follow-up to the roundtable discussions and interviews in the countries listed above, FES Addis Ababa facilitated a small expert meeting in Addis Ababa in May 2014, during which a group of academics and policy advisors from the region discussed and gave feedback on the preliminary results of the project. The national security interests of actors in the HOA with regard to the conflict in South Sudan, which broke out in December 2013, were also addressed at this regional meeting.

The primary objective of this summary report is to communicate the interests and perceptions articulated in the roundtable discussions and interviews to other actors and across borders, and to serve as a basis for future critical debate and political dialogue on national security interests in the HOA.

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I am grateful to all participants of the roundtable discussions and interviews for sharing their knowledge and expertise on national security interests and regional politics in the HOA and for engaging in discussions on this topic. Special thanks goes to Arne Schildberg and colleagues at the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung for their support and advice in implementing the project, as well as to the moderators and participants for their very helpful comments, notes and feedback in support of writing this report and analysing the outcome of the discussions.

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This summary report is an account of the discussions and interviews that took place. It is not a comprehensive overview or analysis of the topic as a whole or of the specific questions addressed, nor does it reflect the views of the author or of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES). All discussions took place under the Chatham House Rule.

Statements that refer to a country (for example, “Kenya perceives...”) are not to be read as official positions; they reflect the observations and interpretations of policy makers and experts (the participants of the roundtable discussions) in view of their governments’ national security interests and foreign policy decisions.
2. Ethiopia’s National Security Interests in the Horn of Africa

Two roundtable discussions in Addis Ababa took place on the 30th August and 29th November 2013 between advisors and policy makers from the Ethiopian government and independent experts and academics.

2.1. On Ethiopia’s foreign policy

Ethiopia’s foreign policy is based on protecting and safeguarding its economic interests and security. Peace and security in the region are necessary to enable unhindered development and economic cooperation. Although policy makers and experts largely share an “internal vulnerability perspective”, according to which Ethiopia’s main security threats are considered to be poverty and bad governance, the extent to which external threats – specifically regional threats in the HOA – are treated only as secondary security concerns is debated. After all, Ethiopian involvement in Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan shows that Ethiopia is willing to actively engage with regional security issues. Ethiopia seeks to have a positive influence in the region and has established itself as a regional power in terms of its leverage in both Somalia and the Sudan – South Sudan conflict.

The fundamental principles of the 2002 “Ethiopian Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and Strategy” are argued to hold today. The implementation and monitoring of Ethiopia’s foreign policy strategy is the responsibility of the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and does not follow a built-in process.

2.2. The Somalia conflict

Ethiopia’s engagement in Somalia is largely driven by security concerns rather than economic incentives. Instability and the lack of a strong central government in Somalia are perceived as a serious threat to Ethiopia’s national security and to stability in the region. Ethiopia’s troops have been directly involved in Somalia since their military intervention in 2006 to remove the Islamic Courts Union. In January 2014 Ethiopian troops were “re-hattet” under the AU regional peacekeeping mission AMISOM.

The security threat posed by instability and conflict in Somalia is multifaceted. Radical and militant Islam (Al-Shabaab, Al-Qaeda) in the region and the idea of a “Greater Somalia” are considered serious threats to Ethiopia’s national security and territorial integrity. Since its intervention Ethiopia is also threatened by terrorist attacks in retaliation to its troops on the ground. Both Eritrean and Ethiopian insurgents operating out of territory controlled by Islamists are relevant in understanding Ethiopia’s military engagement in Somalia. Ethiopia’s involvement in Somalia is also considered important to limit the influence of Asmara in Mogadishu. Inside its borders the Ethiopian government is intent to secure its Somali region (Ogaden) and combat the rebel group Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), which it has designated a terrorist organisation. Ethiopia must secure its border with Somalia to stop the smuggling of small arms (security threat and economic implications of contraband) and to contain the influx of Somali refugees.

Ethiopia’s policy in Somalia is to support the Somali government in fighting Al-Shabaab and a central driver for Ethiopia’s involvement is to have a stable and peaceful
neighbour. Stability in Somalia is not possible without a functioning government in Mogadishu; both the lack of a central authority and public services are seen to strengthen Al-Shabaab. Ethiopia’s vision for a functioning political system is, however, less clear. It supports the establishment of a strong central state, while also encouraging the Somali government to take local processes and realities seriously. This arguably resonates with the idea of a “clan-based federal state”, much like Ethiopia’s federal system. Despite cooperating and continuing to build a good trade and security relationship with Somaliland and Puntland where it serves its interests, Ethiopia claims not to be interested in a “balkanized” Somalia. Instead, Ethiopian engagement in Somaliland and Puntland should be seen as a template for positive engagement in peace building in Somalia, with the hope that Puntland and Somaliland will function as “building blocks” for a future peaceful and united state.

Although Ethiopia originally viewed AMISOM critically – as overstretched and unable to control areas left to Al-Shabaab – it joined the peace operation in January 2014. Reasons for Ethiopia not to join AMISOM previously were its unwillingness to give up the “command and control” over its troops and there were some concerns over possible Somali reactions to the inclusion of Ethiopian troops in the mission. However, in joining AMISOM Ethiopia followed the invitation of the Government of Somalia who expressed the wish that the 6000 additional troops to join AMISOM should be Ethiopian. It is argued that Ethiopian troops were invited because of their experience in peace operations and military training, as well as their ability to build good relationships with local authorities (state building, administration). Like Kenya, Ethiopia will have its own sector (sector 4) under its own control and command. Ethiopia does not view AMISOM as a lasting or even long-term solution to the security crisis in Somalia and it is argued that any external involvement should be directed at supporting a Somali-led peace process.

Ethiopia’s forces enjoy a high regional reputation for being professional and effective. The preference expressed by the Somali authorities resonates with Ethiopia’s positive experience in Sudan and UNISFA. Ethiopia’s troops in Somalia also strengthen its position as a regional power, which “invests” in peace and security in the HOA. This gives Ethiopia influence and leverage in the region and in future developments in Somalia.

The fact that Ethiopian troops in AMISOM will be externally funded is recognised as a benefit, but Ethiopia insists that economic interests are not an important motive for Ethiopia’s involvement in Somalia.

2.2.1. External actors’ involvement in Somalia

Ethiopia is critical of Kenya’s involvement in Somalia. There are some concerns that Kenyan forces may be involved in a “spoils game” in Somalia. Ethiopia feels it must “cover Kenya’s back” by sharing intelligence and providing Kenya with expert knowledge on Somalia.

Some AMISOM troop contributing countries may be tempted to keep the operation going for as long as possible. Ethiopia sees itself playing a useful role in AMISOM by discouraging these “staying on tendencies”. It wants AMISOM to train Somali security
forces and then leave; so does Somalia’s government.

The option of UN involvement in the AU-led peacekeeping mission is contested. It is argued that AMISOM will not have access to necessary resources unless the UN is involved. However, UN involvement could also undermine the position and the robustness of AMISOM in Somalia. African leaders are wary of the fact that any form of a “joint” mission would mean that the peace operation would automatically become an issue of the UN Security Council’s “Permanent Five”. “Hybrid missions” carry the negative connotation of the joint AU-UN mission in Darfur (UNAMID).

### 2.3. The Sudan – South Sudan conflict

Ethiopia has a strong strategic interest in a peaceful coexistence of Sudan and South Sudan and in upholding its good relationship with both countries. Instability in Sudan and South Sudan and the possibility of renewed conflict between the two states pose a threat to Ethiopia’s national security. Ethiopia also has economic interests in natural resources in Sudan and South Sudan.

Ethiopia has many security issues concerning Sudan. These include Sudan’s relations with Eritrea and some “unfriendly independent entities” operating in the east of Sudan, where Sudanese intelligence and regional authorities are said to be complicit. Sudan also constitutes a potential source of “radicalisation”; radical Islamists operating in Ethiopia are often trained in Khartoum (at the Islamic International University of Africa). Despite these concerns, Ethiopia prefers to maintain security by engaging with the government in Khartoum and strengthening its own internal security. It is in Ethiopia’s interest to have a peaceful relationship with Sudan; conflict or an intervention would carry huge costs for the country.

A renewed conflict between Sudan and South Sudan would have a serious impact on Ethiopia, especially in terms of border security. In Ethiopia’s view the largest risk of conflict between Sudan and South Sudan is the unresolved status of Abyei. This issue is considered very important and requires a political solution, not just a referendum. Currently both Sudan and South Sudan are thought to be interested in maintaining the status quo in order to survive. The possibility of regime change in either Khartoum or Juba also constitutes a security threat for Ethiopia, who is not prepared for the situation of a coup d’état in either country. In the HOA the relationship with a neighbouring country is always the relationship with the current regime; regime change ultimately leads to a crisis.

Ethiopia worked for a political solution of the conflict between Khartoum and southern Sudan for a long time – they drew up the Declaration of Principles (1997) that eventually led to the CPA. Ethiopia claims never to have had any illusions about maintaining a united Sudan but managed to avoid expressing a view before the 2010 referendum (unlike Egypt and Eritrea who openly opposed independence). Upholding a functioning relationship with both sides has given Ethiopia leverage in the conflict and this also serves to limit Eritrea’s influence in both Sudan and South Sudan. Ethiopia tries hard not to be involved in the internal affairs of the two countries; holding a neutral position between the two is challenging and requires considerable diplomatic effort.
The involvement of Ethiopian troops in UNISFA is unprecedented; a neighbouring power invited by both Sudan and South Sudan to provide an interposition force to keep the peace between them. This is seen as evidence of Ethiopia’s good relations with both states and its neutral position in the conflict, and Ethiopia takes pride in this regional role. UNISFA is viewed as a success story and has shown Ethiopia that it is not only possible but “a good thing” to contribute troops to a peace operation in a neighbouring country.

2.3.1. External actors’ involvement in the Sudan – South Sudan conflict

The Ethiopian government views Eritrea as a central factor for insecurity in the HOA; it is perceived to destabilize the region and has influence in both Khartoum and Mogadishu. Because Eritrea is seen to support anyone who destabilizes the region, Ethiopian officials argue that it is not interested in a stable South Sudan and exploits the weak system of governance there.

2.4. The South Sudan conflict

The armed conflict in South Sudan that broke out in December 2013 is a grave security threat to Ethiopia; it has vast implications for domestic security and security in the region as a whole.

It is in Ethiopia’s national security interest to prevent state collapse in South Sudan and to find a political solution to the conflict though mediation in IGAD. Ethiopia is the lead mediator and hosts the peace talks between President Salva Kiir’s and former Vice President Riek Machar’s delegations in Addis Ababa. So far the cease-fire agreements signed by Kiir and Machar in January and May 2014 have not been able to bring an end to the conflict. Despite efforts to find a political solution to the conflict, Ethiopia is also aware that a regional protection force may be necessary to bring an end to hostilities and stabilize the state.

Conflict in South Sudan also has domestic political implications for Ethiopia: the influx of refugees has the potential to trigger ethnic conflict in the already fragile Gambella region in western Ethiopia, and the conflict also means an increased illegal flow of small arms and economic contraband over the border. Although Ethiopia wants to stay neutral by neither siding with Kiir nor Machar, this position is made more difficult by the close ethnic links between Ethiopia’s Gambella region and the South Sudanese Nuur community to which Machar belongs.

Ethiopia’s involvement in South Sudan is also driven by the need to contain the influence of Eritrea, and the infiltration of radical elements connected to Al-Shabaab.

South Sudan’s relationship with Eritrea is viewed as a potential threat to Ethiopia. South Sudan’s offer – made before the outbreak of conflict in December 2013 – to mediate between Ethiopia and Eritrea was not interpreted as an attempt to emerge as a peacemaker in the region, as South Sudan had also approached Eritrea to discuss areas of potential collaboration, for instance access to the port of Assab.

Both oil from South Sudan and planned large infrastructure projects such as LAPSSET are important economic incentives for Ethiopia’s engagement in South Sudan. While Meles

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4 These notes reflect discussions about Ethiopia and the South Sudan conflict at the FES regional expert meeting in May 2014.
decided that Ethiopia should not be part of the “spoils game” in South Sudan, some feel Ethiopia has not done enough to promote legitimate commerce and economic relations with its new neighbour. Before the conflict broke out, Ethiopia’s regional competitors Kenya, Uganda and Eritrea were seen to be investing and making better use of the opportunities in South Sudan than Ethiopia.

2.4.1. External actors’ involvement in South Sudan

Officials view Uganda’s political role in South Sudan negatively. It is argued that the government reshuffle in South Sudan in July 2013 meant that Uganda’s President Museveni – a passionate supporter of South Sudan and equally passionate enemy of Khartoum – lost friends in the South Sudanese government and felt he was losing influence with his northern neighbour. Uganda’s unilateral military intervention in South Sudan in December 2013 is also perceived to be at odds with Ethiopia’s mediation efforts through IGAD.

Before conflict broke out in December 2013, Ugandan and Kenyan investment and workers in South Sudan were seen to create tensions in the new state.

Regarding the involvement of external actors it was argued that South Sudan is largely run by international NGOs who depend on crises for their own survival and do not necessarily act in the country’s best interest.

2.5. The use of the Nile Waters

The construction of the GERD is a major development project for Ethiopia and will, once completed, be the largest hydroelectric power plant in Africa, allowing Ethiopia to export power to other countries on the continent.

The tensions with Egypt over the impact of the dam on use of the Nile waters are considered a serious threat to Ethiopia’s national security. The discussants were sceptical whether Egypt would be willing to negotiate on the Nile issue – it is perceived as a stalled relationship. The conflict over the use of the Nile waters also plays into the security dynamics of other conflicts in the HOA. For instance, when Juba approached Egypt to deploy troops in South Sudan (which the latter denied) the possibility of Egyptian troops in proximity to the GERD was perceived as a potential security threat to Ethiopia. Ethiopia’s efforts to stabilize Sudan’s states bordering to Ethiopia are also connected, in part, to their proximity to the GERD.

2.6. Ethiopia and regionalism, IGAD and the EAC

IGAD is the only regional organisation in Eastern Africa of which Ethiopia is a member. Ethiopia has a strong voice in, and determination to make things happen through IGAD; its involvement was described by the discussants as “true commitment”. Ethiopia uses IGAD as a diplomatic tool. Although it is seen to have instrumentalized the regional body in some cases – for instance in order to implement sanctions against Eritrea – it has arguably done many good things for the region through IGAD too. Ethiopia feels that it does not receive enough recognition in the region for its positive role and initiative in IGAD.
The changing political dynamics in the region affect the functioning of IGAD both with regard to responding to security crises and the region’s potential for more economic integration. Ethiopia perceives the over-securitisation of IGAD as a weakness and the stalled conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and Eritrea’s self-imposed suspension from IGAD in 2007, are seen to impede the role of IGAD in the region. Before 1998, Ethiopia and Eritrea were expected to “handle things”; now Kenya is perceived to take a more active role in responses to regional security crises.

There was no interest expressed for Ethiopia to join the EAC. The EAC member countries are also perceived to be wary of the possibility of Ethiopia – with its huge population and cheap labour force – joining the regional organisation.

On a bilateral level there is political pressure for enhanced economic cooperation between Ethiopia and Kenya. Trade between the two countries is weak because of poor infrastructure, for instance the road to the border town Moyale is paved on the Ethiopian side but not yet on the Kenyan side of the border. Kenya’s President Uhuru Kenyatta has promised to invest more in cooperation and Ethiopia hopes that Kenya’s interest in importing electricity from Ethiopia in the future may spur this intention. In the discussion it was stated that Ethiopia invests six billion Ethiopian Birr (approximately 317 million USD) in infrastructure projects annually. These are largely self-funded (e.g. through “Ethio telecom”). Despite this, Ethiopia is still seen to lag behind countries such as Kenya with regard to its regulatory environment for business and trade. Ethiopia advocates the idea of progressive leader forums between Kenya and Ethiopia to allow decision makers from both countries to come together for mutual learning on economic integration and its implications.

3. Uganda’s National Security Interests in the Horn of Africa

The roundtable discussion took place in Kampala on the 8th October 2013 and was an expert meeting.

3.1. The Somalia conflict

The main security threat posed to Uganda by ongoing conflict and instability in Somalia is the infiltration of radical Islamism and terrorist attacks in retaliation to Uganda’s involvement in Somalia. Somalia’s fragile state and the threat of attacks by Al-Shabaab are described as a “fire on our doorstep”, despite the geographical distance between Uganda and Somalia. Al-Shabaab is perceived to be regrouping and externalising its influence. The Westgate attack in Nairobi (21-24 September 2013) clearly demonstrated the threat posed to troop contributing countries, and was a reminder of the bombings in Kampala in July 2010 during the FIFA World Cup Final match, which left 74 dead. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attack carried out in retaliation of Uganda’s participation in AMISOM.

Personal engagement and relationships between leaders play an important role in Uganda’s foreign policy making. Uganda’s President Yoweri Museveni is viewed as an important driver of Uganda’s involvement in Somalia. Museveni has shown genuine
concern for Somalia; he was the last President to visit the country in 1991 and pushed for an intervention in Somalia in 2005 under the auspices of IGASOM, which did not materialize due to lack of external support to fund the operation. Ugandans like to think that Museveni went to Mogadishu to help out his friend Meles, who had got into difficulties there.

Uganda’s image and positioning in the region are important drivers for its military involvement in Somalia. The general image of the country in the region and further afield is important: Uganda no longer wants to be associated with the images of war, Idi Amin, and AIDS. Being perceived as a regional stabilizer and peacekeeper is a source of national pride. It also brings some economic benefits.

Uganda’s involvement in Somalia is perceived to have a comparatively strong economic dimension. Military employment is one factor – national security interests and economic interests are interlinked here. Uganda has a huge army (number unknown) that needs an occupation and to be paid. Ethiopia criticises Uganda for keeping AMISOM big in order to provide “jobs for the boys” instead of training Somali forces with the objective of handing over the security operations to them. Apart from paying troops, intervention is also expected to have a “natural economic dimension”: the troops should pave a way for business people to follow. In the case of Somalia though, Uganda feels that its economic interests are not being served. Individuals may have profited, but the Ugandan economy has neither benefitted from this intervention nor from others, including the country’s military involvement in Rwanda, DRC, and southern Sudan.

Uganda’s participation in peace operations and troop deployment to countries in the HOA also serves as a strategic foreign policy tool. The threat to withdraw its forces from Somalia is used to silence criticism by Western (donor) countries on issues such as democracy and corruption, and accusations by members of the international community regarding Uganda’s suspected negative involvement in the DRC.

3.1.1. External actors’ involvement in Somalia

Uganda sees itself as part of a triangular relationship of neighbouring states vis-à-vis the Somali authorities; the two other key state actors involved are Ethiopia and Kenya. The objective of these neighbours’ involvement in Somalia is different to Uganda’s objective: Kenya and Ethiopia are perceived to have a vested interest in a federal and weak Somalia, while Uganda’s vision is the creation of a strong centralized state. Kenya is seen to support Jubaland in order to create a buffer zone on its northern border, and to be interested in potential oil reserves, the control of the port of Kismayo and the sea border (off-shore oil). Kenya’s involvement in Somalia is perceived as being slow and not very effective in terms of defeating Al-Shabaab.

Al-Shabaab is seen as part of an international network and as a threat that reaches far beyond the HOA. Uganda’s positioning as a strong ally in the “Global War on Terror” helps its relations and positioning with “the West” and Western donors, especially the USA. The relationship arguably works both ways. The USA is seen to use Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia to advance its interests in Somalia and to do the work on the ground. Uganda feels taken for granted in this role.
The geopolitics of the HOA is important in explaining international actors’ involvement in Somalia too. This includes the threat of piracy on international sea-lanes, which has received widespread international attention, as well as the involvement of Middle Eastern actors.

3.2. The Sudan – South Sudan conflict
Sudan is perceived as a serious and continuous threat to Uganda’s national security. This perception goes a long way back and is connected to a history of mutual support for insurgencies. Khartoum supported the LRA in Uganda and Uganda’s support to the SPLA was a way to undermine the North. Kampala allegedly still harbours Sudanese rebel movements. Supporting the independence struggle of South Sudan served, inter alia, to create a buffer state, which would limit the direct influence and threat of aggression from Khartoum. This argument still holds although instability in South Sudan is also perceived as an immediate security threat to Uganda.

The support of the SPLM/A in South Sudan’s liberation struggle is also connected to the personal relationships of political leaders. President Museveni and Garang, who led the SPLA during the second Sudanese Civil War 1983 – 2005, had been friends since their university years in Dar es Salaam. In contrast, the relationship between Museveni and South Sudan’s President al-Bashir is markedly hostile.

The involvement and positioning of Uganda in the conflict between Sudan and South Sudan has a strong ideological dimension – the support of South Sudan is described as a “pan-African cause”. Khartoum excluded and discriminated against the population of southern Sudan, at least in part, because they were perceived as “African” as opposed to the “Arab” population of northern Sudan. Uganda argues that its involvement in this conflict is tied to questions of race and of justice.

3.3. The South Sudan conflict
The possibility of state collapse and the authorities’ loss of control in South Sudan were already perceived as real at the time of the roundtable discussion in Kampala at the beginning of October 2013, and as constituting an immediate security threat to Uganda. In addition to the problems of small arms proliferation and refugees, a renewed civil war is feared to give Uganda’s enemies an opportunity to infiltrate and create bases in South Sudan. It is therefore in Uganda’s national security interest to support stability in, and build a good relationship with its northern neighbour. Despite the history of Uganda’s support to the SPLA this cannot be taken for granted; Uganda is aware of the “big brother” effect and the risk of finding itself with a new enemy on its doorstep.

Although Uganda profits from a strong trade relationship by exporting supplies to South Sudan, many Ugandans feel that the country’s economic interests in South Sudan are not served well. There is strong competition for influence in South Sudan. Kenya is perceived to be doing very well in economic sectors such as banking and insurance, while Ugandans are left to compete with South Sudanese at the lower end of the economy and have been threatened and under attack. For instance,

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5 This section also draws on notes from the FES regional expert meeting in May 2014.
in August 2013 hundreds of Ugandan boda-boda (motorbike taxi) drivers were forced to leave South Sudan after the Interior Ministry enforced a ban on foreigners owning or using motorbikes to provide commercial taxi services.

As in the case of Somalia, Uganda’s initial positioning with Western (USA) interests in stabilizing South Sudan was perceived as strategic and smart foreign policy which ultimately serves the government’s goal of regime survival. But in light of Uganda’s most recent military intervention in South Sudan “pleasing the West” does not seem to outweigh more immediate security concerns.

Uganda has argued that primary motives for its military intervention in South Sudan were to protect Ugandan civilians in the country and to prevent genocide or ethnic cleansing of the local population. Uganda is not part of the IGAD mediation efforts hosted by Ethiopia and it is unclear whether Ugandan forces would withdraw if a regional protection force for South Sudan were created, or if the troops would be integrated in the mission.

3.3.1. External actors’ involvement in the Sudan and South Sudan conflicts

While the SPLM emphasises that Ethiopia is its main supporter in the region, Uganda views the Ethiopian involvement and influence in Sudan, South Sudan and Abyei (UNISFA) critically. Ethiopia is a competitor for influence in South Sudan.

There is more to regional relationships than providing troops and economic investment. Despite the military influence of Ethiopia and the economic influence of Kenya, it was argued, “Juba will always rely on Kampala”.

South Sudan is still in need of much external support. The CPA guarantors should have done more to get the unresolved issues – both internally and with regard to disputed issues with Sudan – settled before independence and should stay engaged now. The USA is perceived to be solely focused on countering the threat of terrorism in the region.

3.4. The use of the Nile Waters

The second security threat – next to Khartoum – influencing Uganda’s northward policy emanates from Egypt and conflict over the use of the Nile waters. This is a big defence issue for the Uganda People’s Defence Force (UPDF). There is a rumour that Egypt “bunkers” the Nile waters and, while officially arguing that its survival is threatened, sells water to Israel. The colonial treaties on the use of the Nile Waters are viewed as unacceptable and unfair and Uganda is a strong supporter of the CFA.

3.5. Conflict in the Great Lakes region

Uganda is affected by ongoing conflict in the Great Lakes region due to instability on its western border with the DRC and the security risk posed by the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), a Ugandan rebel group with rear bases in the DRC. Uganda’s linkages to and interests in the conflict in the DRC are contested. A UN report in 2012 accused Uganda of supporting the M23 rebel group but the Ugandan government denies any involvement. The Ugandan government has also been accused of being interested in a Tutsi-led government in the DRC and in access to the DRC’s vast mineral resources.
In response to the abovementioned UN report Uganda threatened that it would limit its engagement in Somalia (see: using troops in multilateral peace operations as a strategic foreign policy tool).

3.6. Uganda and regionalism, IGAD and the EAC

Uganda has a sceptical view on current regionalism and multilateral institutions. With regard to the Ugandan government’s regional ambitions it has been suggested that some members of the political elite would not be averse to the idea of a supranational organisation in the HOA or Eastern Africa. In the discussion group it was lamented that although the RECs all have a mandate to deal with peace and security issues, in practice they often choose not to act. IGAD lacks resources and is perceived to be controlled by Ethiopia – also the only member state that is not in arrears. Uganda views the EAC more positively than IGAD, it is also considered to be “more democratic”.

In the discussion group it was argued that “regionalism” is, in principal, a good idea, but in the political context of the HOA the existing institutions and documents have so far turned out to be a “form without substance”. Security threats in the HOA are transnational and require regional cooperation to address them but states are unable to do so effectively: Firstly, they are internally unstable and their governments often the cause of instability. Secondly, state actors in the HOA are unwilling to limit their sovereignty and to cede any authority to multilateral regional organisations. Because regional organizations in Africa are purely intergovernmental organisations, they are seen to be unaccountable and have no capacity to enforce agreements.

They are only used if they serve national interests. Despite these limitations, regional organisations can have a very useful function as co-ordination mechanisms and regionalism has an important role to play in the HOA. There is growing recognition that threats in the region are transnational and that political stakeholders in different countries should work together to address them.

4. Kenya’s National Security Interests in the Horn of Africa

The roundtable discussion took place in Nairobi on the 10th October 2013 and was an expert meeting.

4.1. National security policy formulation in Kenya

There is no public official guiding document on Kenya’s national security and foreign policy to date. The National Security Council (NSC), which is the main institution responsible for national security issues in Kenya, has drawn up a draft national security policy document. The NSC is a powerful body chaired by the President and comprises relevant ministries and security agencies. When former President Moi was in power, he decided on all matters of national security.

The draft national security policy has been developed without significant public consultation or media engagement and is not public yet. Meanwhile, the Westgate attack (21-24 September 2013) has sparked wider public debate on national security and Kenya’s foreign policy in the region,
especially its intervention in Somalia. What is the end game? Is the intervention effective in combating radical Islamism and terrorism? And questions closer to home: Did the security agencies handle the Westgate crisis well? Somalia is not the only concern; Kenya has always had to deal with serious issues of transnational security.

4.2. The Somalia conflict

The Kenyan intervention in Somalia in 2011 came as a surprise to many regional and international actors and observers. Up to this point Kenya had mainly been involved in regional conflicts in a mediation capacity, not militarily, and had led a policy of non-interference and non-intervention in regional security issues. Some argue that Kenya’s intervention in Somalia in 2011 was merely a pragmatic intervention; others, however, interpret it as a fundamental shift in Kenya’s foreign policy.

Terrorist attacks by Al-Shabaab in retaliation of Kenyan forces in Somalia currently pose the largest immediate threat to Kenya’s national security. When Kenya intervened in Somalia in 2011 it was thought that Somali economic interest in Kenya, and the fact that many Somalis see the country as their “second home”, would protect it from reprisal attacks. The Westgate attack radically changed this view. The original Somali Al-Shabaab, it is thought, would not have carried out an attack like Westgate – Al-Shabaab is seen as fragmented now and includes “foreign elements” that are willing to do so. It is feared that pushing back Al-Shabaab in Somalia and its fragmentation heightens the security threat to Kenya. A further perceived security threat is the influx of Somali refugees into Kenya.

While Kenya is thought to support, in principle, the idea of a federal state, it has been more interested in Somalia’s regions bordering Kenya. Originally, a central driver of Kenyan intervention in Somalia was to create a buffer state in Jubaland, southern Somalia, the border of which would be policed by Kenyan trained Somali fighters. According to the discussants there are no known data on where these forces are now. “The West” was initially reluctant to a Kenyan intervention in Somalia and refused to support the buffer zone plan, instead advocating the re-hatting of Kenyan Defence Forces (KDF) under AMISOM. Whether Kenya was pressured into joining AMISOM or if advocacy by the West was helpful in justifying the move to join AMISOM is debated. Kenya states that it is using its own resources to be involved in southern Somalia and, although now part of AMISOM, it is still largely autonomous in its operations.

Kenya’s economic interests in a stable Somalia are interlinked and, in some cases, blend with security issues. There are oil reserves between Mogadishu and Baidoa and offshore. Access to these, and large-scale infrastructure projects such as LAPSSET, will only be feasible and profitable in the future if the threat of terrorism is brought under control. With regard to Kismayu, Ogadeni Kenyans are claimed to have economic interests in the port city and as long as it “sits up for grabs”, it is argued, Kenya is reluctant to hand over to a Somali government.

In Kenya’s own view it adopted a different approach in its intervention in Somalia than some of its neighbours: Kenya wanted to “win hearts and minds” and to work together with Somali allies.
4.2.1. External actors’ involvement in Somalia

Ethiopia is perceived as being very focused on issues of national security and currently, Somalia is seen as its number one security threat. In Kenya’s view, Ethiopia is so focused on security issues that it views everything, including economic relationships, through a security lens.

The relationship between Kenya and Ethiopia with regard to Somalia remains unclear; in which areas do the two countries (not) want to work together? Ethiopia is perceived to think that Kenya is not working with them. An Ethiopian military officer was quoted as saying: “When Kenya decides to work with us, we will manage the region together”. From a Kenyan perspective, however, this lack of will to cooperate is a misconception. There is much interest in potential alliances and Kenya shares the view that, were decisions made as “Ethiopia and Kenya”, the two countries could increasingly tackle regional issues together. With regard to Somalia, despite the fact that both Ethiopia and Kenya have had some criticisms of each other in this context, the two countries involvement in Somalia has arguably strengthened their relationship. Positive examples of cooperation include the agreement on who should run Jubaland.

Uganda’s involvement in Somalia is not viewed so positively. The country’s foreign policy is seen to be driven by President Museveni’s regional leadership ambitions. He is also thought to have built up his military capacity with foreign assistance.

The policy of “the West” in Somalia is thought to be purely self-interested. Intervention and resources are directed towards combating piracy and conducting drone strikes against Al-Shabaab, but from the perspective of the Somali population this is doing little to improve their living conditions and security. This kind of intervention is unable to gain moral legitimacy. Only Turkey, who has taken a comparatively active role in establishing diplomatic relations with the government in Mogadishu, is perceived to be helping Somalis for their own sake. It was further argued that the policies of international actors in Somalia are inconsistent and based on double standards. For example, much support and money goes to Somaliland, which is seen as a contradiction to the supposed support of a central national government in Mogadishu. Also, the West seemingly forgot all about human rights norms when Ethiopia decided to intervene in Somalia in 2006 with the aim to remove the Islamic Courts Union (ICU).

4.3. The Sudan – South Sudan conflict

Neither Sudan nor South Sudan is perceived to pose a direct security threat to Kenya. Kenya supports a political solution to the conflict. An economic incentive to support peace and stability between the two countries is arguably to help ensure that oil production and oil exports continue.

4.3.1. External actors’ involvement in the Sudan – South Sudan conflict

Ethiopia is perceived to play a very important diplomatic role in keeping the peace between Sudan and South Sudan. Its ability to uphold good relations with both states and the fact that it received the consent of both sides to provide the troops for UNISFA gives it certain leverage in the region. If and how Ethiopia makes strategic use of this position is unclear. Ethiopia’s efforts to
uphold good relations with both Sudan and South Sudan arguably also serve to prevent Eritrea from using its own relationships to forge alliances against Ethiopia – that between Eritrea and Sudan is considered to be very good and Eritrea also has influence in South Sudan.

4.4. Involvement in South Sudan

The Kenyan government is mainly involved in South Sudan through capacity building programmes, which provide training to judges, diplomats, and include, to some extent, training in the security sector. There is scope for a stronger involvement in developing the education system too. Supporting South Sudan’s capacity to administer itself gives Kenya influence and a positive role in the new state. Much like Ethiopia, Kenya is interested in peace and security in South Sudan to enable economic development. In regional efforts to find a solution to the most recent conflict in South Sudan, which broke out in December 2013, Kenyan diplomacy has been very visible.

While the SPLM/A used Kenya as a base during the Second Sudanese civil war, Kenya did not capitalise on this to strengthen bi-lateral relations after South Sudan’s independence. The government does not back Kenyan investors in South Sudan; they came to the country on their own initiative. In retrospect this has been criticised as being un-strategic, and there is a general feeling that Kenya has not received the dividends of its involvement in South Sudan. Instead countries like Uganda and South Africa are profiting from the economic opportunities in the new state. However, LAPSSSET would mean a significant economic relationship between the governments of Kenya and South Sudan, and would include a pipeline to Lamu for the export of South Sudanese oil.

4.4.1. External actors’ involvement in South Sudan

Ethiopia is seen to invest a lot in the security sector in South Sudan. The “international community” is viewed to be working for stability in the country, mainly for economic reasons. Next to the global power of the USA, China and India are considered important players too.

4.5. Kenya and regionalism: economic and security issues

Kenya is well positioned in the region: It has a stronger economy and is considered politically more stable than many other states in the HOA. Kenya exerts regional power through its comparatively strong economy and positions itself as a “soft power” in the HOA and East Africa. This profile goes well with the EAC, of which Kenya appears very fond, while it seems to identify less with IGAD. Although the country has many economic advantages, including its tourism industry and the port of Mombasa, there is also a sense that Kenya is ignoring economic competition in the region and could be making more of its head start. Ethiopia is perceived to have the potential to catch up (if the growth rate figures are to be believed) and Tanzania is a growing competitor in the hospitality

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6 Government-led investment in South Sudan might have been stronger if Raila Odinga, who had closer ties with South Sudan’s President Salva Kiir, had become President (Nilotic linkages).
sector. Ethiopia pressurises Kenya to keep deadlines in the LAPSSET project and to complete their roads to the border.

Kenya needs a strong economy to support a strong security sector that is able to deal with threats to Kenya’s economic power and prosperity. While a participant of the roundtable discussion estimated that the country’s economy is strong enough to sustain a war for three years, Kenya’s economic power so far exceeds its military prowess.

IGAD is an intergovernmental, not a supranational, organisation and its member states do not share a basis of common values or norms of behaviour. Disagreement is therefore always close at hand. Despite this, IGAD is viewed as an important forum in which decisions can be made, even if they are primarily based on the national security interests of powerful players in the region. Kenya sees Ethiopia as a power that is not (yet) in the position to determine regional politics. Although Ethiopia takes a leading role in IGAD, this is not perceived as a threat or as competition to Kenya’s position in the region. It can, in some cases, be an advantage for Kenya too. IGAD, for instance, facilitated mediation to determine who would lead operations in Kismayo. The forum managed to diffuse tensions between Ethiopia and Kenya over this issue and also diluted the Somali view of Kenya as an enemy, which in turn had been perceived as a threat to Kenya, via the demand (30 June 2013) to the AU to bring in a multilateral force to Jubaland.

5. South Sudan’s National Security Interests in the Horn of Africa

The roundtable discussion took place in Juba on the 16th October 2013, between independent experts, academics and a member of the SPLM. Further interviews were conducted with members of the South Sudanese government on the 17th and 18th October 2013. The discussions capture some South Sudanese perspectives before conflict erupted inside the country in December 2013 and when the main threat was seen as external (Khartoum).

5.1. Perceived threats and vulnerabilities

Although national security is the priority of South Sudan, it is difficult to answer the question of who defines national security interests in the young state. National security interests are articulated “in the notebooks of the generals”. At the time of the roundtable discussion and interviews a consultative process was taking place in the Office of National Security, regarding a White Paper to define South Sudan’s national security interests within the government. The exact content of these consultations and how far the discussion went is not clear. National security interests in South Sudan are mostly discussed in the context of crisis, and South Sudan’s foreign policy is perceived as an extension of the response to internal security issues. South Sudan’s main national security interests are to settle its borders, and to create peace and security inside the borders of the state.

In the roundtable discussion and interviews it was emphasised that South Sudanese
identify themselves as being “African”. This understanding informs South Sudanese interests and positioning in the region and stems from a history of discrimination experienced as being part of Sudan, which wanted to impose an Arab-Muslim identity on the south.

The biggest external threat to South Sudan’s national security is its northern neighbour. It is therefore in South Sudan’s interest to normalize its relationship with Sudan, which is currently determined by ongoing disputes over border areas and resources. Sudan is perceived to use threatening rhetoric towards its new neighbour, and to feel that it owns South Sudan. It is also important for South Sudan’s peace and security that Sudan remains stable.

South Sudan must secure its porous borders and control cross-border activities, such as the infiltration of small arms. This is proving very difficult. Border security is also the precondition for interacting with neighbouring states and is attached to economic interests in this way. South Sudan must also secure its resources in the border areas, i.e. oil. The development of different pipeline projects – including a Chinese line and LAPSSET – is important for South Sudan to gain economic independence from Sudan. Cattle rustling in the border areas is viewed as a further national security concern with a wider regional conflict dimension for the HOA. It was argued that the limited reach of regional governments in the border areas of their countries makes them unable to control this “economic activity”.

With regard to the domestic political situation, “state weakness” and internal rebellion are considered major threats to the national security of South Sudan. Rebellions can arise as a consequence of democratic institutions, for example from election defeats or unmet demands for country representation. A large part of the population does not have faith in the institutions of the state, there is a lack of services – “people have to scavenge to survive” – and poor law enforcement as well as poor policing heighten personal insecurity. A further aspect is that the emerging nation state does not yet exist in rural areas and people feel more attached to local authorities than to the government in Juba. Beyond the obvious consequences for peace and stability inside the country, internal instability can also affect regional relations. External actors are often blamed for causing internal conflicts and this can lead to recriminations that can affect the region and even reach the wider international level.

South Sudan is very vulnerable to developments in the region and feels the impact of crises in neighbouring countries. For example, during Kenya’s election violence there was no fuel in South Sudan. Being landlocked and import/export dependent is a major concern. Instability in Somalia and the threat of Al-Shabaab is perceived as a “risk close to us”, especially since the attacks in Kampala (2010) and Nairobi (September 2013). The perpetrators in these attacks were East Africans recruited by Al-Shabaab. Recruitment is thought to go on in the slums of Nairobi and Kampala under the guise of Islamic philanthropy – bringing the threat close to South Sudan too. It was argued that the South Sudanese government must develop ways to deal with the infiltration of radical Islam and the terrorism threat, and must work together with Uganda and Kenya in doing so. There is a large Somali community investing in
Juba in sectors that are hard to control, for instance the petroleum sector, fuel, cement, and other construction resources. The perceived threat posed by Somalis and the widespread perception that “Somalis are everywhere here” must also be understood in the context of xenophobia, the problem of open borders und uncertainty of who is in the country.

Environmental security issues include oil waste, which spoils the environment and causes migration and tensions with other communities.

5.2. Developing foreign policy and relationships in the Horn of Africa

While in the process of state formation, South Sudan is in a vulnerable position in the region and – it was argued – is willing to cooperate with every neighbouring state with common interests. Regional stability is vital for South Sudan to be able to focus on building and strengthening its state institutions. While UNMISS was seen to provide a security blanket for the fragile government against external threats, the biggest threat is evidently inside the country.

South Sudan has historical and opportunity-driven relationships with its neighbours but it has yet to develop a policy or strategy for dealing with them in the long run. Cooperation with neighbouring countries – Kenya, Uganda, and Ethiopia – is considered important to deal with regional threats such as terrorism. South Sudan feels it belongs to the East Africa region as opposed to the “Arab North”.

South Sudan looks back on a long history with Uganda. The countries’ ties go back to the Anyanya rebellion (settlement in 1972), which predated the SPLM. The two countries share common government structures inherited by the British colonial system, which reached across the Uganda-Sudan border. Very close social-economic ties exist between parts of South Sudan and Northern Uganda. There are close ethnic links between the two countries and many South Sudanese received their education in Uganda and/or were refugees there. South Sudan’s independence struggle was supported by Uganda, and Uganda has always been seen as a place of refuge and safety.

Uganda is said to provide South Sudan with most of its imports and supplies and since the CPA there has also been an influx of Ugandan workers and investors in the new state. This has led to tensions, as the economic development is perceived as a one-way street: Ugandans take up (blue collar) jobs while there is very high unemployment in South Sudan. Ugandans are not the only ones to want a share of the cake: Kenyans dominate the financial sector (banking and insurances), and Ethiopians and Eritreans largely run the emerging hospitality sector in the country. Kenyans and Ugandans in particular are beginning to be seen as a hindrance to local ownership of the South Sudanese economy.

The relationship between President Museveni and the South Sudanese leadership is less close than it used to be. President Museveni has lost influence in South Sudan since the government reshuffle in July 2013, during which many of his “old acquaintances” were pushed out. He is thought to see himself in an “advisor role” to South Sudan, which can be perceived as patronizing, and to have tried to hinder South Sudan from normalising its
relationship with Sudan. South Sudan also has territorial disputes with Uganda, plus the Elemi Triangle, which were left unsettled by Sudan. South Sudan is trying to address these conflicts through local community conversations and agreements are to be taken up on the bilateral level. If this does not work they will have to be referred to IGAD.

The above-mentioned tensions regarding Kenyan economic investment in South Sudan aside, Kenya’s role in South Sudan is viewed less critically than Uganda’s. Kenya is credited with an important diplomatic role in the region and its diplomacy has been very visible in the negotiations following the outbreak of civil war in South Sudan in December 2013 (for example in negotiating the release of seven political detainees, the “Nairobi-Seven”). Kenya has also supported South Sudan in capacity building, as has South Africa.

With regard to Sudan’s domestic political situation, the hope for regime change in Khartoum was expressed, as was the need for a stable Sudan to ensure peace and stability in the region. There are a number of misunderstandings between the two countries: Sudan is thought to believe that South Sudan supports the SPLM-North, and also that there is an agreement on Abyei functioning as a buffer zone monitored by UN forces. It was argued that Abyei threatens to become “the Kashmir of Africa” and that the AU should have pushed harder for a referendum on Abyei to be held soon. It is also important to define who is South Sudanese in Abyei, in order to prevent “Arabs” from voting in the referendum (this is considered a lesson learned from Spanish Western Sahara). The border conflicts and the issue of Abyei are seen to be, essentially, about oil reserves. In the context of the current conflict in South Sudan (since December 2013) President Salva Kiir has made allegations that Khartoum is supporting opposition leader Riek Machar, continuing a long history of supporting insurgencies in other states.

South Sudan maintains good relations with Ethiopia, who hosts the currently ongoing IGAD mediation process in Addis Ababa. Ethiopia is becoming a stronger security partner and is viewed as a traditional ally as it supported the independence cause of South Sudan. South Sudan also leans towards Ethiopia as it is seen as the only country in the region in a position to influence Khartoum.

From the South Sudanese official point of view, Ethiopia is involved in Sudan and South Sudan because it is in their interest to prevent a new war between the two states. Ethiopia’s involvement in Abyei and UNISFA is important, as they are the only force accepted by Khartoum in this role and, therefore, the only one that could help to make peace in the area. But while Ethiopian troops in Abyei are considered a neutral force doing their best to keep peace in the region, UNISFA is not a lasting solution to the border conflict. The local population in Abyei are said to condemn them, claiming that the troops are not keeping peace and should act as a protective force against Khartoum. In South Sudan’s view, Ethiopia also has an economic incentive to provide troops for UNISFA.

South Sudan’s relationship with Eritrea is considered unproblematic: “they helped with some issues and are sympathetic to South Sudan’s cause”. South Sudan is able to maintain a good relationship with both Ethiopia and Eritrea.
Beyond the HOA, South Sudan is concerned by instability in the DRC and CAR. It needs stable neighbours to be able to focus on the internal development of the country.

5.3. Regionalism and regional institutions
Views differ strongly with regard to whether South Sudan should make moves towards joining the EAC or not. The “internationalists” in the discussion group argued that the sooner South Sudan joins the EAC the better, and that it is important for South Sudan to be part of ongoing regional developments: “the world won’t wait for us!” EAC membership is also linked to securing the import of military equipment and the need for End-User Certificates. The “protectionists”, however, had a stronger voice in the discussion, expressing caution that South Sudan is not ready to join the EAC, and that the “postponement” of South Sudan’s membership should be considered a good thing. It was argued that the country needs to develop clear policies on several issues before joining, including trade, migration, and employment. Irrespective of joining the EAC, major infrastructure projects also facilitate economic integration. The LAPSSET project is viewed positively in terms of oil export options but security issues across northern Kenya and Somali areas are a concern.

IGAD has a very good reputation in South Sudan. This is largely brought about by its important and positive role in settling the conflict between the SPLM/A and Sudan by mediating the CPA and in helping South Sudan to gain independence. IGAD “gives hope to the Horn of Africa”: it is seen as a forum for regional peacemaking and mediation and should be encouraged and strengthened in this role. The possibility to settle issues on the sub-regional level without having to go to the AU is also viewed positively. IGAD is not a supranational organisation; it is dependent on the political will of its member states’ leaders. Although it might be dominated by strong leaders this is to be expected. During the liberation struggle foreign actors drove the IGAD process, it was argued that it is now time for the founding states to own their organisation.

6. Sudan’s National Security Interests in the Horn of Africa
The following summary is based on interviews conducted in Khartoum with experts and academics in the field of security policy and regional politics in October 2013, and inputs made at the FES regional expert meeting in Addis Ababa in May 2014.

6.1. Sudan’s national security and foreign policy making
Sudan’s national and foreign policy lies in the hands of President Omar al-Bashir. The Sudanese National Security Council is directly governed by President al-Bashir, while further members are the Minister of Defence, the Minister of External Relations, the Director of National Intelligence, and the Minister of Finance. Some observers argue that foreign policy strategies are not discussed within the Sudanese government.

In October 2013 the Council for the Sudanese National Comprehensive Strategy was set to revise the 1992 document to create a new 25-year vision, and to oversee its
implementation. When the 1992 document came into force the priority of Sudan’s foreign policy had been solidarity with oppressed Muslims. Official documents in the late 1990s indicate a development with reversed priorities; Sudan is now seen to focus on more nationalistic concerns and has changed its rhetoric accordingly.

While Sudan is occupied with internal conflicts and instability it is also surrounded by “troubled neighbourhoods”: the HOA and the Chad, Libya, CAR complexes, and to some extent also the Great Lakes region. It is argued that Sudanese foreign policy has become more pragmatic since the end of the 1990s; for example, Sudan immediately recognized the new CAR government, as it is not in its interest to have a power vacuum there. After the fall of Colonel Gaddafi, who used to have a strong influence in the Sahel area, the Sudanese government is said to be rethinking its role in the region and their alliances. The area is perceived as more fragile now, and there has been a meeting between Sudan, Chad and Libya to coordinate their efforts towards stability. Despite Sudan’s orientation towards the north and its identification as an Islamic and “Arab” state, it is also involved in the HOA region.

6.2. Internal threats to Sudan’s national security

National security threats in Sudan primarily relate to conflicts and rebellions in the South Kordofan, Blue Nile and Darfur regions. Opposition to the regime is also seen as a threat to Sudan’s national security and stability; the government is considered weaker than ever before and is argued to have lost popular support.

The FES interviews in Khartoum (October 2013) were held at a time of government protests during which 250 people were killed. According to one observer the protests were considered the most serious in the past 23 years. A major reason for the protests is the deteriorating economy following the secession of South Sudan in 2011, after which an estimated 75% of Sudan’s oil went to South Sudan. In this context the economy is described as a major threat to national security.

Opinions diverge over the future of Sudan’s regime. While some are convinced that the political map in Sudan will inevitably change in the coming five to six years as “people are fed up” with the status quo, others argue that the President is consolidating his power and that he has the unwavering support of the military. If there is change, it is argued, it will be made through the military – “it has always been like that in Sudan”. The army is first and foremost made up of soldiers and not Islamists. It is thought that a change of government would bring in new foreign policy partners and enable a normalization of relations with the USA.

Sudan is also affected by a “brain drain”; highly qualified Sudanese (doctors, university professors) are leaving Sudan in high numbers to work in Saudi Arabia, and Sudanese investors are also going to Ethiopia.

6.3. Conflicts in the Horn of Africa

6.3.1. The Somalia conflict

While the infiltration of radical militant Islam is perceived as a national security threat, Khartoum is also thought to have some leverage in the conflict, as many Islamists in
Somalia are educated at Khartoum’s Islamic International University of Africa.

Sudan has a formal (military) presence in Somalia and wants to maintain its importance in Mogadishu; at the same time political decision makers have realized the shift towards a regional approach to Somalia of which Sudan is not part.

6.3.2. The Sudan – South Sudan conflict

The secession of South Sudan came abruptly and not all outstanding issues had been discussed and settled beforehand. The SPLM-North is still leading a rebellion in two of Sudan’s states, Blue Nile and South Kordofan, and these conflicts need to be resolved before there can be peace between Sudan and South Sudan. From Sudanese officials’ point of view, the AU HIP actively and positively addresses Abyei.

Sudan’s primary interests are to stop insurgencies in contested border areas (security is the first priority) and to secure access to oil reserves in these areas. At the time of the FES regional expert meeting (May 2014) it was unsure for how long the pipeline between South Sudan and Sudan would remain open, because oil production in South Sudan is very low due to the ongoing civil war. Discussants argued that from Sudan’s perspective, the current crisis in South Sudan could escalate into a regional war.

Security issues dominate Sudan’s relationship with South Sudan, although people living in the border regions have joint economic interests. It was argued that Sudan should invest in providing supplies to the north of South Sudan, since an estimated two thirds of the South Sudanese population lives there.

6.3.3. The use of the Nile Waters

Egyptians and Sudanese have strong historical and cultural ties. In the past Sudan sided with Egypt regarding “the Nile question”; it was believed that other riparian states would undermine the historic privileges that Sudan has on the Nile waters. Today Sudanese officials argue that the GERD will not endanger Sudan’s water interests but will benefit the country by stabilizing the flow of the Nile waters and by possibly preventing Sudan’s annual floods in this way. The GERD will also generate electricity, which can be exported to Sudan. Ethiopia’s current energy policy is thought to serve its own national interests and in Sudan’s view, it is Ethiopia’s right to build the GERD. To resolve the tensions with Egypt tripartite talks are necessary, the AU could play a role here.

An observer argued that the fact that Sudan is siding with Ethiopia in “the Nile issue” is also connected to Ethiopian support in resolving conflicts with South Sudan, in particular in Abyei: “if we stand with the Egyptians, the Ethiopians will change their view”.

6.4. Sudan’s relationships in the Horn of Africa

In the HOA, South Sudan is arguably the most important country for Sudan. The two states share borders, tribes and resources, as well as a long history of conflict. Sudan’s relationship with South Sudan is still considered a challenge and in view of the outbreak of civil war in South Sudan, Sudan is now also concerned about its stability. The conflict was described as essentially being “fighting between tribes”.

Ethiopia is viewed as the second most
important country for Sudan in the HOA, due to its population and market size as well as its market resources (irrigation and electricity). Sudan is aware of Ethiopia’s importance in the region and is intent to uphold a good strategic relationship with its neighbour. Sudan managed to keep a neutral position during the war between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and has been able to maintain good relationships with both states.

In Sudan’s view Ethiopia plays a significant role for peace and stability in the region: Addis Ababa has become a hub for peace activities on Sudan and the Ethiopian peace troops in Abyei are seen as impartial and are appreciated as an African contribution to UN troops. Ethiopia has also supported the AU HIP. Ethiopia’s late Prime Minister Meles is missed as a “visionary African leader”; he also had a close relationship with President al-Bashir. The ruling party in Ethiopia is considered to still follow Meles’ course.

Sudanese relations with Eritrea are thought to have normalized since 2006. Eritrea needs Sudan more than Sudan needs Eritrea; it depends on Sudan for basic commodities such as sugar and oil, but – it was emphasised – not for arms supplies.

Relations with Kenya are described as “normal” and “surprisingly good”, considering that Kenya is also competing with Sudan: it is encouraging South Sudan to reroute its oil pipeline as part of the LAPSSET project and is thought to aim at replacing Port Sudan. Sudan and Kenya have a common enemy, the ICC, and Kenya is recognised for its economic importance in the HOA.

Sudan’s relationship with Uganda is regarded as being poor; it has been so for the past 16-17 years. Sudan has always accused President Museveni of supporting the SPLM and southern Sudan, as well as the ICC in the case against President al-Bashir. Kampala also reputedly hosts leaders of Darfur rebel groups. Sudan, in turn, is accused of supporting the LRA in Uganda during the civil war. Relations between the two states are said to have become tenser recently. Uganda is seen to have “hegemonic ambitions” in the HOA.

6.5. Sudan’s relationships with actors external to the Horn of Africa

Instability and the threat of terrorism emanating from West Africa are also perceived as national security threats to Sudan. Reasons for instability include the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the region after the downfall of Libya and the conflict in Mali. All this has had a direct impact on Sudan, for example, the dramatic reduction of oil imports from Libya. A disintegrated Libya is considered a major security threat to the region. Relations with Chad are described as “excellent”, and the relationship with CAR is now based on cooperation.

Historically, Sudan has consistently upheld good relations with “the Arab countries”. Since the Arab Spring Sudan is looking more towards the Gulf States than towards Egypt. Saudi Arabia and Qatar are perceived to be competing for influence in Sudan; both states do so by offering social support, for example by founding associations and building mosques. While Saudi Arabia has an important religious and political impact on Sudan, some observers consider Sudan’s relationship with Qatar closer that its relationship with Saudi Arabia. Sudan also has a strategic and ideological partnership with Iran, which Saudi Arabia is not happy
about. There are many Sudanese expatriates in the Gulf region and their remittances are crucial for the economy (state level) and families (micro-level).

After the imposition of US economic sanctions and “terrorism lists”, Sudan’s relationship with the West has deteriorated; it is now looking towards the East. The fact that the new generation of Sudanese academics are no longer trained in the US and the UK, but are offered Chinese scholarships, is given as an example for the change. Turkey and Malaysia are also common places to study. Although, faced with Western embargoes Sudan has turned to other partners, it is argued that it needs the USA more than China. The sanctions are painful: technology transfer and borrowing are cut, Sudanese accounts in UAE, Russia or the UK are closed.

China has much to offer. It has been instrumental in oil exploration in Sudan and has cancelled many debts. It also does not try to “dictate” traditions in democracy and human rights. China is involved in major infrastructure projects in Sudan (e.g. the new airport) but also in peace issues; it has appointed a Special Envoy for Darfur and has sent its own peacekeepers. The Sudanese regime seems quite confident about the Chinese position. The first office of the new Chinese Peace Fund will open in Sudan, and party-to-party relations between the NCP and CP have improved. However, other observers question whether China can play a positive role in supporting peace in Sudan. Chinese interest in South Sudan could mean a big change in its relationship with Sudan. For example, from 2000 onwards Sudan was offered an annual loan of 3 billion USD, but this stopped in 2011. Despite these developments it was stated that there is no debate within the Sudanese government on its relationship with China.

Political dialogue between Sudan and the EU stopped in the early 2000s. The EU does not follow a common policy when it comes to Sudan. The UK, Germany and France are considered influential – as individual countries – and debt release is a big issue in bilateral relations. Norway is noted for its positive engagement: it was a key player in the CPA and acts as a consultant on oil business between Sudan and South Sudan. EU states’ involvement in Sudan is viewed as less ideological than that of the US.

Discussants argued that a problem with external engagement in Sudan is that partners from abroad tend to solely focus on “the Khartoum perspective” instead of taking regional perspectives into account too.

6.6. Sudan and regionalism:
perspectives on IGAD, EAC, and AU

Sudan is a member of IGAD. Initially the Sudanese government rejected the organisation, as it was perceived as a tool of the USA, but has since recognised it as a useful diplomatic forum. IGAD played an important role in negotiating the CPA, and also served Sudanese interests when it lobbied for President al-Bashir and President Kenyatta against the ICC.

Sudanese discussants expressed the view that IGAD needs to be strengthened and that it has a bigger potential than is currently visible; it could, for example, be used to enable more economic integration in the region. Other observers argue that IGAD’s role is limited; for example, it has so far been unable to have a significant impact.
on the stalled relationship between Eritrea and Ethiopia or the Somalia conflict.

Some Sudanese observers criticise the AU because it is unwilling to take measures against the government in Khartoum, which is seen to use the AU to fight the ICC rather than to resolve conflicts. The organisation is also argued to lack capacity and resources, the consequences of which were evident in the deployment of AU troops to Darfur in 2005/6. Sudan’s “allies” in the AU include the Egyptian and other North African governments, as well as that in Chad.

The Sudanese official position expresses a more positive view on the AU; the AU supports Sudan in its fight against the ICC and played an important role in the implementation of the CPA as well as in efforts to stabilize South Kordofan, Blue Nile, and Darfur. The AU HIP is seen as a chance to reach an agreement with the SPLM-North. The AU is also seen to have played an important role in responding to conflicts in Cote d’Ivoire and Mali.

Importantly for many, the AU is perceived as a “shield against Western intervention”. It is an African platform that can help Sudan to achieve some objectives without “giving in to the West”; this is more symbolic than it may be in actual fact. Further perceived weaknesses of the AU are that it is not fully independent and depends on the international community for financial support.

7. Tanzania’s National Security Interests in the Horn of Africa and East Africa

The roundtable discussions and interviews in Dar es Salaam took place on the 25th and 26th November 2013. The participants were political experts, academics, journalists, and officials from the Tanzanian government.

7.1. Tanzania’s national security policy

Tanzania’s national and foreign security policy is generated in-house. There are some official documents on foreign policy available to the public, but no documents on security policies and it is very difficult to access information on national security or foreign policy debates in parliament. The impression is that there is very little discussion of security issues in civil society.

7.2. Conflicts in the Horn of Africa

The main security threat coming from the HOA region is the continuing conflict in Somalia. Although Somalia is far away in geographical terms, instability and insecurity there affect Tanzania – terrorism and piracy are viewed as threats to Tanzania’s national security.

The greatest perceived security threat is the infiltration of radical Islam and its influence on the local population. It is feared that “desperate youth” in the country will be recruited for international terrorist activities, as is seen happening in Uganda and Kenya. This concern resonates strongly with local grievances: parts of Tanzania’s Muslim population feel marginalised and
oppressed, making them a more likely target for recruitment by external extremist movements. In addition, there is growing suspicion towards Somalis in Tanzania. As entrepreneurs with money it is argued they “could do anything”.

Despite the security threat posed by Somalia through the infiltration of radical Islam and possible terrorist attacks, Tanzania has not committed troops to Somalia to help stabilise the situation there. This job is already covered by other EAC member states. It was argued that there are no Tanzanian troops in Somalia because there is little direct impact of events in the HOA on the political and security situation in Tanzania. However, should the rumours that there are large quantities of oil in Somalia be true, this could radically change external engagement.

A further reason not to get involved is the threat of retaliation. If Tanzania were to have troops in Somalia, the country would be a more likely target for terrorist attacks. The attacks in Kampala (2010) and Nairobi (2013) are named as cases in point. The fact that Tanzania sees itself as a close ally of the USA is considered to make the country a possible target too.

The military engagement of Somalia’s neighbours Ethiopia and Kenya is viewed positively and as legitimate. From Tanzania’s perspective, these states have intervened to protect their national security, whereas actors external to the region “lack the political will to resolve the Somalia issue”.

The Sudan – South Sudan conflict poses no immediate threat to Tanzania. The Tanzanian troops in Sudan (UNAMID) were sent in response to UN and AU requests. Contributing troops to this multilateral peace operation serves economic interests – the troops are being paid (well) – and promotes the regional image of Tanzania as an actor for peace.

7.3. Conflict in the DRC and the Great Lakes Region

“The country’s regional interest is peace”. Conflict in the Great Lakes Region is a big security concern for Tanzania. Stability and peaceful neighbourly relations are a prerequisite to safeguard security inside the country, as instability in neighbouring countries has a direct impact on Tanzania, for example through an influx of refugees. Some states in the region – notably Uganda and Rwanda – are seen to follow an “expansionist agenda”, which is also viewed as a threat to regional peace and stability.

It is debated whether Tanzania’s active involvement in the DRC since 2012 indicates a real change in its foreign policy or not. The situation in the DRC is not perceived as an immediate security threat to Tanzania and the country’s involvement is arguably largely driven by economic interests. Tanzania wants more control over current developments in the DRC to be able to establish a trade relationship and profit from its resources. There is a sense that Tanzania missed out on this opportunity in the 1990s.

Tanzania’s active involvement in the DRC also helps to reassert its influence and image in the region. There has been debate – mainly in the media, not so much in parliament – that Tanzania had lost influence in the region through its lack of response to Rwanda in the 1990s, and its unwillingness to commit troops to the DRC in the past, although Tanzania considers its troops to be better
than Ugandan and Rwandan forces.

Tanzania has no open conflicts with any of its neighbours, but there is marked competition and conflict of interests between Tanzania and Rwanda in the DRC. The involvement of Rwanda in the DRC is viewed critically: “countries that are part of the problem should not be involved in troop contribution”. There is a view in Tanzania that Rwanda’s involvement in the DRC is driven by economic and security interests: the looting of mineral resources, as well as the alleged support of the M23 and fight against the FDLR.

China is an important external actor in this conflict. It is very interested in the DRC’s resources and supplies weapons to the Congolese government. South Africa is very interested in resources in the DRC too.

7.4. Tanzania and regionalism: the EAC and SADC

There are tensions in Tanzania’s relationship with the EAC because Tanzania is perceived to be reluctant to open up economic relations with other EAC member states. This is reflected in a big ongoing debate in the country about how Tanzania wants to position itself in the regional organisation. Tanzania has always been reluctant towards a federation and is very protective of its resources. There is a lot of insecurity with regard to what regional economic integration would mean in practice.

In the roundtable discussions it was argued that Tanzania has good opportunities to develop its economy but does not act fast enough on them. When others do, it feels isolated. One of the main issues and fears related to regional integration concerns land. Tanzania is a huge country with undeveloped land and overpopulated neighbouring states. It is sceptical towards free movement across borders because it fears that, should it open its borders, immigrants from other EAC member states would overrun the country. The argument that Tanzania is protecting the land of its people is also used by the government to justify why Tanzania is lagging behind other EAC member states with regard to regional economic integration.

While Tanzania feels part of the Southern African community (historically), its more immediate focus is on its neighbours in East Africa. Tanzania barely has any trade, nor realistic projects for increased economic cooperation, with other SADC member states. The greater part of its population is in touch with the EAC, rather than Southern Africa. The EAC is also seen as the place to find common solutions to regional security crises, even though it has not established formal institutions to work on peace and security issues (yet). However, SADC is important as a forum to be involved in; it can serve as a useful political umbrella, for example to legitimise Tanzania’s current involvement in the DRC. Tanzania’s involvement in both the EAC and SADC illustrates the logic of being a member of different regional organisations.
8. National Security Interests and Responses to Conflicts in the Horn of Africa: Regional Perspectives

This chapter reflects some of the discussions held at the FES regional expert meeting in Addis Ababa, which took place in May 2014. It focuses on “regional perspectives” on national security interests and responses to conflicts in the HOA. Points referring to the perspectives of individual countries have been included in the country reports above.

8.1. The Somalia conflict

States in the HOA have common interests with regard to Somalia. Historically, these include containing the influence of Islam in the region and the threat of “jihadism”, as well as preventing the formation of a “Greater Somalia” (a vision which is said to include the Ogaden region of Ethiopia, areas of Kenya, Djibouti, Somaliland, and the “main Somalia block”). More recently, common interests extend to preventing terrorist attacks by Al-Shabaab – in retaliation to foreign troops in Somalia – and the infiltration of radical Islam in the countries of the Horn and Eastern Africa. Al-Shabaab is seen to recruit members and conduct trainings across different countries in the region.

The current situation in Somalia is perceived as a regional threat. While cross-border cooperation is important, states in the HOA have, to a large extent, responded to the threat individually. From this perspective, it was argued, the “regional response” to Somalia can be seen as a string of unilateral interventions while AMISOM provides an arrangement in which states can act together. AMISOM should be considered a huge achievement for the region, especially considering that, initially, states in the HOA were reluctant to provide troops for a multilateral peacekeeping force. Instead of backing their favourite insurgencies and playing out regional competition in another country – from a historical perspective not an unlikely scenario – states in the region were able to “cobble out” a regional force. The question to which extent AMISOM can be considered a regional approach remains open though. Is AMISOM essentially an umbrella approach with every state involved following its own strategy? To which extent are states working together in AMISOM? While the discussants considered the motive of earning foreign money and building the national capacities of armies by having access to training and equipment reimbursement a valid argument for states to join forces under an international mandate, they stressed that this motive should not be exaggerated.

Some governments in the region are perceived to overplay the threat posed by Al-Shabaab for domestic and international audiences; it can be instrumentalised in two ways: to attract external support (e.g. financial, training, capacity building), and/or to justify stronger internal political control (e.g. anti-terrorism laws).

States in the HOA want a stable government in Mogadishu but, it was argued, they do not share a common vision for a state system in Somalia. While there may not be a home-grown demand for federalism (by all), it is seen as the reality on the ground (Somaliland, Puntland, emerging Jubaland, other less stable regional administrations):
“in Somalia we are already beyond a centralised state”.

In the view of other states in the region, Kenya’s role in the HOA is changing; its regional policy has become more strategic and the Kenyan government is now actively engaged in important regional issues. One reason for this is thought to be that Kenya perceives that other countries are “catching up” and it must therefore secure its standing in the Horn and East Africa.

8.2. The South Sudan conflict

Some observers view the independence struggle of South Sudan as a “regional project” and therefore consider it tangible that “the region” feels it also has a responsibility to make the project work. During the discussion a comparison was drawn between the regional response to the 2005/6 situation in Somalia and the current civil war in South Sudan: the regional response began with a unilateral intervention (Ethiopia and Uganda respectively), a regional force was constructed in haste, and gradually the unilateral force left and the regional force became stronger. A notable difference between the two cases is that it took the region a long time to respond to Somalia, while in the case of South Sudan an initial regional response (the IGAD mediation process) was put in place shortly after the outbreak of the conflict. There is an ongoing debate about the creation of a regional force in South Sudan that could replace Ugandan forces – this was noted as being almost identical to what Meles suggested in 2006 with regard to Somalia.

At the time of the FES expert meeting in May 2014 neither the form of, nor possible contributors to, a regional “protection force” were clear. While IGAD could be the place where this regional approach is developed some discussants questioned whether the organisation will be able to hold the states in the region together in the case of South Sudan. Points of concern include the observation of increased competition between Ethiopia and Uganda for a leading role in response to conflicts in the region, and tensions between Sudan and South Sudan. From a regional perspective Ethiopia and Kenya look at South Sudan though the same prism: establish peace and security to enable development and economic relations.

8.3. The use of the Nile Waters

From the perspective of discussants from the HOA, power in the region has shifted from Egypt to Ethiopia. It was argued that the response of other states in the region to the current tensions over the use of the Nile Waters depends, among other things, on whether the respective state supports the “new power” by siding with Ethiopia or attempts to “balance power” by siding with Egypt. The riparian states do not speak with one voice; this is also due to the fact that they all have different bilateral agreements with Egypt. The discussants concluded that the region must focus on confidence building between Egypt and Ethiopia, and that bilateral talks are currently more pressing than trilateral meetings.

8.4. Regionalism and regional organisations in the Horn of Africa

Regional factors are considered very powerful in the HOA and the region is considered to be growing as the Horn and East Africa are increasingly connected.
While states in the region may, in some cases, host each other’s rebel groups, it is argued that the channels of communication between their heads of state are open.

The main reason why regional organisations are important is that they provide a forum for discussing transnational issues and concerns. IGAD leads on security cooperation in the HOA. Far from being a supranational organisation with executive powers, it is considered to play an important role as a forum for negotiation. The discussants argued that regional organisations in the Horn and East Africa are sometimes judged unfairly and according to standards that disregard the difficult political situation in the region. They are squeezed in between the competing interests and conflicts of their member states and must respond to these sensitivities. The question of IGAD’s funding, however, is viewed critically: governments in the region seem to have little incentive to fund the regional organisation while they appear perfectly willing to invest in national defence and the like.

In an attempt to nuance the discussion on Ethiopia’s role in IGAD, which is perceived to commonly follow the rhetoric of “Ethiopia dominates IGAD’s agenda and uses it to fulfil its own interests”, it was argued that Ethiopia started using IGAD as a diplomatic tool to solve legitimate problems it had in the region, and that now other states are beginning to use it in this way too. The discussants agreed that IGAD’s agenda is not solely dominated by Ethiopia but that other states have the space to address their issues in IGAD too.

Eritrea has applied to rejoin IGAD after it suspended itself in 2007. While its application is “under consideration” by Ethiopia and Kenya, Sudan would support Eritrea rejoining. All states in the region are said to want Eritrea to be a member of IGAD again, but only an Eritrea who is “agreeable”, indicating that this is probably not possible under the current regime. Eritrea is actively engaged in the HOA (e.g. Sudan, South Sudan) and it is therefore considered important that it is included in the regional forum.
# Appendix: Matrixes

## I. National security interests and conflicts in the Horn of Africa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ethiopia</th>
<th>Kenya</th>
<th>South Sudan</th>
<th>Sudan</th>
<th>Tanzania</th>
<th>Uganda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Somalia conflict** | - Contain infiltration of radical Islam and prevent terrorist attacks  
- Military response through AMISOM (since 2014)  
- Support government in Mogadishu  
- Vision for polit. system?  
- Limit influence of Eritrea  
- Positioning as a regional power for peace & stability  
- Territorial: Secure Somali region, combat OLF  
- Secure border: Contain influx of Somali refugees (security threat) & combat smuggling of small arms (sec. and econ. threat) | - Contain infiltration of radical Islam and prevent terrorist attacks  
- Military response through AMISOM (since 2011)  
- Vision for polit. system?  
- Create “buffer state” in Jubaland  
- Economic interests: Oil, prevent security risks to LAPSET in Somali regions  
- Access to Kismayo port  
- Secure border and contain influx of Somali refugees (security threat) | - Prevent infiltration of radical Islam  
- Cooperate with Ethiopia and Kenya on anti-terrorism  
- Relationship with Mogadishu? | - Prevent infiltration of radical Islam  
- Maintain influence and importance in Mogadishu through “formal presence” | - Prevent infiltration of radical Islam  
- Prevent terrorist and piracy attacks  
- No military involvement  
- No strong economic incentive to get involved | - Contain infiltration of radical Islam and prevent terrorist attacks  
- Military response through AMISOM (since 2007)  
- Vision for political system: support strong central state  
- Initially intervention also driven by strong personalities (M7 – Meles), no longer  
- Troop deployment as a strategic foreign policy tool  
- Image and positioning in the HOA: “regional ambitions”  
- Military employment  
- Alignment with Western/US interests |
| **Sudan – South Sudan conflict** | - Peace & stability: spillover would have internal political implications for E.  
- Political solution  
- Role as regional peacemaker through mediation and impartial troops (UNISFA)  
- Uphold good relations with Sudan and South Sudan: leverage  
- Economic incentive: Oil  
- Contain influence of Eritrea  
- Stabilize states close to the GERD | - Conflict is not perceived as a direct security threat to K  
- Support political solution  
- Economic incentive: Oil | - Normalize relations with Khartoum  
- Stabilize border areas  
- Secure borders and resources in border areas  
- Economic incentive: Oil | - Resolve conflicts in Blue Nile and South Kordofan before peace with South Sudan is possible  
- Support of Ethiopia’s involvement in Abyei  
- Economic collaboration with South Sudan  
- Support of AU HIP as a chance to reach an agreement with SPLM-North  
- Economic incentive: Oil | - Troop contribution UNAMID: following request of UN and AU, no further political motivation  
- Regional and international image as a peacekeeper  
- Economic incentive: troop payment | - Contain security threat posed by Khartoum ("Arabisation" from the North; “pan-African” cause)  
- Interest in a political solution is unclear  
- Economic incentive: Oil |
| South Sudan conflict | - Prevent state collapse in South Sudan: Instability has internal political implications for E, e.g. influx of refugees and insecurity in Gambella  
- Political influence  
- Contain influence of Eritrea  
- Investment opportunities  
- Economic incentives: Oil & LAPSET | - Prevent state collapse in South Sudan  
- Influence in South Sudan through investment & capacity building  
- Establish trade relations  
- Economic interests: Oil & LAPSET | - Peace and stability  
- Functioning transitional government [perspective before the current civil war] | - Stability in South Sudan  
- Economic incentive: access to oil | [Not discussed] | - Prevent state collapse in South Sudan  
- Military engagement, not possible to withdraw now  
- “Re-hat” troops under multilateral peace operation  
- Economic interests: trade and oil  
- Influence in South Sudan and the region (seen as personal ambition of M7)  
- Troops: strategic leverage |
| Nile conflict | - GERD: major development project  
- Contain threat from Egypt  
- Support of NBI  
- Signatory of CFA  
- Potential security threats: Egyptian troops in South Sudan & Eritrean-Egyptian relations | - Support of NBI  
- Signatory of CFA  
[Nile not discussed in roundtable discussion] | - Support of NBI (but not signatories yet) | - Support of Ethiopia’s position; GERD will benefit Sudan  
- Support of tripartite talks btw. Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan | - Support of NBI  
- Signatory of CFA  
[Nile not discussed in roundtable discussion] | - Contain threat from Egypt  
- Support of NBI  
- Signatory of CFA |
### II. Competing and coinciding interests: Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda

#### Ethiopia and Kenya

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competing interests</th>
<th>Ethiopia’s perspective</th>
<th>Kenya’s perspective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- K involved in “spoils game” in Somalia and interested in keeping AMISOM going as long as possible (economic incentives), E wants exit strategy</td>
<td>- K not collaborating enough in infrastructure projects</td>
<td>- E: Over-securitization; E views economic relationships through a security lens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- K’s economic involvement in South Sudan is creating tensions</td>
<td>- Lack of will to cooperate is a misconception of E</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Coinciding interests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coinciding interests</th>
<th>Ethiopia’s perspective</th>
<th>Kenya’s perspective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Recently renewed defense pact</td>
<td>- Good relationship between President Kenyatta and Prime Minister Hailemariam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- More economic cooperation, idea of a “progressive leader forum”</td>
<td>- Infrastructure projects, including LAPSET</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Somalia:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Contain threat of militant Islam and terrorist attacks by Al-Shabaab through military means</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Address security crisis in Somalia through AMISOM</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Troops are part of AMISOM: support of a regional approach [but to what extent?]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Territorial dimension: Contain threat of expansion, i.e. idea of a “Greater Somalia”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- The Sudans:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- South Sudan and Sudan – South Sudan conflicts: support of finding a political solution, mediation-approach, work through regional organizations (primarily IGAD)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ethiopia’s role as a peacemaker in the region: i.e. troops in UNISFA, role in IGAD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Profit from economic opportunities in South Sudan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Uganda and Ethiopia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competing interests</th>
<th>Uganda’s perspective</th>
<th>Ethiopia’s perspective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Support and seek influence in South Sudan (idea of a “buffer state”), Khartoum is a declared enemy</td>
<td>- Best to work together with both Sudan and South Sudan; U’s political role in the Sudan - South Sudan conflict could be an impediment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- E is viewed as a competitor in gaining influence in South Sudan</td>
<td>- Tension between Uganda’s military involvement in South Sudan and regional (IGAD, E &amp; K) mediation efforts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- E’s military influence in Sudan and South Sudan and its troops in UNISFA are viewed critically</td>
<td>- M7 seeks influence in South Sudan, his personal leadership ambitions in the region could jeopardize peace</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- E (and K) said to be interested in a federal and weak Somalia, U wants to support creation of a strong centralized state</td>
<td>- U’s economic involvement in South Sudan is creating tensions</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>- Troops are part of AMISOM: support of a regional approach [but to what extent?]</td>
<td>- Initial involvement in Somalia: Mutual support of leaders, strong personal relationship between M7 and Meles</td>
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<th>South Sudan</th>
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<td>- Stable South Sudan with functioning government and state institutions</td>
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### Kenya and Uganda

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<th>Competing interests</th>
<th>Kenya’s perspective</th>
<th>Uganda’s perspective</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- U’s foreign policy is driven by M7’s regional leadership ambitions, can hamper regional efforts</td>
<td>- K’s involvement in Somalia is seen as being slow and not effective</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- U is competitor in gaining influence in South Sudan and profiting from economic opportunities</td>
<td>- K’s presence in Jubaland is driven by economic incentives</td>
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<td>- Stable South Sudan with functioning government</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Profit from economic opportunities in the new state</td>
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## III. Perspectives on regional organisations

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<th></th>
<th>Ethiopia</th>
<th>Kenya</th>
<th>South Sudan</th>
<th>Sudan</th>
<th>Tanzania</th>
<th>Uganda</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IGAD</td>
<td>- Over-securitization is a weakness</td>
<td>- Members don’t share common values or norms of behavior, conflict close at hand</td>
<td>- Important and positive role as a forum for regional peacekeeping and mediation, must be strengthened in this role</td>
<td>- CPA a IGAD success&lt;br&gt;- Declining role: no significant impact on&lt;br&gt;e.g. Ethiopia-Eritrea or Somalia&lt;br&gt;- Full potential not used, must be strengthened&lt;br&gt;- Economic integration must be fast-tracked</td>
<td>[Not discussed in roundtable discussion]</td>
<td>- Serves national interests of strong member states&lt;br&gt;- Controlled by Ethiopia&lt;br&gt;- Useful as a coordination mechanism</td>
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<tr>
<td>EAC</td>
<td>- EAC members would be wary if E would join; E prefers to maintain &quot;political autonomy&quot;</td>
<td>- Viewed positively</td>
<td>- Debated as an option for the future: opinions diverge btw. joining now or “not ready yet”</td>
<td>[Not discussed in interviews]</td>
<td>- Tensions with EAC: T reluctant to open up economic relations (e.g. land-issue) &lt;br&gt;- But: future seen in EAC, not SADC (although SADC useful as a political umbrella)</td>
<td>- Positive role&lt;br&gt;- &quot;More democratic&quot; than IGAD</td>
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<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>[Not discussed in roundtable discussion]</td>
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<td>- AU instrumentalised, e.g. to fight the ICC&lt;br&gt;- Can have positive role in addressing conflict&lt;br&gt;- “African forum”&lt;br&gt;- Dependant on financial support of the international community</td>
<td>[Not discussed in roundtable discussion]</td>
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About the author:

Katharina Newbery is a PhD student at the University of St Andrews, UK. Her research interest is in regional intervention politics and security cooperation in the Horn of Africa, with a focus on Ethiopian, Ugandan, and Kenyan responses to conflict in Somalia and the Sudans. From September 2013 to July 2014 she worked as a project manager for the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) in Addis Ababa.

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The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia coordinates the work of FES on security policy in sub-Sahara Africa in the Horn of Africa and wider Eastern Africa region and, together with the FES offices in Abuja and Maputo, at the continental level. As a political foundation committed to the values of social democracy, FES aims at strengthening the interface between democracy and security policy. FES therefore facilitates political dialogue on security threats and their national, regional and continental responses.

In the framework of its regional programme on security policy in the Horn of Africa, FES Addis Ababa implemented a project on “Mapping National Security Interests in the Horn of Africa” in 2013 and 2014. The project is a contribution to creating an open and inclusive debate on national security interests in regional fora in the Horn of Africa. The aim of the discussion series is to increase transparency and thereby build trust between political actors in the region, enabling them to address competing interests in areas in which these (potentially) hinder a cooperative approach to regional security crises. This publication is a summary report reflecting the output of the FES “Mapping National Security Interests in the Horn of Africa” project. It aims to contribute to the dialogue on national security interests and the regional response to conflicts in the Horn of Africa by making relevant discussions and analysis widely accessible.

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