



T.C.

CANKIRI KARATEKIN UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

DEPARTMENT

**A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF BORDER DISPUTES,
ETHNIC IDENTITY, AND CONFLICT DYNAMICS IN
THE ETHIOPIA-ERITREA WAR (1998–2000) AND THE
ETHIOPIA-SOMALIA OGADEN CONFLICT (1977–
1988).**

Robleh Mohamed ROBLEH

MASTER'S THESIS

Supervisor

Prof. Dr. Sezai ÖZÇELİK

Çankırı – 2025

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
SCIENTIFIC ETHICS STATEMENT	v
THESIS ACCEPTANCE AND APPROVAL.....	vi
PREFACE	vii
ABSTRACT	viii
ÖZET.....	ix
ABBREVIATIONS	xi
LIST OF MAPS.....	xii
LIST OF FIGURES	xiii
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Background of the study.....	3
1.2. Research Question	5
1.3. Objective of the study.....	5
1.4. Significance of the study	6
1.5. Methodology	6
2. THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF CONFLICT 10	
2.1. Understanding Conflict: Key Concepts and Theories	10
2.1.1 Basic Human Needs Theory	13
2.1.2 Basic Human Needs in African Conflicts	15
2.1.3 Theories of Border Disputes and Territorial Conflict	15
2.1.4 Ethnic Identity and Conflict: A Conceptual Analysis.....	17
2.1.4.1.1 The primordialist.....	19
2.1.4.1.2 The instrumentalist.....	20
2.1.4.1.3 The constructivism	20
2.1.5 Conflict Mapping	23
2.1.6 Applying Sandole's Framework to Understanding Conflict.....	23
2.2. Conflict Flow Diagram (CFD).....	27
2.2.1. Conflict Parties	27
2.2.2. Conflict Topics and History	29
2.2.3. Causes and Conditions of Conflict	30
2.2.4. Conflict Context	31
2.2.5. Conflict Dynamics.....	31
2.2.6. Conflict Outcome and Intervention Methods	34
2.2.7. Techniques and Tools for Conflict Resolution.....	38
3. APPLYING SANDOLE'S APPROACH TO THE ERITREA-ETHIOPIA AND ETHIOPIA-SOMALIA CONFLICTS	42
3.1 Historical Overview of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Conflict	42
3.2 Historical Overview of the Ethiopia-Somalia Conflict.....	45
3.3 First Pillar: The Actors and Issues in the Eritrea-Ethiopia Conflict	50

3.3.1 Key Actors	50
3.3.1.1 Ethiopian-Government.....	50
3.3.1.2 Eritrean Government.....	51
3.3.2 Core Issues	53
3.3.2.1 Political Disagreement	53
3.3.2.2 Economic Factors.....	54
3.3.2.3 Territorial dispute.....	55
3.4 First Pillar: The Actors and Issues in the Ethiopia-Somalia Conflict	56
3.4.1 Principal Actors.....	56
3.4.1.1 Somali Government	56
3.4.1.2 Ethiopian Government	57
3.4.1.3 Soviet Union and Cuba	58
3.4.1.4 International Actors.....	59
3.4.2 Core Issues	59
3.4.2.1 Border conflict	59
3.4.2.2 Ethnic Identity.....	61
3.4.2.3 Economic Factors.....	62
3.5 Second Pillar: Conflict Processes in the Eritrea-Ethiopia War.....	63
3.5.1 Escalation and Militarization of the Conflict.....	63
3.6 Second Pillar: Conflict Processes in the Ethiopia-Somalia Conflict	64
3.6.1 Military Escalation of the Ogaden War	64
3.7 Overview of Sandole's Third Pillar: Conflict Resolution.....	65
3.7.1 Conflict resolution in Ethiopia-Eritrea war.....	65
3.7.2 Conflict resolution in Ogaden war	68
4. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE ERITREA-ETHIOPIA AND ETHIOPIA-SOMALIA CONFLICTS	70
4.1. Pillar I: Latent Conflict – Key Issues and Actors	70
4.2. Pillar II: Structural Conditions and Conflict Causes.....	71
4.3. Pillar III: Attempts at Conflict Intervention and Resolution.....	73
5. CONCLUSION.....	76
REFERENCES.....	77
APPENDICES	90
CURRICULUM VITAE.....	Hata! Yer işareti tanımlanmamış.

SCIENTIFIC ETHICS STATEMENT

Throughout the entire process of writing my master's thesis, which was titled *A Comparative Study of Border Disputes, Ethnic Identity, and Conflict Dynamics in the Ethiopia-Eritrea War (1998-2000) and the Ethiopia-Somalia Ogaden Conflict (1977-1988)*, I adhered strictly to all academic standards and regulations. I also made sure that I gathered all of the information for the thesis within the framework of these traditions and ethics. The works listed in the bibliography are the ones from which I have profited, and I affirm that I have properly cited all of my sources.

05/ 11 /2025

Signature

Robleh Mohamed ROBLEH

THESIS ACCEPTANCE AND APPROVAL

ÇANKIRI KARATEKIN UNIVERSITY

TO THE DIRECTORATE OF THE INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

This research entitled *A Comparative Study of Border Disputes, Ethnic Identity, and Conflict Dynamics in the Eritrea-Ethiopia War (1998-2000) and the Ethiopia-Somalia Ogaden Conflict (1977-1988)* authored by *Robleh Mohamed ROBLEH* was unanimously deemed successful following the thesis defense conducted on 05/11/2025 and was approved as a Master's thesis in the *Department of Political Science and International Relations* English by our jury.

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Member: Doç. Dr. Levent Ersin ORALLI

Signature:

APPROVAL

This Master's thesis was approved by the jury appointed at the session of the Çankırı Karatekin University Institute of Graduate Studies Executive Board, dated2025 and numbered

Prof. Dr. Ali YİĞİT

Director of the Institute

PREFACE

This thesis is the result of my deep interest in understanding the complexities of border disputes, ethnic identity, and conflict dynamics in the Horn of Africa. The Ethiopia-Eritrea War (1998–2000) and the Ethiopia–Somalia Ogaden Conflict (1964–1988) stand as two significant cases where contested borders and politicized ethnic identities fueled prolonged hostilities.

The research journey has been both intellectually challenging and personally rewarding. Conducting interviews with diplomats, scholars, and representatives of regional organizations allowed me to gain first-hand insights into the realities of these conflicts beyond the narratives found in existing literature. These conversations, combined with an extensive review of historical records, academic studies, and policy documents, have shaped the findings presented in this work.

I wish to express my deepest gratitude and sincere appreciation to my Parents, particularly my mother, I am extremely thankful for her and all her support. Without her, I would have given up a long time ago. She was an inspiration source and boosted my spirit with such unimaginable advices. Secondly,

I am profoundly grateful to **Prof. Dr. Sezai ÖZÇELİK**, for His friendly guidance and expert advice which have played a crucial role in the refinement of this dissertation. I also thank the interview participants for their time, openness, and willingness to share their knowledge and experiences. Without their contributions, this thesis would not have been possible. Without forgetting my friends who has believed in me and was my source of motivations.

I hope that the empirical insights offered by this research will be useful to academic and policy audiences currently debating and acting towards prevention and resolution of such crises in Africa and elsewhere.

../../ 202.

Robleh Mohamed ROBLEH

ABSTRACT

Thesis Title : A Comparative Study of Border Disputes, Ethnic Identity, and Conflict Dynamics in the Ethiopia-Eritrea War (1998-2000) and the Ethiopia-Somalia Ogaden Conflict (1977-1988).

Author of the Thesis: Robleh Mohamed ROBLEH

Supervisor : Prof. Dr. Sezai ÖZÇELİK

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In this article, we explore how border disputes, ethnic identity and conflict dynamics interact by comparing two major conflicts in the Horn of Africa: The Eritrea–Ethiopia War (1998–2000) and Ethiopia–Somalia Ogaden Conflict (1977–1988). With qualitative analysis, the author bases on primary data of interviews with diplomats, academics and regional representatives, and secondary sources such as historical records and academic materials. Sandole’s three-pillar conflict model is used to rigorously analyze the actors, issues, processes of escalation and resolution options in both cases. The results suggest that ethnicized politics, combined with colonial boundaries that continued to shape identities until the present date, were main factors behind the escalation in both conflicts. And where the Eritrea Ethiopia conflict, as I indicated in Chapter 2, was essentially a question of post-colonial sovereignty and competing national narratives, the Ogaden war, for its part, simultaneously expressed irredentist claims of ethnic Somalia self-determination. In either scenario, the role of local and international actors were instrumental towards shaping conflicts. The comparative experience highlights the need to address historical grievances, promote inclusive governance and build capacity of regional mediation organs. Lessons learnt from them provide useful tools for resolving border disputes in Africa, where multiple identities and the challenge of disputed territories have proven to be a recurrent source of instability across countries.

Keywords: Border disputes, ethnic identity, Horn of Africa, Eritrea–Ethiopia War, Ogaden Conflict, Sandole’s framework.

ÖZET

Tez Adı : Etiyopya-Eritre Savaşı (1998–2000) ile Etiyopya-Somali Ogaden Çatışması (1977–1988) Arasında Sınır Anlaşmazlıkları, Etnik Kimlik ve Çatışma Dinamiklerinin Karşılaştırmalı Bir İncelemesi
Tezin Yazarı : Robleh Mohamed ROBLEH
Danışman : Prof. Dr. Sezai ÖZÇELİK
Anabilim Dalı : Siyaset Bilimi ve Uluslararası İlişkiler
Tez Türü: : Yüksek Lisans Tezi
Tarih : 05 Kasım 2025

Bu çalışma, Afrika Boynuzu'ndaki iki büyük çatışmanın, Eritre-Etiyopya Savaşı (1998-2000) ve Etiyopya-Somali Ogaden Çatışması'nın (1977-1988) karşılaştırmalı bir analizi yoluyla sınır anlaşmazlıkları, etnik kimlik ve çatışma dinamikleri arasındaki etkileşimi incelemektedir. Bölge temsilcileri, diplomatlar ve akademisyenlerle yapılan görüşmelere dayalı bir alan çalışması yapan yaz için, geleneksel bir metot, alan çalışması alan çalışması verdi. Sandole'nin üç sütunlu çatışma çerçevesi, her iki durumda da aktörleri, sorunları, tırmanma süreçlerini ve çözüm çabalarını sistematik olarak değerlendirmek için uygulanmaktadır. İkincil kaynaklar; temel veriler, tarihsel kayıtlar ve akademik literatür gibi unsurları içermekte olup, her iki çatışmanın da sömürge dönemi sınırlandırmalarının bir sonucu olarak, her iki tarafın da siyasete dâhil olduğu ve etnisitenin siyasallaşarak karşıt bir unsur hâline geldiği bir süreçte tırmandığını ortaya koymaktadır. Eritre-Etiyopya çatışması, öncelikle çatışan ulusal anlatılarla karmaşıklaşan bir bağımsızlık sonrası egemenlik anlaşmazlığıyken, Ogaden çatışması etnik Somali özyönetimine dayanan irredantist iddialarla şekillenmiştir. Her iki durumda da, bölgesel ve uluslararası aktörlerin katılımı çatışma yörüngelerini etkilemede belirleyici bir rol oynamıştır.

Karşılaştırmalı analiz, tarihsel yakınmalar ele alınmasının, kapsayıcı yönetişimin sağlanmasının ve bölgesel arabuluculuk mekanizmalarının güçlendirilmesinin önemini vurgulamaktadır. Bu vakalardan alınan dersler, örtüşen kimliklerin ve tartışmalı bölgelerin barış ve istikrar için önemli zorluklar oluşturmaya devam ettiği Afrika'daki gelecekteki sınır anlaşmazlıklarının çözümü için pratik rehberlik sunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sınır anlaşmazlıkları, etnik kimlik, Afrika Boynuzu, Eritre-Etiyopya Savaşı, Ogaden Çatışması, Sandole'nin çerçevesi.



ABBREVIATIONS

ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
AU	African Union
CFD	Conflict Flow Diagram
CPF	Conflict Prevention Framework
EEBC	Eritrea–Ethiopia Boundary Commission
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EECC	Eritrea-Ethiopia Claims Commission
EPL	Eritrean Liberation Front
EPLF	Eritrean People’s Liberation Front
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NFD	Northern Frontier District
NSFP	negative self-fulfilling prophecies
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OLF	Oromo Liberation Front
ONLF	Ogaden National Liberation Front
SNRS	Somali National Regional State
SYC	Somali Youth Club
SYL	Somali Youth League
TPLF	Tigray People Liberation Front
UN	United Nations
UNMEE	United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea
USA	United State of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

LIST OF MAPS

<u>Maps Number:</u>	<u>Page</u>
Map 1.1: Political Map of the Horn of Africa region	1
Map 1.2: Badme Ethiopia and Eritrea.....	52
Map 2.1: Map of the Ogaden Conflict.	57



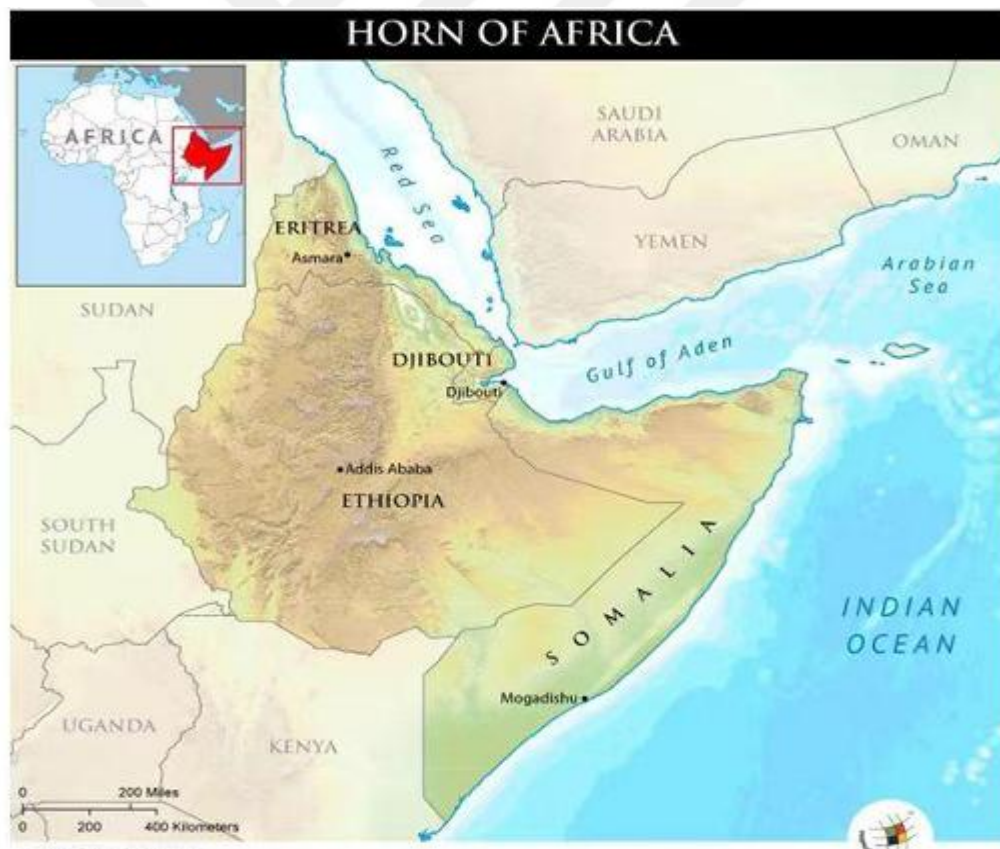
LIST OF FIGURES

<u>Figure No:</u>	<u>Page</u>
Figure 1.1: The Conflict Triangle: (Attitudes, Behaviours, Context)	10
Figure 1.2: A Comprehensive Mapping of Conflict and Conflict Resolution: A Three Pillar Approach	23
Figure 1.3: “Peace-Building Pyramid” from Lederach J. P., Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies, United States Institute of Peace Press, Washington, DC, 1997, p,39	27
Figure 1.4: conflict dynamics.....	31
Figure 1.5: Diagram 2: Conflict Style.....	32
Figure 1.6: Spectrum of Conflict Handling Mechanisms.	40

1. INTRODUCTION

The Horn of Africa is the northeastern part of the continent, bordering the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden, and the Indian Ocean. In the 1990s, the term "core Horn" referred to four countries: Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, and Djibouti. The "Greater Horn" includes Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, while Rwanda and Burundi are on its edges (Yemane & Borowy, 2023, p. 1). Civil wars, poverty, and famine limit the region's growth, despite significant progress in some countries. The Horn is one of the most conflict-prone regions worldwide, with each nation dealing with intense political violence (Ba, 2022, p. 2).

Map 1: Political Map of the Horn of Africa region



Source: Yemane & Borowy, 2023, p.1.

Ethiopia's political history is rich and varied, stretching back to the ancient Aksumite civilization that thrived from around the first century CE until about the 7th century CE. The Aksumites established a powerful kingdom in the northern Ethiopian

highlands, renowned for its wealth, extensive trade networks, and the adoption of Christianity as the state religion. Following the decline of Aksum, Ethiopia witnessed the rise of several regional kingdoms and dynasties, including the Zagwe and Solomonic houses, both of which played a pivotal role in shaping the nation's cultural and political heritage. The Solomonic dynasty, which claims descent from the biblical King Solomon and Queen Sheba, emerged as the preeminent ruling lineage in Ethiopian history. This dynastic legacy continues to exert a profound influence on the country's monarchical identity and religious authority (Gordon, 2000, pp. 29-32).

Ethiopia stands as a notable exception in African history due to its remarkable resilience against repeated attempts at colonization and its sustained sovereignty in the face of powerful foreign invaders. Rebellion flourished in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries during the "Scramble for Africa," propelled by European colonial aspirations. At the Battle of Adwa in 1896, Ethiopian forces under the leadership of Emperor Menelik II decisively defeated the Italian army, thereby preventing colonization. This victory established Ethiopia as one of the few African nations to preserve its independence during that period, designating a significant triumph over European colonial expansion (Marcus, 2002, p. 161).

Ethiopia's occupation of Eritrea originates to the period immediately following World War II, when the British administered Eritrea as a former Italian colony. As post-war negotiations unfolded, Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia asserted that Eritrea ought to be integrated into his country due to its historical and cultural ties with the region. In 1952, the United Nations established a federation between Ethiopia and Eritrea, which granted the latter a degree of autonomy. However, in 1962, Ethiopia dissolved the federation and fully annexed Eritrea, thereby triggering a prolonged armed conflict. Eritrean nationalists resisted the annexation, reaching a climax in a thirty-year struggle for independence, ultimately achieved in 1991. Ethiopia's continued occupation was driven primarily by strategic considerations, as Eritrea's access to the Red Sea was vital for the nation's trade and economic objectives.

The Ogaden region in eastern Ethiopia has likewise been a focal point of contention due to its ethnic Somali population and strategic location. In the late nineteenth

century, under Emperor Menelik II's expansionist policy, the Ogaden was annexed to bring this Somali-inhabited area under Ethiopian rule. Tensions escalated in the twentieth century, particularly after the establishment of an independent Somali Republic in 1960. Somalia subsequently laid claim to the Ogaden, leading to the Ogaden War of 1977–1978, during which Somali forces initially backed by the Soviet Union attempted to reclaim the territory. Ethiopia, supported by Cuba and later the Soviet Union, repelled the Somali advance and retained control of the region. Nevertheless, the Ogaden has remained a persistent source of tension, with Somali separatist movements continuing to challenge Ethiopian authority to this day.

1.1. Background of the study

Several factors have laid the ground for conflict in the Horn of Africa, such as colonial legacies, ethnic divisions, and territorial disputes. Two prominent conflicts in the region include the Eritrea-Ethiopia war from 1998 to 2000 and the Ethiopia-Somalia Ogaden conflict between 1964 and 1988. Although they involved border conflicts and ethnic identities, the two were conceived in different historical settings and political landscapes. The contested areas included the borderlands in particular Badme town which was claimed by the two states. For Eritrea, the war was a validation of its sovereignty after independence from Ethiopia in 1993, won through bitter resistance. Ethiopia, on the other hand, saw a war of as being part of its overall strategy to protect and defend its territory. Ethnic identities also mattered in this fight but mainly to the extent each nation-state considered its historical and cultural connections with the disputed region. But for the Ogaden, historical enmity between Ethiopia and Somalia had deeper colonial roots. The Ogaden was largely populated by ethnic Somalis, who became the clear axis of Somali irredentism. After Somalia gained independence in 1960, it had tried to recover ethnic Somali-inhabited territories which belonged to Ethiopia. This had led to a series of recurrent wars between the two countries over the years. Rather than a purely territorial dispute, the conflict should be understood as one rooted in ethnic self-determination, with Somalia considering the annexation of by Ethiopia as unjust the incorporation of ethnic Somalis. In any event, the issue about border disputes and ethnicities were a component of the overall conflictual interplay.



1.2. Research Question

The study explores the roles of border conflicts, ethno-identity and conflict process in Eritrea's war with Ethiopia as well as Ethiopia-Somalia war in Ogaden. The central problem of the research is to find an explanation for why these two conflicts, occurring as they did under quite different historical conditions, exhibit similar patterns in the dynamic relationship between border disputes and ethnic identity. These two conflicts are examined collectively to address the central research question.

Key research questions that shall guide this study include:

- How do territorial disputes and ethnic identity contribute to the escalation of both conflicts?
- To what extent, do state policies and approaches to ethnic identity and territorial sovereignty shape the evolution of these conflicts?
- How can a comparative analysis of these two conflicts deepen our understanding of conflict dynamics in the Horn of Africa using the Sandole's approach?

1.3. Objective of the study

This paper consequently compares and contrasts the war between Eritrea and Ethiopia with the Ogaden conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia, as well as to identifies the main causes of border disputes and ethnic identity. The following inquiries are addressed in this study: a) The historical and political context that gives rise to each of the conflicts; b) The nature in which ethnic identification is used in either the mobilization or legitimizing claims over territory.

- Discuss the relationship between local ethnic groups and state actors during each conflict.

Contribute to wider work of conflict studies through a nuanced study of territorial rivalries and ethnic identities as they unfold in post-colonial Africa.

1.4. Significance of the study

The conflicts between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and between Ethiopia and Somalia, are of particular analytical importance. These cases provide a substantial empirical foundation for examining the interplay between territorial disputes and ethnic identity in the Horn of Africa. To begin with, these conflicts constitute a substantial case studies for understanding the interrelationship between territorial disputes and ethnic identity in the Horn of Africa. for examining the interplay between territorial disputes and ethnic identity in the Horn of Africa, an area that continues to experience instability. Second, this research elucidates the ways in which the postcolonial state-building process, particularly the delineation of borders and the administration of ethnic diversity, influences conflict dynamics. The results of this study are relevant to the ongoing peacemaking initiatives in the Horn of Africa, characterized by significant border and ethnic conflicts. This study seeks to draw analogies between the two, so contributing to the existing body of literature on comparative conflict analysis and providing insights applicable to other disagreements in other contexts.

1.5. Methodology

1.5.1 Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative research design to provide a comprehensive understanding of the Eritrea–Ethiopia War and the Ethiopia–Somalia Ogaden Conflict. A qualitative approach allows for exploring complex social, political, and historical dimensions through multiple perspectives, offering nuanced insights into conflict dynamics and ethnic identity in the Horn of Africa.

Given the historical and context-specific nature of these conflicts, integrating various data sources enables a well-rounded analysis. Primary data are collected through interviews, while secondary sources, including scholarly works and government documents, complement and contextualize the findings.

1.5.2 Participants and sampling

The study employs purposive sampling to select knowledgeable participants capable of providing first-hand and informed insights. Participants include local elders,

diplomats, military officials, government representatives, academics, and civil society members who have direct or indirect experience with the conflicts.

This sampling technique ensures that collected data are relevant to the research objectives and grounded in lived experience.

A summary of participant information is provided below:

Participants	Gender	occupation
P1	Male	Academic
P2	Male	Professor
P3	Male	Academic
P4	Male	Professor
P5	Male	Researcher
P6	Male	Diplomat

1.5.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

1.5.3.1 Inclusion criteria

2. Individuals directly or indirectly involved in the Eritrea–Ethiopia or Ethiopia–Somalia conflicts.
3. Participants aged 18 years or above.
4. Individuals able to provide informed perspectives on border, ethnic, or political issues.
5. Willingness to participate voluntarily and consent to recording or note-taking.

1.5.3.2 Exclusion criteria

1. Individuals unwilling to participate or who withdraw consent.
2. Persons lacking relevant experience or expertise.
3. Individuals unable to communicate effectively due to language or technical barriers.

1.5.4 Data Collection

Primary data were collected through semi-structured interviews conducted online (via Zoom or WhatsApp) due to geographical and security limitations. Interviews were held in English, Somali, or Amharic, depending on participants' preference, to ensure accuracy and comfort. Each interview lasted approximately 45–60 minutes, focusing on participants' perceptions of border disputes, ethnic identity, political dynamics, and conflict resolution efforts.

Particular attention was given to local interpretations of the “no peace, no war” situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia, as well as historical narratives surrounding the Ogaden War.

Secondary data included scholarly literature, government reports, archival materials, and translated sources in Somali and Arabic. These materials provided historical and political context and were essential for triangulating and verifying the primary data.

Due to financial and logistical constraints, desktop research was used when access to primary sources was limited.

1.5.5 Data Analysis

Interview responses were analyzed using thematic analysis, following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step framework:

1. Familiarization with the data,
2. Generating initial codes,
3. Searching for themes,
4. Reviewing themes,
5. Defining and naming themes, and
6. Producing the report.

Data were coded manually to identify patterns and recurring ideas related to the causes, escalation, and consequences of the two conflicts. Secondary data were examined using content analysis and cross-case comparison to identify historical and political continuities between the two cases.

The thematic analysis revealed five major themes and corresponding subthemes:

Themes	Subthemes
Root Causes of Conflict	Colonial borders; Ethnic identity; Resource competition
Political and Governance Factors	Authoritarian leadership; Power imbalance; Ideological rivalry
Regional and International Involvement	Role of neighboring states; Cold War influences; External
Social Consequences and Human Impact	Displacement; Civilian suffering; Nationalism and collective
Pathways to Peace and Reconciliation	Peace agreements; Role of OAU; Prospects for long-term

The interpretation of these themes was guided by Sandole's (1998) three-pillar conflict framework, which categorizes data into:

1. Root causes and structural conditions,
2. Conflict dynamics and escalation patterns, and
3. Pathways and challenges of conflict resolution.

1.5.6 Ethical Permission

Ethical considerations were integral to all stages of this research. Participants were fully informed about the study's purpose, procedures, and voluntary nature. Written or verbal informed consent was obtained prior to interviews. To protect confidentiality, participants' names and identifying information were omitted from the analysis and replaced with coded identifiers (e.g., P1–P6).

Sensitive information was handled with strict confidentiality, and all data were securely stored to prevent unauthorized access.

2. THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF CONFLICT

2.1. Understanding Conflict: Key Concepts and Theories

Although conflict is not a difficult concept that requires detailed explanation, it has been widely studied over the centuries in most social sciences, such as psychology, sociology, and economics, and has acquired different connotations. However, it has been nearly three-quarters of a century since the term appeared in political terminology. Even within the discipline of political science, scholars who study and analyze conflict have provided various interpretations and theories, rapidly promoting the development of conflict research.

They believed conflict to be inherently evil and harmful, often equating it with violence, destruction, and irrational behavior. Proponents of this view maintain that when social systems are organized through rigid structures and strict hierarchies, the potential for conflict is greatly reduced. The term "conflict" is a flexible one, having multiple definitions and applications. It is frequently used to describe serious conflicts, contradictions, debates, rivalries, discussions, confrontations, battles, and even acts of terrorism. There are similarly evocative expressions for understanding the concept of conflict or identifying behaviors within this category. The term "conflict" denotes a scenario that produces contradictory goals or values among many parties. A scientist characterizes conflict as "the tension between reality and the ideals held by certain groups, a confrontation of values and interests. Before examining possible solutions, it is necessary to first understand what the term "conflict" actually means and entails (Wani, 2011, p. 105).

According to Soubagleh, scholars in different fields of study have given definitions of "conflict." The Learner's Dictionary defines conflict as "opposition or disagreement." In contrast, others view it as arising from social interaction and

manifesting as differences, discord, or clashes within or between social units (people, groups, organizations, etc.). Often, conflict is synonymous with violence. However, the United Nations Children's Fund questioned this assumption, stating that conflict occurs not only in violent situations but also when there are differences in ideas, values, positions, and opinions on a range of issues (Soubagleh, 2020, p. 4).

Many conflict researchers and experts agree with this general description: conflict breaks out when two parties argue over incompatibilities. Nevertheless, it is advantageous to revisit the views of leading conflict experts and conflict theory. John Galtung, a prominent pioneer in peace studies, highlights the importance of understanding conflict and the role of “nonviolent” and “creative” conflict transformation. Galtung views every conflict as a "contradiction" that requires resolution by individuals, groups, or other actors. When various actors, including states, possess goals that are "incompatible," it suggests that their fundamental differences prevent them from coexisting harmoniously. But for him, contradiction is only one of the three components of conflict. The others are what he calls “attitudes,” which are “potential aggression,” and “behavior,” which are the “overt frustrations” that actors, groups, and states have with each other. "In Figure 1, we present Galtung's conflict triangle, which models the relationships between actors, groups, and states. The conflicting parties may experience exhaustion in corner A from emotional fatigue or in corner B from physical weakness, but these corners might be interconnected. In contrast, the disagreement at corner C could persist indefinitely. There is no strict rule dictating that conflicts must escalate indefinitely. Even in our world full of conflicts, there are still people who possess hope. A fundamental problem is that conflicts can also come from A or B. One party may harbor negative attitudes (aggression) or aggressive behavioral tendencies. When a new situation arises, A, B, or both may be triggered to act aggressively, including hostile feelings and a negative view of the other party (the "enemy image"). This process can be referred to as focusing on the new problem. When A manifests itself as aggression, including hostile feelings and a negative view of the other party (the "enemy image"), we can speak of negative conflict energy, which is associated with ambivalence and may stem from previous negative conflict experiences. Conversely, conflict energy can also be positive, characterized by an overall loving, compassionate, accepting attitude and a positive view of others (the "friend image")

and oneself. Cumulative conflict experiences can lead to positive personality changes, but they can also lead to negative changes, forming a bitter personality full of resentment."

Figure 1.1 *The Conflict Triangle*

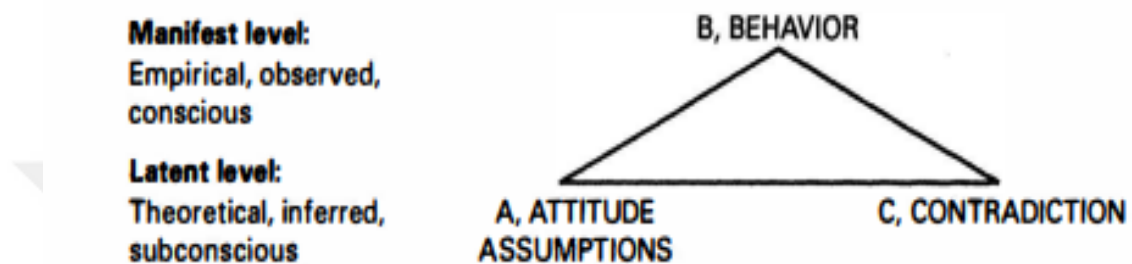


Figure 1.1: The Conflict Triangle: (Attitudes, Behaviours, Context)

Source: Johan Galtung, 1960, p.72

The conflict triangle is a technique for scrutinizing the elements of a dispute by utilizing the triangular relationship among its basic components, where each aspect affects and is affected by the others. This model makes it easier to examine the attitudes, actions, and environments of the principal players, which is based on Johan Galtung's theories regarding the interactions between conflict, violence, and peace. Conflicts are believed to consist of three closely related structural components. According to Galtung, these components include the attitudes and views of the opposing parties, the acts of the disputing parties, and the history or context of the conflict (Galtung, 1960, pp. 70-72).

Additionally, conflict in everyday life often takes the form of opposing actions, such as strikes, boycotts, or even wars between states. However, it goes beyond just visible actions. Deeper incompatibility situations give rise to actual conflict, as limited resources prevent different parties from simultaneously meeting their goals or demands. These situations persist even if actions momentarily stop, as unresolved issues or tensions may cause conflict to re-emerge. Parties may resolve the conflict when they adjust their demands to alleviate resource scarcity. If resources remain

limited, the conflict will still be based on incompatibility, creating a hidden tension that could become apparent if the parties start acting on their conflicting needs.

A comprehensive understanding of conflict includes three main components: actions, incompatibility, and actors. Conflict requires at least two parties striving to attain scarce resources simultaneously. This competition for resources may involve actions ranging from minimal efforts to full-scale warfare. The timing of these demands is critical because conflict arises only when all parties seek to meet their goals simultaneously, making resources like power or territorial control indivisible at that moment. Resources in conflict aren't limited to economic goods; they can also include positions of influence, land, or access to communication platforms. Therefore, conflict arises when parties desire something scarce and cannot all have it at the same time, leading to a complex social dynamic driven by competing needs and scarce resources (Wallensteen, 2002, p. 15-16).

2.1.1 Basic Human Needs Theory

According to the online dictionary of Merriam-Webster (1828), a theory is a general principle or a set of principles used to explain a reasonable or scientifically acceptable phenomenon.

According to the Oxford Dictionary (1884), a theory is a collection of principles that underpin behavior. A theory is a collection of principles or concepts grounded in evidence and meticulous reasoning that elucidates the functioning or occurrence of phenomena, but remains unproven in its entirety, as defined by the Collins Dictionary of Students (2004) (Palace, 2020, p. 2).

The notion of human needs shares similarities with the aggression of frustration and the theories of relative deprivation. The key premise posits that all humans have fundamental needs they strive to fulfill, and obstructing or thwarting these desires, whether immediate or deferred, may result in conflict. These basic human needs include physical, psychological, social, and spiritual. Denying access to these needs, like freedom of worship or recognition, may lead to violence. Burton highlights the link between frustration, which compels humans toward aggression, and the necessity of fulfilling basic needs. He contended that individuals cannot be conditioned to acquiesce to practices that jeopardize their identity or other

fundamental needs. Consequently, they resist entities or systems they perceive as responsible for endangering these needs. Burton identified components of human needs such as recognition, identity, security, autonomy, and social bonding that are inherently non-negotiable. Attempts to suppress these needs either fail or cause greater damage over time. While various scholars identify different categories of human needs, they agree that unmet needs inhibit the realization of individual and group potential, ultimately resulting in conflict (Onyewuchi, 2011, pp. 11-12).

Human needs theory posits that certain essentials, beyond food, water, and shelter, are necessary for human survival. These essentials include both physical and non-physical elements, such as safety, belonging, self-esteem, personal fulfillment, cultural security, freedom, distributive justice, and participation. Some scholars, such as Maslow, arranged these needs in a hierarchy, whereas Burton contended that human needs cannot be prioritized. Burton and other scholars, including Kelman, emphasized the interconnectedness of identity, recognition, and security, considering these needs critical to understanding intractable conflicts. Burton posited that the fundamental cause of conflict lies in the frustration of essential needs, contending that societal evolution has frequently alienated decision-makers from the individuals affected by their choices. Institutions fail to meet the needs of individuals, leading to resistance. Coercion and punishment cannot deter individuals or groups from pursuing the fulfillment of their needs, which are ontological and non-negotiable. Technological advancements have further complicated coercion by enabling easier organization and dissemination of information among dissident groups. Burton contended that resolving conflicts requires a fundamental reorganization of society to ensure the satisfaction of essential human needs for all involved parties. He held the belief that addressing these needs is not a one-sided process; meeting the needs of one group does not necessarily lead to the frustration of another's. Proper institutional frameworks can address these needs and establish sustainable peace (Walsh, 2015, pp. 3-4).

Burton also differentiated between needs, values, and interests. Needs: Everyone has them, and they are non-negotiable since humans will drive themselves to pursue their needs. This denial of their needs can lead to antisocial behaviors. Values are social

community-specific and relate to ideas, habits, and customs that constitute identity groups. Such values tend to polarize societies, especially in multiethnic ones. While needs and values are non-negotiable, interests can be bargained and exchanged for collective benefits, for instance, taxation. The fact that needs such as ethnic or cultural identity have been denied is what Burton views as the root cause of most ethnic conflicts, especially those where colonialism or conquest has delineated boundaries. He condemned democracy and so-called power-sharing based on the principle of a majority as violent institutions that fuel conflict in multi-ethnic societies. He argued that conflict resolution requires moving beyond power-based approaches and addressing the fundamental human needs of individuals and groups. This perspective contrasts with neo-realist theories that prioritize military power and elite interests over societal well-being (Bickl, 2019, p. 23).

2.1.2 Basic Human Needs in African Conflicts

Irobi (2005) compares Nigeria and South Africa, demonstrating that the refusal to negotiate non-negotiable human needs, as outlined by Burton specifically identity, recognition, autonomy, and security serves as a significant catalyst for ethnic conflict. Colonial and postcolonial state institutions were structured around ethno-racial categories that marginalized participation and distributed resources inequitably. In Burton's model, negotiability is not a concern for these needs; they can be postponed but not evaded. The dynamics described by Irobi represent a microcosm of a broader trend in Africa and beyond, wherein individuals experiencing unfulfilled recognition claims organize into violent groups in pursuit of identity affirmation. This case is significant as it illustrates how unmet desires for acknowledgment and participation may transform systemic inequalities into violent ethnic mobilization. The quest for identity and self-determination among peripheral groups has shaped the conflicts between Eritrea and Ethiopia, as well as between Ethiopia and Somalia in the Horn of Africa (Irobi, 2005).

2.1.3 Theories of Border Disputes and Territorial Conflict

The concept of territorial borders dates back to the Treaty of Westphalia, which witnessed the emergence of sovereign states as the primary units of analysis in international relations. International law understands territorial borders, despite their perceived natural and ideological nature. According to the 1933 Montevideo

Convention on Rights and Duties of a State, a defined territory is identified as one of the primary elements of a state. Article I of the Convention states that the state, as a person of international law, should possess the following qualifications: (a) a permanent population; (b) a defined territory; (c) a government; and (d) the capacity to enter into relations with other states (Midiwo, 2020, p. 10-11). Such a legal framework sets out that borders are not only physical demarcations but are essential for maintaining sovereignty and the international order.

Borders and boundary lines are politically constructed dividing lines that separate two areas of land from one another. Those who seek to control these lines often make them real and influential. When these lines are between two nation-states, they are called international borders. They are defined on a local point-by-point basis through treaties and other political processes. This makes international borders a critical legal issue, as these lines represent the geographic extent to which states can independently manage their affairs under the concept of sovereignty. Another defining characteristic of borders is the role they have played throughout history. For example, clearly defined borders have been repeatedly cited not only as a key element in defining modern states but also as a significant element in building state institutions and forming a collective sense of national identity. The connection between borders, modern state-building projects, and the management of political conflicts between neighboring states is evident. Disputes about the location of boundary lines remain a crucial point of conflict between governments (OECD/SWAC, 2022, pp. 35).

A territorial dispute broadly involves disagreements between states about where their shared homeland or colonial borders should be drawn, or one state challenging another's sovereignty over specific territory. A territorial dispute arises when at least one government contests the delineation of its border with another nation. In contrast, the neighboring government views the current boundary as legal based on a signed treaty or document. These disagreements can range from a small section of land to the entire border. In such disputes, the challenger does not deny the existence of a border but questions the legitimacy of its location. Of the 129 territorial disputes after World War II, 25 cases (about 19 percent) involved such disagreements (Huth, 2009, p. 19).

European colonization has been particularly consequential since the fifteenth century. "Scholars have identified three primary waves of European colonial and imperial expansion, each linked to a specific area". The first focus was on the Caribbean and the Americas, both North and South. The third facilitated European supremacy in Africa, while the second did it in Asia. The third wave, commencing in the 1880s and focused on Africa, is frequently termed New Imperialism. The principal European countries convened in the Berlin Conference (1884–1885), which aimed to partition Africa among themselves. Several European countries succeeded the Conference with the Scramble for Africa. Britain, France, Germany, Portugal, Belgium, Italy, and Spain partitioned the majority of African territory within two decades (Gilmartin, 2009, p. 115). African boundaries are sometimes characterized as 'arbitrary' and 'artificial' colonial creations, placed onto unwilling and non-participating African populations, who have either significantly suffered due to their ramifications or have disregarded them entirely. Africa's borders have remained unstable, hindering the expansion of state power into border regions and the establishment of necessary state institutions. Africa's colonial boundaries have significantly impeded the capacity of many African states to establish governmental efficiency and achieve effective national consolidation. The situation is characterized by the near impossibility of attaining enduring stability, long-term peace, and security within and among most African states. Additionally, the porous and unviable boundaries of Africa have led to the regionalization of instability and conflict, resulting in chaos and even anarchy in regions such as the Horn of Africa (Ikome, 2012, pp. 2).

2.1.4 Ethnic Identity and Conflict: A Conceptual Analysis

The phrase "ethnic identity" first emerged in the 18th century during the Age of Enlightenment. Malinowski (1944) asserts that the notion of "identity" in ethnic studies is the source of the term "ethnic identity." (An, Wanner, Yu, and Ono, 201, p. 260). To fully understand the concept of ethnic identity, one must investigate its etymological foundation. The term "ethnic" originates from the Latin "ethnicus" and the Greek "ethnikas," signifying "nation." Historically, it has also been employed to refer to individuals as heathens. The Greek term "ethos" signifies tradition, temperament, or characteristic. When combined, "ethnikas" and "ethos" denote a

collective of individuals (a country) cohabiting and acknowledging common traditions. The second component of the construct, identity, originates from the Latin term "identitas," which is derived from "idem," meaning "same." The phrase is thus employed to denote the concepts of sameness, similarity, and unity. Identity refers to "the consistency of a person or entity across all times and circumstances; the state or fact that a person or entity is itself and not another" (Lowenstein, 2011, p. 1).

Ethnicity and identity are differently conceived and addressed from diverse perspectives because researchers attempt to answer disparate questions. Definitions differ based on the theoretical orientation that researchers select. Ethnic terminologies reflect different ideological stances and theoretical orientations, which contribute to some confusion in explaining ethnic phenomena. Ethnic identification refers to the extent to which an individual associate with a particular ethnic group or numerous ethnic groups. An ethnic group is a community characterized by a common history, encompassing elements such as language, origin, culture, and historical experiences. An individual's affiliation with an ethnic group signifies their sense of belonging and the degree to which the group shapes their cognition, perception, emotions, and conduct. In developmental science, the predominant conceptualization of ethnic identity, as articulated by Phinney (1990, 2000, 2003), is a dynamic and complex self-perception as a member of an ethnic group. An individual may associate with a subgroup that shares common characteristics such as culture, race, religion, language, kinship, or geographic origin within a broader ethnic community. This identification is not static; instead, it may be formed and remade as individuals become aware of how their ethnicity is situated within and shaped by social circumstances (Levesque, 2018, pp. 1209-1210). Ethnic groups, regarded as the principal actors in ethnic conflicts, are characterized as individuals bound by shared culture, language, religion, race, customs, traditions, a collective historical narrative, and a psychological sense of belonging. Ethnic conflict is a form of group conflict where at least one party attributes the conflict, its causes, potential resolutions, and primary reasons to ethnic distinctions, thereby invoking ethnic divisions. It depicts scenarios where the primary division is ethnic, leading to violent confrontations between groups structured around ethnic identities. The classification of ethnic conflict as a specific sort of war raises critical questions regarding its analytical validity and the diversity of examples categorized under this notion,

warranting debate over its uniqueness. The inability to differentiate between ethnic and non-ethnic conflicts raises doubts about the necessity of employing this notion (Güven, 2024, pp. 50-51).

2.1.4.1 Theoretical perspective of ethnicity and ethnic conflict.

2.1.4.1.1 The primordialist

The primordialist perspective regards ethnic groups as inherent entities rather than affiliations individuals choose to adopt. Ray et al. (2006:13) assert that early primordialists, including scholars like Geertz, Isaacs, Naroll, Gordon, Mitchell, Epstein, and Furnivall, conceived of ethnicity as inherently violent and grounded in objective traits, such as the culture individuals possess. Additional individuals mentioned are Edward Shils, Clifford Geertz, Anthony Smith, Walker Connor, and Donald Horowitz. They underscore the historical significance of ethnic identity and ethnicity, their deep cultural roots, and the power they derive from collective myths, memories, social institutions, and practices. Early socialization transmits these over time, ensuring the consistency of ethnic identity. Horowitz, for instance, holds that people are born into an ethnic group and stay with it for their entire lives (Yasin, 2010, p. 18).

Anthropologist Clifford Geertz is most responsible for introducing the concept of primordial attachment in the 1960s. Primordialism suggests that ethnicity has "pre-modern or even prehistoric" roots and that ethnic identity is an inherent part of human nature, such that the need for belonging with people of the same characteristics is automatic. The most vital characteristics attributed to it are the sharing of name or tongue, descent myths, or other factors that the members of the collective share. Geertz (1973) argues that ethnic attachments, built upon perceived kinship relations, social customs, and religious practices, are deeply rooted within individuals through the mechanism of enculturation. Ethnic boundaries express these attachments, forming strong emotional bonds and distinguishing various groups of people (Geertz, 1997). Geertz highlights how several newly emergent post-colonial nations attempted to establish integrated systems of governance based on representative democracy. Nevertheless, these efforts conflicted with the old "primordial" attachments of kinship, language, culture, and religion, revealing a

fundamental contradiction between modern state ideals and individual identities shaped by these primordial ties (Almi and BinWasi, 2013, p. 5).

2.1.4.1.2 The instrumentalist

In instrumentalist dynamics, ethnic conflict arises not directly from differences in ethnic identity, but rather when ethnicities are politicized or manipulated to secure political and socioeconomic advantages for one ethnic group at the expense of others. Instrumentalists pursue rationales outside ethnic identification to elucidate ethnic conflicts. These explanations encompass security concerns, rivalry, inequality, and avarice. The emotions of grievance and frustration that inform these theories suggest that, according to instrumentalism, ethnic disputes are predominantly driven by such factors (Che, 2016, pp. 2-3).

The instrumentalist perspective argues that the aspirations of ethnic groups for state control lead to the politicization of ethnicity in African politics, which is further enhanced by the elite's ability to exploit and utilize it. Instrumentalists again argue that ethnicity fosters a sense of belonging, particularly within the self-interested urban belt, which is likely to struggle for scarce resources and face vulnerability. This sense of belonging provides essential social safety nets that help alleviate issues like poverty during unfavorable economic times (Kisaka and Nyader, 2019, p. 163).

2.1.4.1.3 The constructivism

It follows the constructivist school of thought, which traces the roots of arguments by past English and French philosophers that ethnicities are constructed, reconstructed, and activated by the social and political conditions of the day. The English language, for instance, is the linguistic effect of the people who invaded the country and settled within it: The Celts, the Danes, and the Romans. Constructivism posits that the primordialist perspective on the nature of individuals, shaped by brain physiology and biological characteristics, is fundamentally incorrect. Moreover, constructivists contend that it is erroneous to assume that members of an ethnic group possess a "singular social experience" imparted by their collective. Constructivists argue that ethnic identities are shaped and defined by the prevailing cultural norms of the time. They are produced and reproduced according to the prevailing cultural standards of the time (Yeghiazaryan 2018, pp. 48-49).

Constructivism views the ethnic conflict as the result of specific historical processes.' It believes that forces of history are likely to impact ethnic relations between ethnic groups. If at some point in the past, two ethnic groups were at war over territory, the chances of these groups carrying a specific image of the opposing ethnic group and being informed by various forms of hatred are excellent. Constructivists, unlike primordialists and instrumentalists, focus on external processes while considering how ethnic identities are politicized, with the former's appeal rooted in emotive factors and the latter's in rational calculations (Rodina, 2021, pp. 6-7).

Ethnic groups maintain boundaries, such as language, to demarcate identity, argues Barth (1969). So people are likely to adapt and switch ethnic identity for different types of social interactions or contexts. A demarcation between people and the making of the collective is ethnicity (Weber, 1968). Constructivist author Aalen (2002) perceives ethnicity not as objective but as a construct of society flexible, situationally defined, and rational socio-cultural constructions that are likely to change over the period of the situation's occurrence and are neither permanent nor fixed. Furthermore, constructivist scholars such as Kaufman (2001) argued that the contributions of language, history, symbols, and culture play vital roles in triggering and sustaining ethnic competition. Amaru (2018) posits that ethnicity is a flexible and subjective construct that evolves in response to interactions between different ethnicities, maintaining and reinforcing societal differentiation for specific purposes (Amaru 2018, p. 21).

2.1.4.2 Ethnic conflict

Ethnic conflict is a subject of significant ontological, epistemological, and normative debate: What precisely does it entail? What is the basis of our familiarity with it? Should "ethnicity" be employed to elucidate the conflicts under examination? Despite profound and persistent ambiguities, the literature remains robust, primarily because scholars often define ethnic conflict as armed conflict with an identity dimension, based on prescriptive, historical, or mythic foundations by at least one participant. Ethnic conflicts primarily occur within states rather than between them (Desrosiers, Marie-Eve, and Vucetic, Srdjan, 2018, p. 484). Ethnic conflict is defined as a dispute in which the objectives of at least one party are expressed in ethnic terms, and both the nature and causes of the conflict, along with suggested resolutions, are framed within an ethnic context. Ethnic divisions do not

fundamentally define the dispute; rather, these distinctions contextualize political, economic, social, cultural, or geographical issues. Ethnic conflict poses a significant global threat to peace and security. Ethnic strife destabilizes provinces, states, and occasionally entire regions. Ethnic conflicts are characterized by egregious human rights violations, including genocide and crimes against humanity, as well as economic collapse, state disintegration, environmental degradation, and the displacement of refugees. Widespread human tragedy results from violent ethnic warfare. Tepfenhart (2013) characterized an ethnic conflict as an internal conflict inside a state involving tensions, hostility, or violence between two or more ethnic groups (Britannica, T. Information Architects of Encyclopedia, 2024). In these conflicts, one ethnic community typically has a position of dominance or authority within the state, while another ethnic group occupies a subordinate or disadvantaged status. Conflicts usually arise from historical grudges, rivalry for resources, political or economic inequality, and cultural, religious, or linguistic differences. Ethnic conflicts can range from minor tensions to extensive battles, posing significant challenges to peace, stability, and social cohesion within a society. Resolving ethnic conflicts typically requires a combination of political, economic, and social measures aimed at addressing the underlying reasons and promoting reconciliation and equity among the involved ethnic groups. Ethnic conflicts possess a protracted global history; yet, in the past two decades, they have gained prominence due to events such as the Rwandan genocide, upheaval in Eastern Europe, and the dissolution of the Soviet Union post-Cold War (Abasili, Ezeneme, and Nwokike, 2023, p. 242).

2.1.4.3 Ethnic identity in African conflicts

Africa comprises more than 50 nations and around 850 ethnic and linguistic groups. Africa had five external colonial waves and three widespread religious systems. The complexity of ethnic organization, along with external hegemonic influences, has resulted in ethnic conflicts in Africa. Before the emergence of Western influences, sociocultural, economic, and geographical imperatives determined the coexistence of ethnic groups, making the nation's borders inconsequential. Natural phenomena or impediments, such as rivers, deserts, or mountains, were never artificially created to demarcate boundaries. The situation compelled several traditional ethnic adversaries to live without any buffer zone separating them. Specific ethnic groupings were

peculiarly situated between the delineated spheres of influence. Colonial administrations primarily exacerbated ethnic discord in Africa for political purposes (Oviasuyi and Uwadiae, 2009, pp. 251-252).

2.1.5 Conflict Mapping

The Wehr Conflict Mapping Guide by Wilmot and Hocker serves as one of the most effective evaluation instruments. The Wehr Conflict Maps facilitate the disaggregation of complex disputes into components, allowing for analyses that yield informed interventions. Pollack Peacebuilding Systems (2025) Conflict mapping is a physical instrument that delineates the principal participants in a conflict, their interrelations, contentious issues, and conflicting interests, thereby elucidating the conflict scenario with clarity and precision. Conflict mapping delineates the participants, issues, motivations, and mechanisms of a workplace conflict. A conflict resolution manager creates a structured study of the conflict scenario, enabling others to comprehend and utilize it for resolution strategies. Conflict mapping was initially presented by political scientists as a systematic method for addressing extensive societal conflicts. It has now developed into a graphical instrument that assists organizations, courts, and non-profit groups in informing their peacebuilding initiatives and legal processes. Conflict mapping is significant because of its capacity to uncover patterns, underlying causes, and blind spots that may not be readily visible. Non-governmental organizations and human rights advocates utilized statistics to elucidate the events that characterized post-conflict Kosovo. Consequently, the coordinated approach enabled these organizations to ascertain the presence of violence, which was subsequently utilized as evidence in international tribunals (Pollack Peacebuilding Systems, 2025).

2.1.6 Applying Sandole's Framework to Understanding Conflict

A valuable resource is *A Comprehensive Mapping of Conflict and Conflict Resolution: A Three Pillar Approach* by Sandole (Bright, 2001, p. 2). Sandole's three-pillar approach articulates a comprehensive identity conflict analysis encompassing three fundamental dimensions: the parties and their issues of concern, the processes of conflict escalation and de-escalation, and the creation of mechanisms for conflict resolution and management. The Eritrea-Ethiopia War of 1998-2000 and the Ethiopia-Somalia Ogaden Conflict of 1964-1988 encapsulate this

methodology by offering multifaceted perspectives on border disputes, ethnic identity, and conflict dynamics. The study systematically applies Sandole's pillars to investigate the conflict's actors, issues, and processes, aiming to deliver a comparative analysis of how unaddressed territorial and ethnic grievances have led to prolonged conflict in the Horn of Africa region. We have employed Sandole's approach to study conflicts in various global contexts. The conflict can be analyzed and resolved at any stage under Sandole's three-pillar model of conflict. The model identifies the participants, the issues at stake, the objectives, the resources, the contextual factors of the conflict, and the strategies for conflict direction and management inside Pillar 1. The model identifies the circumstances and the origin of the conflict under Pillar 2. Conflict interventions are addressed within the framework of Pillar 3's planning and implementation (Özçelik, 2017, p. 44).

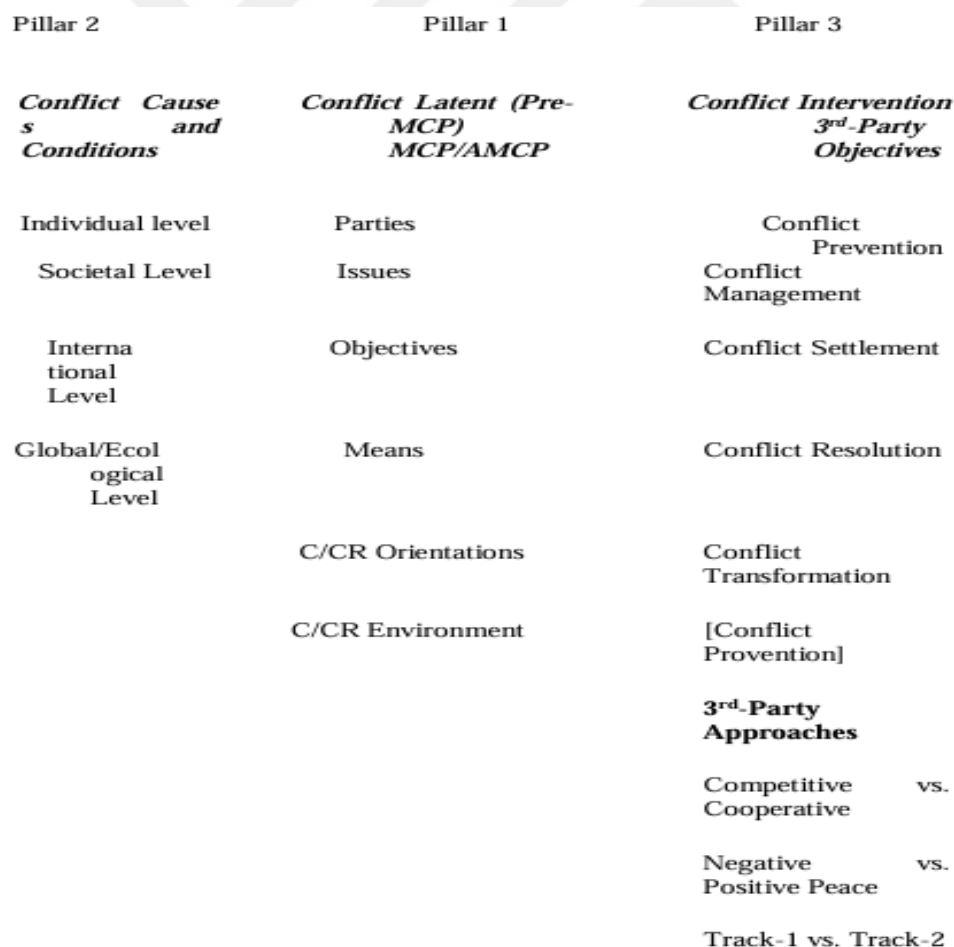


Figure 1: A Comprehensive Mapping of Conflict and Conflict Resolution: A Three Pillar Approach

Source: (Sandole, 1998, p.4-5)

2.1.6.1 Pillar I: Conflict Latent (Pre-MCP)MCP/AMCP

Pillar I: Latent Conflict (Pre-MCP) MCP/AMCP Pillar 1, representing the "middle" column of the conflict map, addresses both overt and covert conflicts within the workplace. Sandole conceptualizes conflict as a progression of processes rather than the result of a singular triggering event. This pillar encompasses manifest conflict processes (MCPs), pre-MCPs, and aggressive conflict processes (AMCPs). It permits the categorization of conflict processes, acknowledging their overt, covert, aggressive, non-aggressive, physical, and psychological dimensions. It also facilitates the placement of conflicts within specific phases of the conflict cycle (initiation-de-escalation-termination). Pillar 1, along with the corresponding conflict analysis, prioritizes the conflict parties, their perceptions of the issues, and their objectives. Pillar 1 aims to categorize conflicts among opposing parties and the interconnected, inherent conflicts within those parties, which must be addressed before and during the resolution of inter-party conflicts (Areff, 2015, p. 29).

2.1.6.2 Pillar II: Conflict Cause sand Conditions

Pillar II: Causes and Conditions of Conflict Pillar II, positioned to the left of Pillar I, classifies the limited causes and conditions into four tiers: the individual level, which includes biological, physiological, and psychological factors. As discussed in the previous section on Basic Human Needs, these individual-level factors pertain to unmet human needs that frequently incite conflict, such as safety, identity, and recognition. Sandole's Pillar II aligns with this perspective by clarifying how personal and psychological variables affect the broader dynamics of conflict. The societal level, encompassing social, political, and economic dimensions; the international level; and the global/ecological level. Several conditions and causes are ascribed to these four levels, encompassing structural/cultural violence, ethnocentrism, Realpolitik, negative self-fulfilling prophecies, and self-perpetuating conflict processes. Unmet "human needs," including identity, security, and recognition, substantially exacerbate individual-level conflict by inducing rank disequilibrium, cognitive dissonance, relative deprivation, and discontent. This perspective corresponds with Burton's Basic Human Wants Theory, which posits that

the absence of these essential needs leads to persistent social conflict. The ethnic dimension of these needs reflects the dynamics analyzed in Ethnic Conflict theory, as identity-based grievances often intensify intergroup conflicts. At the societal level, the emphasis is on the socio-psychological, political, and economic dimensions, encompassing intergroup biases, stereotyping, and prejudices existing between conflicting parties. The international dimension highlights the conflict at both global levels, primarily resulting from colonial dynamics and their spillover effects. The ecological strain in the war has arisen from resource scarcity, overpopulation, land productivity, and environmental deterioration (Özçelik and Güder 2022, p. 42).

The previous analysis highlights ecological and resource-related factors; however, it is essential to situate these challenges within a broader structural context. Sandole argues that systemic pressures, along with institutional deficiencies, colonial legacies, and interstate rivalries, influence the broader dynamics of conflict, extending beyond individual factors. Pillar 2 illustrates the importance of societal norms, values, and institutions in conflict processes. The battle between Eritrea and Ethiopia, along with the conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia, highlights societal factors such as ethnic identity, historical grievances, and economic disparities. The societal pillar recognizes how colonial borders exacerbate ethnic tensions and territorial disputes in the region.

2.1.6.3 Pillar III: Conflict Intervention 3rd-Party Objectives

Pillar 3 is located to the right of Pillar 1. Pillar 3 covers conflict [3rd party] intervention that is categorized into “3rd party goals” and “3rd party tools for the goals’.” Under "goals," we can include the following examples: (a) prevention of conflict through forceful means (preventing the fire from spreading); (b) conflict management (containing the fire by the fire brigade); (c) conflict settlement (extinguishing the fire with the help of the fire brigade); (d) conflict solution (eliminating the combustible cause of the fire with assistance from the fire brigade); and (e) conflict transformation (establishing a fire-free relationship between the fire brigade and survivors). Under "3rd party tools," we can include the following, among others: (a) coercive and collaborative tools (for the just-in-case purpose of preventing the occurrence of another Rwanda or the perpetuation of Darfur); (b) "negative peace" (absence of conflict by prevention of conflict by fire brigade or by the

forceful extinction of the fire) and "positive peace" (extinction of the combustible cause of the fire); and (c) "track-1" (state and international governmental actors and processes) and "multi-track" (nongovernmental actors and processes, including the world of business, academe, the churches, the press, and the others) (Sandole, 2007, p. 263-264).

The analytical framework they create unifies these pillars. The understanding they gain from each other forms the basis for analyzing conflicts. When using Pillar 1 to investigate a conflict, some of the knowledge you gain helps clarify the reason for Pillar 2. The knowledge they integrate helps formulate effective resolutions with Pillar 3. Understanding surface conflict indicators and the signals beneath the surface, which help predict the outcome of the situation, is key to the framework's success. The framework applies to conflicts of any size, whether interpersonal or global, increasing its adaptability for conflict resolution practitioners.

Another vital task in conflict analysis is identifying conflict actors, as this provides additional perspectives for understanding the conflict.

2.2. Conflict Flow Diagram (CFD)

This section demonstrates the Conflict Flow Diagram (CFD) in accordance with Sandole's multidimensional conflict analysis methodology. The CFD illustrates the influence of various people, topics, and dynamics on disputes. The diagram serves as a visual and intellectual instrument illustrating how historical, political, economic, and identity-related factors can initiate and exacerbate conflicts. The subsequent sections examine the principal parties involved in the conflict, the underlying causes, and the components illustrated in the CFD.

2.2.1. Conflict Parties

Another vital task in conflict analysis is identifying conflict actors, as this provides additional perspectives for understanding the conflict. A conflict party can be the direct or indirect leading conflict actor, and they are most likely to have indirect supporters who are not directly involved in the conflict action.

The disputants differ in their level of involvement and the importance of the outcome for them. Primary parties are the opposing disputants who use fighting behavior and

directly benefit from the conflict outcome. Secondary parties indirectly benefit from the conflict outcome. Secondary parties are sympathetic allies of the primary conflicting parties but are indirect opposing disputants. The opposing disputant's position also divides the disputants. We divide interest groups into moderates, hardliners, external backers, conflict profiteers, and spoilers (Burgess, 2017). A third party does not become part of the conflict and remains unbiased. The third-party role remains the same regardless of culture, religion, or country. Most countries have established legal systems that include both litigation processes and alternative conflict resolution methods, such as arbitration, mediation, negotiation, conciliation, facilitation, fact-finding, med-arb, ombudsperson services, mini-trials, structured dialogues, and others (ÖZÇELİK, 2007, p.12). The third party, therefore, remains interested in the conflict resolution process but not the conflict outcome. A third party intervenes between the disputants and assists them in managing the conflict. Third-party actors include the mediator, the facilitator, the observer, the researcher, the arbitrator, or the enforcer.

The Conflict Pyramid is a framework that helps us identify the actors of conflict, their levels, and the extent of their power and influence. The Conflict Pyramid can be used for conflict actors' identification within various environments (for example, school settings, youth organization settings, international firm settings, and state settings).

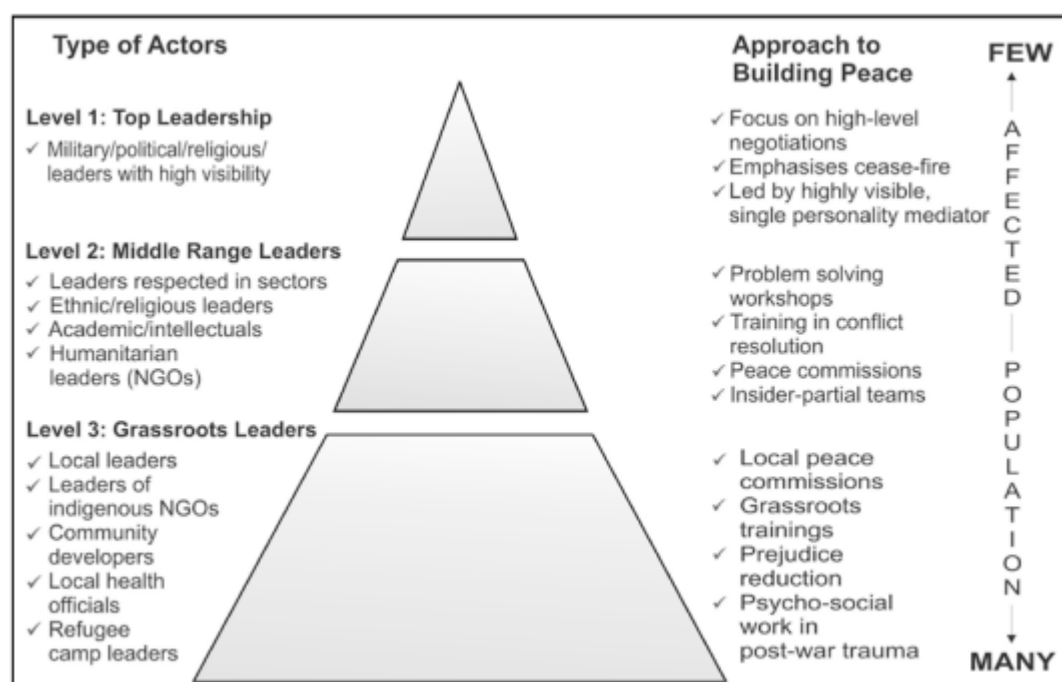


Figure 1.3. “Peace-Building Pyramid” from Lederach J. P., *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, United States Institute of Peace Press, Washington, DC, 1997, p. 39.

Source: (Council of Europe, n.d, p.71).

The apex of the pyramid represents individuals who hold crucial roles in the conflict setting. The middle range represents the middle tier of the conflict setting. The most extensive section of the pyramid represents the grassroots, i.e., the most significant number of people within the conflict setting. The model derives from the analogy of an international conflict setting, so the illustrations used are drawn from this context. The model can nonetheless be adapted to illustrate any other social or conflict setting, as some actors always possess more power than others. That might be the situation within an armed international or civil war. Additionally, this situation can also occur in school settings, NGO environments, or within family dynamics, where hierarchies exist and specific individuals are granted the privilege of making decisions. Still, the privilege of decision-making by no means lies with everybody (Council of Europe, n.d., pp. 70-71).

2.2.2. Conflict Topics and History

The specific issues at the heart of a conflict are vital for understanding its nature and implications. Conflict topics may include territorial disputes, resource competition, ethnic grievances, or political power struggles.

Territorial conflicts, including efforts toward secession and territorial expansion, have played a significant role in numerous political disputes. These conflicts often center on integrating ethnic frontiers into a state's territory or achieving independence through secession. In contemporary settings, territorial disputes tend to focus more on contested state boundaries rather than annexation or conquest, with borders functioning as instruments for both inclusion and exclusion. Conflicts involving minorities are frequently associated with ethnic groups but can also affect social minorities. Such disputes often emerge when majority governments attempt to enforce uniform conditions across different regions. Ethnic conflicts, in particular, are frequently fueled by distrust in the state system, with some scholars asserting that political elites exploit ethnic identities to gain or maintain power. Resource-based conflicts arise from competition over access and control, shaped by factors such as scarcity, shared supply, power imbalances, and the availability of alternatives.

Resource shortages and environmental degradation are significant contributors to these disputes (Raman, 2021, p. 57-58).

2.2.3. Causes and Conditions of Conflict

Social conflicts are due to the necessity of upholding dominant systems of power (Dahrendorf, 1975), the frustration of relative deprivation (Gurr, 1970), the repression of core needs (Burton, 1982), and the cultural diversity of values and norms (Avruch et al., 1991; LeBaron, 1997). Satisfaction of the most fundamental daily needs is crucial because the ability to be content with life matters most. Therefore, conflict arises when deprivation threatens the supply of the most basic of needs (Ajibogun, 2009, p. 7). This section's discussion on the origins of conflict closely parallels the Basic Human Needs and Ethnic Conflict hypotheses. These frameworks were selected for their strong explanatory capacity in clarifying the influence of unfulfilled desires and identity-related conflicts in the Eritrea–Ethiopia and Ethiopia–Somalia wars.

Violent conflict arises from various causes across four levels: individual, societal, international, and global. Physiological mechanisms, such as the hypothalamus and amygdala, can provoke violent reactions when stimulated, although learned behavior also plays a role. When fundamental needs like recognition or security are threatened or violated, the limbic system may overpower rational thinking, leading to heightened violent responses. Frequently, frustration arises from perceived structural or cultural violence, such as rank disparities or relative deprivation, which in turn fosters ethnocentrism and Realpolitik. When several people are frustrated, a conflict spiral starts to form. Such frustration arises from action-reaction dynamics, which enhance war capabilities and lead people to overreact. This process fosters negative self-fulfilling prophecies (NSFPs), representing self-perpetuating conflict cycles. Environmental shocks, including the proliferation of weapons, political instability, or resource scarcity, further intensify conflicts. Third parties play a crucial role in transforming these Realpolitik-driven dynamics into collaborative conflict resolution strategies (Sandole, 1998, pp. 16-18).

2.2.4. Conflict Context

The concept of culture is fundamental in understanding the context in which the conflict occurs. Culture helps us understand how the meanings of objects, facts, and events, as viewed from a cultural perspective, affect attitudes and behaviors during the conflict process. Culture is different for each social group. This social group can include ethnic groups, as well as class, organizational, gender, socio-economic, and international actors. In other words, there is even a difference in the organizational culture of a state institution during conflict analysis. For example, when discussing the methods used by Japan in conflict resolution, it is necessary to take into account the organizational culture differences between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI).

The fact that conflicting parties belong to social groups with different cultures affects their interaction in six ways.

- 1: Which conflict style will the conflicting parties choose?
2. Communication styles used in the conflict process,
- 3: Decision-making processes and leadership styles in the conflict,
- 4: The way the conflict is revealed in society,
- 5- Expectations of the conflict, how it will end,
- 6: Individual and social attitudes and behaviors regarding the conflict,

When it comes to conflict resolution systems, it is critical to consider whether the system in which the conflict occurs has micro- or macro-subsystems. In this context, conflict can be divided into two types: external (exogenous) and internal (endogenous) conflict resolution systems. External conflict resolution systems describe situations where there are no systematic mechanisms for resolving and controlling the conflict (Özcelik, 2013, p. 21-22).

2.2.5. Conflict Dynamics

Conflict dynamics refer to the patterns, processes, and phases that conflicts undergo as they emerge and progress. Understanding these dynamics provides helpful details

about the root causes, behaviors, and possible resolutions of conflicts. Various models outline different numbers of stages and use distinct labels for each phase. Although these models are typically broad and designed to apply to a wide range of conflicts, from interpersonal disputes to national crises, they may not perfectly capture every specific situation. However, mapping out a sequence of stages provides a common framework for identifying the current state of a conflict and predicting its likely trajectory. (Nasriinakeif, 2024, p. 20).

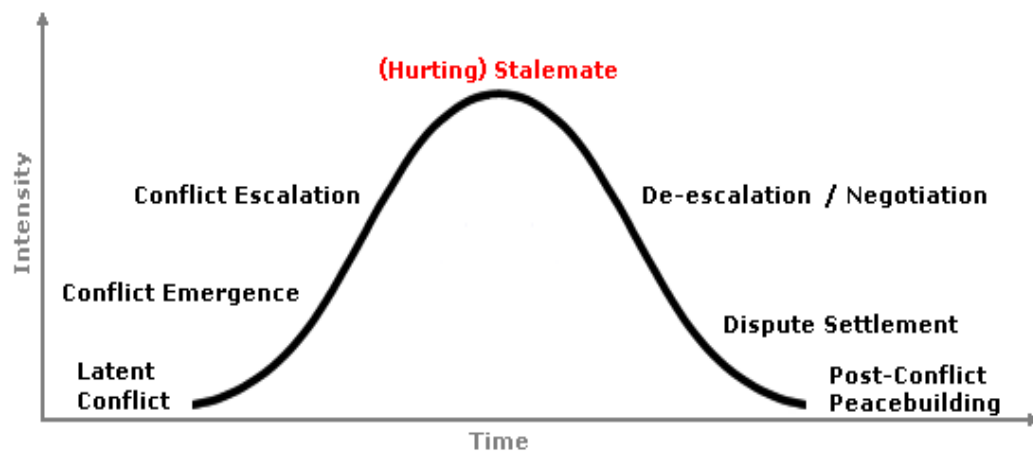


Figure 1.4: conflict dynamics.

Source: (Brahm, 2003).

Latent conflict occurs when differences in viewpoints exist but are not enough to disrupt the status quo, creating an "unstable peace." Conflict Emergence happens when a latent conflict surfaces due to a trigger or increased tensions. Conflict escalation sees the conflict intensify, dividing individuals or groups, entrenching viewpoints, and polarizing sides. (Hurting) Stalemate occurs when neither side can win, but neither wants to back down, sometimes leading to separation. De-escalation/negotiation follows as tensions cool and a willingness to move in a different direction emerges. Dispute Settlement happens when the conflict nears resolution, with grievances reduced on one side while minimizing harm to the other. Post-conflict peacebuilding ensures the settlement is implemented, fostering strong, equitable relations to transform the conflict and navigate sustainable resolutions.

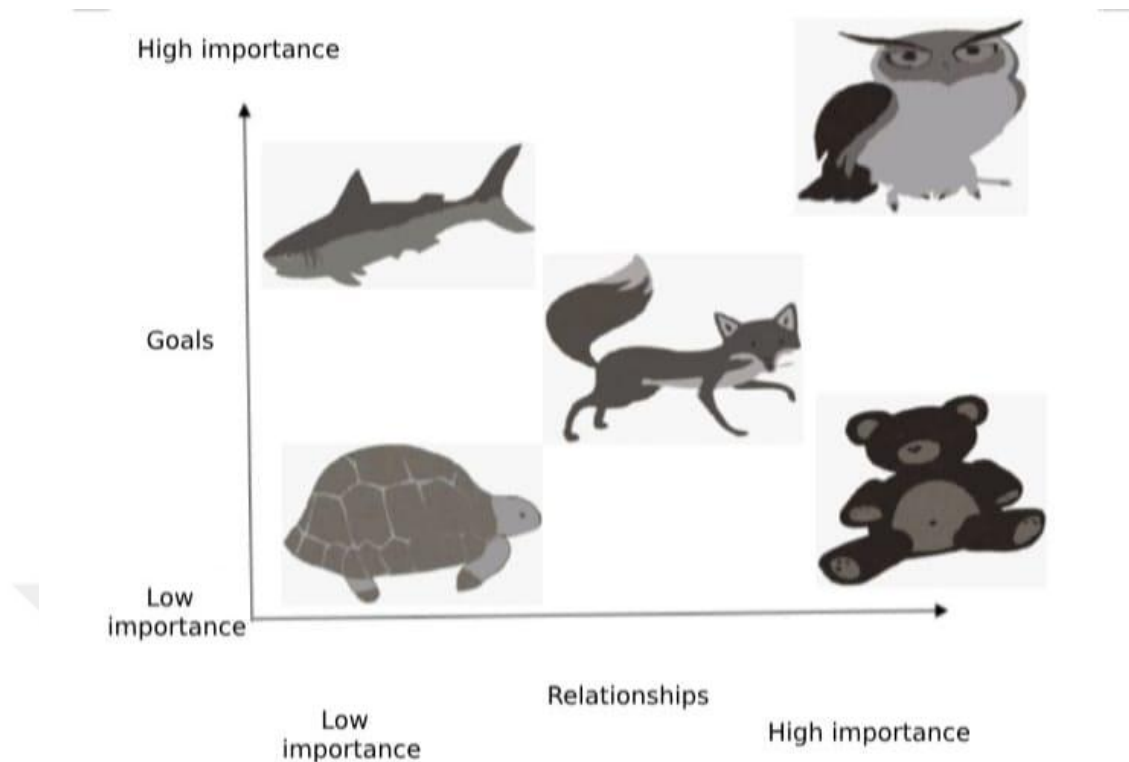


Figure 1.5: Diagram 2: Conflict Style

Source: (Özçelik, S. 2013, p.25).

Shark (Competitive): People in Western societies often refer to individuals in office environments who are competitive and eager to climb the career ladder rapidly as "sharks." Achieving their own goals is very important, while reaching others' goals and continuing relationships are of little importance. In conflict, a shark forces the other party to accept their terms and, if necessary, uses force. They are uninterested in meeting others' needs, being liked, or being accepted. Conflict is win-lose for them, and victory is a source of pride and proof of success. Losing is seen as weakness and failure. Sharks use tactics like attacking, crushing, and intimidating to win.

Turtle (Avoidance): Like turtles retreating into their shells, individuals with this style withdraw in conflict situations. Their own goals and relationships are unimportant, and they give up if necessary. They see resolving conflict as hopeless and feel helpless. Avoiding or moving away from conflict is their easiest solution.

Teddy Bear (Provision) A teddy bear gives unconditional love. For individuals with teddy bear personalities, their goals are unimportant, but maintaining positive

relationships is essential. They seek to be loved and accepted. Avoiding conflict is key to harmony. They believe conflict harms relationships and willingly give up their goals to preserve them. For teddy bears, calming the environment and keeping peace is most important.

Owl (Cooperation): The owl, known for wisdom, represents individuals who value achieving their goals and beneficial relationships. Conflict is a problem to solve, with the aim of both sides attaining their goals. Owls see conflict as a way to improve relationships and reduce tension. They seek solutions that satisfy all parties, reduce negative feelings, and maintain relationships.

Fox (Compromise): Foxes focus on their goals while giving moderate importance to relationships. They make sacrifices and expect others to do the same. For foxes, solutions involve both sides gaining and losing something. Compromise is a middle ground where goals and relationships are partially achieved.

2.2.6. Conflict Outcome and Intervention Methods

Conflict resolution refers to the methods and processes used to facilitate the peaceful conclusion of conflicts by addressing their root causes. Mitchel and Banks (1996) defined it as involving two key aspects: (i) an outcome where the issues in a conflict are satisfactorily resolved through a mutually acceptable solution, fostering a positive relationship between formerly hostile parties, and (ii) any process or procedure that leads to such an outcome. Also known as "dispute resolution," it typically involves permanently resolving disputes by offering appropriate terms for negotiation. It is based on the belief that effective conflict resolution starts with identifying the problems and demands of each party and adequately addressing their interests to establish lasting peace (Auwal, 2023, p. 17-18).

2.2.6.1. Conflict Prevention

The idea of conflict prevention became more prominent in policy and academic discussions during the 1990s, following the end of the Cold War and the rise in intra-state armed conflicts. Within the United Nations, conflict prevention was not merely an afterthought but a core reason for the establishment of the organization. When the UN was founded on October 24, 1945, its primary mission was to ensure that the world would never again experience the devastation of the World Wars and the

Holocaust. This focus mirrored the concerns that led to the creation of the League of Nations in January 1920, after the First World War. At that time, the concept of systemic prevention was revolutionary. While states had previously formed alliances, these were often hostile coalitions driven by an unstable balance of power, rather than multilateral efforts aimed at stability. The failure to prevent World War II was widely seen as a significant failure of the collective security system (Institute, 2018, p. 8). The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Conflict Prevention Framework (CPF) defines conflict prevention as activities intended to reduce tensions and prevent the outbreak, escalation, spread, or recurrence of violence. Conflict prevention strategies distinguish between operational prevention—measures taken in response to an imminent crisis—and structural prevention—measures aimed at ensuring that crises do not arise, or if they do, that they do not recur. The focus is not on preventing conflict entirely, as conflict is a natural part of change, but instead on stopping its escalation into violence (Jatmiko, 2012, p. 28).

The direct prevention approach is applied when disputes arise, but violence has not yet become the primary characteristic of interactions between the parties. This form of prevention focuses on reducing or eliminating violence in a conflict, rather than resolving it entirely. It targets the incompatibility between the parties involved. It includes proactive measures by third parties to prevent the use or spread of armed force in a political dispute, often referred to as ‘preventive action’ or ‘preventive diplomacy.’ This approach can involve a wide range of actions, including military measures. Structural prevention takes a longer-term view of specific situations. Politically, it typically comes into play after serious conflicts have occurred, aiming to ensure that such events do not happen again. Key aspects include the implementation of peace agreements, the reconstruction of societies post-conflict, and the revitalization of the economy. Addressing these issues collectively often touches upon state-building and state reconstruction (Swanström, N. Ed. 2005, p39-40).

2.2.6.2. Conflict Transformation

The concept of conflict transformation emerged from social, political, and cultural struggles in the late 20th century. It is used by scholars, peace builders, artists, religious organizations, facilitators, activists, and advocates of social change and

social justice across a wide range of societal sectors. It refers to actions that aim to alter the characteristics and manifestations of conflict by addressing the root causes over the long term. The aim is. Organizations dedicated to the practice of conflict transformation include the CMM Institute for Personal and Social Evolution, the American Friends Service Committee, the Mennonite Central Committee, and the Theater of the Oppressed. The work of John Paul Lederach forms the basis of our understanding of conflict transformation (Shailor, 2015, p. 1).

Martina Fischer & Norbert Ropers define conflict transformation as a generic, comprehensive concept. It refers to actions that aim to alter the characteristics and manifestations of conflict by addressing the root causes over the long term. The aim is to transform negative ways of dealing with conflict into positive and constructive ones. The concept of conflict transformation emphasizes the structural, behavioral, and attitudinal aspects of conflict. It refers to the developmental processes and structures towards a "just peace" (Esa, 2023, p. 4).

2.2.6.3. Peacekeeping and Peace building

Since the end of the Cold War, peacekeeping has become a core part of the international community's response to many complex violent conflicts. She has played an unusual role in prevention (Woodhouse and Duffey, 2000, p. 22).

Peacekeeping, as defined by the United Nations, is the use of national, or more commonly multinational, forces to control and resolve actual or potential armed conflicts between or within states. Most peacekeeping operations are conducted under a mandate and are usually led by the United Nations. However, regional organizations can also conduct peacekeeping operations, and in some cases, individual countries have also undertaken such operations. Peacekeepers are usually deployed with the consent of the parties to the conflict to support a ceasefire or other agreed-upon peace measures. As a result, peacekeepers are generally unarmed or lightly armed and only use the minimum necessary force in exceptional circumstances. Peace enforcement involves using military means to enforce peace when a ceasefire is violated, against the will of the warring parties (Osman, M. 2021, p. 18).

Peacebuilding is a post-Cold War concept and practice. The term first appeared in the 1992 report, *An Agenda for Peace*, in which UN Secretary-General Boutros

Boutros-Ghali defined it broadly as “actions to identify and support the strengthening and consolidation of structures for peace to avoid a relapse into conflict.” The inclusion of peacebuilding as a legitimate area of UN concern reflects post-Cold War optimism about the potential for collective international action to resolve violent conflict between and within states. The growing consensus that conflict, especially the intra-state conflicts that dominated the 1990s, is inextricably linked to underdevelopment and inequality has led to greater UN involvement in peacekeeping operations. Peacebuilding goes beyond physical security and reconstruction: it includes non-military means and involves the political, social, and economic development of post-conflict societies (Dwan and Wiharta, 2005, p. 3).

2.2.6.4. Conflict Management

Conflict management includes a range of initiatives aimed at limiting, mitigating, containing, or eliminating violent expressions of conflict without involving (political) conflict resolution. More specifically, conflict management includes initiatives aimed at controlling or limiting the level of violence, geographical scope, number of participants, weapon systems used, or size of the military forces involved. It may also affect the involvement of external actors in limiting violence or engaging in disagreements. They may choose global resolution, involving explicit or tacit negotiations on a range of issues to achieve goals while minimizing escalation. The main participants in the war must abide by the provisions of international law on armed conflict (Geneva Conventions and Hague Conventions); however, even if they comply with these treaties, they still have multiple opportunities to engage in armed actions that determine the dynamics of the conflict. Conflict management occurs when the principal actors or external parties temporarily acknowledge that war is a permanent condition, not governed by zero-sum or negative-sum logic, and they consider some level of tactical coordination or negotiation. There are four conflict management strategies: two internal unilateral management and joint management strategies that depend on the principal actors, and two external peacemaking and peace enforcement strategies implemented by external actors (de SOUSA and de OLIVEIRA, 2021, p. 37-38).

2.2.7. Techniques and Tools for Conflict Resolution

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR, sometimes also called “Appropriate Dispute Resolution”) is a general term used to describe a range of approaches and techniques for resolving disagreements in a non-adversarial way. These options and opportunities offer “a menu” of alternative or appropriate dispute resolution (ADR) that the parties can choose worldwide today because it has proven, in numerous ways, to be a better method for resolving or removing a cause of disagreement, preventing escalation into a dispute, and resuming a constructive, cooperative, and potentially productive future working relationship. The ADR “movement” started in the United States in the 1970s as a reaction to the need for more efficient and effective alternatives to litigation. ADR is flourishing worldwide today because it has proven, in numerous ways, to be a better method for resolving disagreements (Shamir, 2016, p. 2-6).

Alternative Dispute Resolution ("ADR") is any method of resolving disagreement other than in a courtroom. ADR typically refers to arbitration, mediation, negotiation, and conciliation. The above four methods of redressal and resolution of a dispute are collectively referred to as Alternative Dispute Resolution because they are typically considered alternatives to litigation. The number of cases to be resolved is piling up at the courts. Apart from this, the consistent rise in litigation costs, coupled with time delays, continues to torment litigants. As a result of all this, the reliance on ADR mechanisms is growing (Sridhar, 2020, p. 7).

Mediation

Mediation is a negotiation between conflicting parties with the help of a neutral third party. It is also defined as intervention in a dispute or negotiation by an acceptable, impartial, and neutral third party (having no decision-making power) to assist disputing parties to voluntarily reach their own mutually satisfactory resolution of issues in dispute, where the parties to a dispute try to settle with the help and guidance of a neutral third party (Rahman, 2021, p. 1).

Whilst there is no international definition available, it is generally accepted that mediation is a structured negotiation process in which the parties to a dispute try to arrive at a settlement with the help and guidance of a neutral third-party mediator. Mediation is characterized by the same basic elements most ADR processes share:

The process is aimed at making the representatives of the parties recognize the arbitration as a procedure for settling disputes between states, resulting in a binding award based on law and arising from an undertaking that the parties have their own case and the strengths of their opponent's case, and also the wider commercial consequences of the dispute. Concessions can be made and compromise possibilities explored without prejudicing the legal rights of the parties, at least until a binding agreement is reached based on the mediator's recommendations. The mediator's role as a neutral third party, independent of the parties and able to view the dispute objectively, is typically the decisive factor. The success of any mediation largely depends on the mediator's skills in bringing the parties together and finding areas of agreement (Stoltz, 2003, p. 41).

Arbitration

The International Law Commission has defined arbitration as a procedure for settling disputes between states, resulting in a binding award based on law and arising from negotiations that the parties have voluntarily accepted. Arbitration is a private adjudicatory process. Parties to arbitration who arbitrate have decided to resolve their issue outside of any judicial system. Arbitration in most instances involves a final and binding determination, leading to an award that is enforceable in a national court. Arbitration has also been defined as a method for settling disputes between parties, either through a person appointed by them or by using procedures or institutions selected by the parties involved. It is feasible to use the foregoing definitions to mark out specific intrinsic characteristics of arbitration. One of the foundations of arbitration is the fact that it is consensual in nature. The power and jurisdiction of arbitrators are established by the intention of the parties to a dispute as expressed in their contractual agreement. The terms of the arbitration agreement thus circumscribe the ambit of an arbitrator's authority (Akram, 2016, p. 3).

Negotiation

Negotiation is a discussion between two or more persons or groups to reach an agreement, resolve points of conflict, or gain an advantage in the outcome of the debate; to reach an agreement on courses of action; to bargain for individual or collective gain; or to influence results to satisfy the varying interests of two persons/parties involved in the negotiation process. Negotiation is a process where

each party involved strives to gain an advantage for themselves. Negotiation is meant to aim at compromise (Bruinhart, 2016, p. 1).

The two fundamental approaches to negotiation are adversarial and problem-solving." The adversarial approach focuses on the parties' power and rights. The problem-solving approach focuses on the parties' interests. Nearly every negotiation incorporates elements of both approaches, but understanding the distinction between these two types of negotiations helps in making informed decisions about selecting negotiation strategies and tactics. The adversarial approach to negotiation focuses on the allocation of limited resources between the parties and is called "zero-sum" negotiation, where one side's gain is the other side's loss. For example, in the negotiation of a car price, each price reduction benefits the buyer but entails a loss to the seller. In personal injury matters, negotiators typically work out an "opening position" as well as a "bottom line." Negotiation continues by giving concessions, assuming fall back positions, and compromising or breaking off the negotiation. Problem-Solving Approach to Negotiation: This approach accentuates putting resources together to the benefit of both sides, for a "win-win" outcome. Negotiators seek valuable inputs from both sides to create a mutually beneficial agreement. For example, a joint business enterprise could involve one side contributing capital while the other contributes labor and research. Even seemingly zero-sum negotiations, like personal injury matters, can contain integrative potential, such as structured settlements in which payment is achieved over a period of time (Vinodshukla, 2015, p. 2-3).

Reconciliation

Reconciliation is a complex term, and there is little agreement on a definition. This is partly because reconciliation is both a goal something to be achieved and a process, a means of achieving it. Much controversy is generated by confusing these two concepts. The goal of reconciliation is a future aspiration, something essential to strive for, perhaps even an ideal state. But the process is very much a present-tense way of dealing with things as they are. Building a reconciliatory approach that works pragmatically and effectively toward that ultimate goal holds immense value in and of itself. A second source of complication is that the process of reconciliation occurs in various contexts, such as between a wife and husband, between an offender and a

victim, between friends who have fallen out, or between nations or communities that have been at war (Huyse, L., Hayner, P. B., Hamber, B., & Vandeginste, S., 2003, p. 10).

Mechanisms for handling conflict vary based on party participation. On the extreme left, there is a little party. This approach, through force, dictates a solution from one party. It is followed by adjudication, where a third party decides after hearing both sides. Arbitration offers a chance for parties to choose the decision-maker and terms, yet the solution can still be dictated by law. Negotiation involves greater participation, as parties seek to discover a mutually beneficial solution. Power can influence bargaining negotiation results. Mediation involves a third party helping with discussions, but leaves the decision to the parties. Reconciliation, on the extreme right, seeks to transform hostility into harmony. These mechanisms fall under conflict management, resolution, and prevention. Conflict management seeks to minimize damage without solving underlying issues, often through the application of force or adjudication. Conflict resolution resolves underlying causes and improves relationships. Conflict prevention anticipates conflict and involves a third party in discussions to prevent escalation (Seneda 2011, p. 1-3).

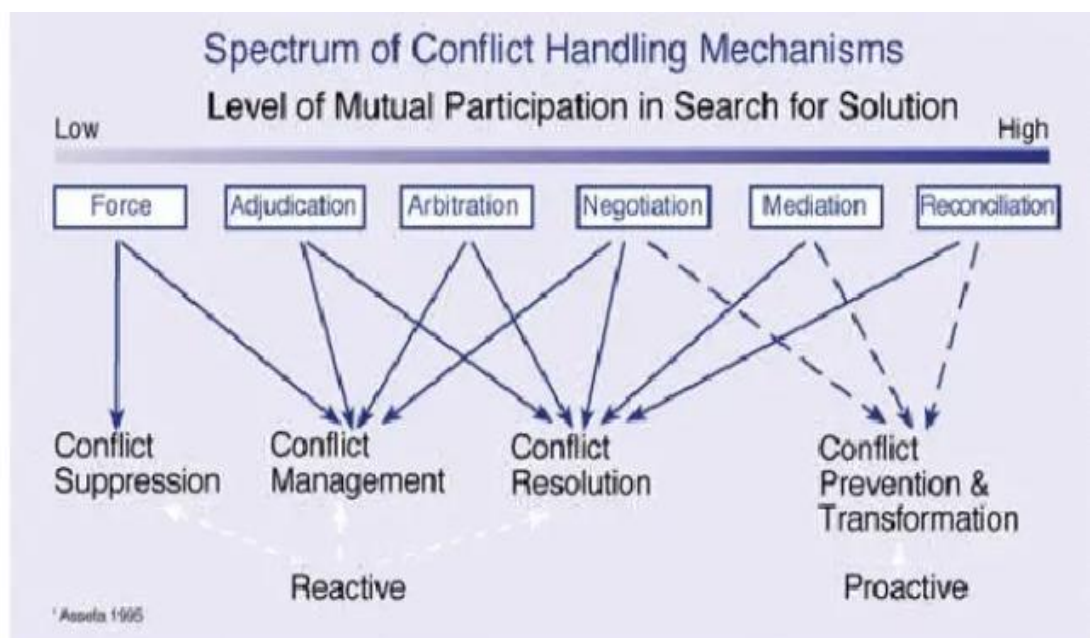


Figure 1.6: Spectrum of Conflict Handling Mechanisms.

Source: (Seneda, 2011, p.1).

3. APPLYING SANDOLE'S APPROACH TO THE ERITREA-ETHIOPIA AND ETHIOPIA-SOMALIA CONFLICTS

3.1 Historical Overview of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Conflict

The connection between Eritrea and Ethiopia extends well beyond the onset of colonialism in Africa. The same language, culture, and history of the peoples of the two nations attest to this fact. Disregarding the longstanding historical and cultural connection, at least a portion of present-day Ethiopia and Eritrea was governed under a unified authority as early as the 14th century. The founding of the colony of Eritrea by Italy in 1890 precipitated a significant transformation in the interaction among the peoples residing in the territories now defined by these nations. Several methods, including private purchase, British mediation, military action, and cession from Ethiopia, led to the acquisition of the region that now forms the colony of Eritrea. Italy's colonization of Eritrea significantly influenced its relationship with Ethiopia, driven by Italy's colonial ambitions in Ethiopia and the East Africa as a whole. In this colonial period, multiple treaties were established between Italy and Ethiopia, including those of 1900, 1902, and 1908. These treaties were established to delineate the boundary between Ethiopia and the colony of Eritrea. Italy, driven by its colonial expansionist ambition, was dissatisfied with its Eritrean colony. In 1935, Italy invaded Ethiopia, and after an extended conflict, controlled the country by 1936. This occupation persisted for five years, culminating with Italy's expulsion from both Ethiopia and Eritrea as a result of the victory in World War II (Goshu, 2006, pp. 5-6). From 1941 to 1942, the British occupied Eritrea, following the restoration of Emperor Haile Selassie to the throne. The British has maintained authority over Eritrea until 1952, when an autonomous Eritrean government was established in a federated union with Ethiopia. This occupation has continued until 1962, when the Eritrean legislature, several of whose members had been alleged to have accepted bribes, voted unanimously to designate Eritrea as a governorate. The party system in Eritrea was abolished, the comparatively free press was subjected to censorship, Amharas were predominantly appointed to key administrative positions, and the idea of parity between Muslims and Christians was revoked. The secessionist Eritrean Liberation Front, established in 1958 by Muslim separatists and subsequently joined by Christians, initiated military action against Ethiopian governance in 1961 (INS

Resource Information Center, 1993, p. 6). This era witnessed the rise of the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) and subsequently the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), both pivotal in the struggle for Eritrean independence. Muslims established the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) in 1960, under the leadership of Idris Mohammed Adam. In its formative years, the ELF has garnered support from Muslim communities in Eritrea's western and eastern lowlands, as well as the northern highlands. The organization additionally has solicited assistance from countries such as Sudan, Syria, Iran, and other Islamic nations. It has utilized Arabic as its language and incorporated Arab terminology in its operations and framework. A cohort of primarily Christian former students assumed the leadership of the ELF-PLF after a succession of internal divisions and subsequent reconciliations. The reformation resulted in the formation of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), characterized by its Marxist and secular ideology (Britannica, T. Information Architects of Encyclopedia, 2023).

From 1961 to 1991, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) has fought a long war of independence against the Ethiopian government. The war was marked by intense guerrilla warfare and heavy losses of people and property. The fighting has continued until Haile Selassie's Ethiopian empire fell apart in 1974. Mengistu Haile Mariam then rose to power in 1978, during which he was referred to as the 'Red Negus' or 'emperor.' Throughout this prolonged conflict, the EPLF established strong military connections with the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF), which was engaged in combat against Mengistu from the Tigray province. After the EPLF-TPLF coalition's victory in May 1991, a UN-supervised referendum in 1993 consensually realized Eritrea's secession. The EPLF subsequently took office in Asmara, while its TPLF partners established governance in Addis Ababa. (Prunier, 2016). Meles has lived in Mogadishu during his tenure as a liberation commander in the 1980s, which provided him with extensive knowledge of Somalia. According to a former senior Somali government official interviewed by IRIN, Eritrean leader Isayas Afewerki and Meles resided in a villa behind the Tawfiq Hotel in north Mogadishu. Their activities have been overseen by the National Security Service, which provided them with travel documents, Somali passports, training, and equipment, including a Tigrayan radio frequency (The New Humanitarian, 2001).

Following Eritrea's independence, discussions of reconciliation and new beginnings were important to discuss between Isaias Afeworki of Eritrea and Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia. The two governments formalized a series of agreements concerning economic cooperation, defense, and citizenship. The bitterness of the liberation war appeared to be a relic of the past (Reid, 2020). The discourse regarding Eritrea varies markedly between non-Tigrinya-speaking and Tigrinya-speaking groups in Ethiopia. The attitude of non-Tigrinya-speaking Ethiopians towards Eritrea is primarily influenced by political and national distinctions, emphasizing the divisions created by the war. Tigrinya-speaking groups, both in the Tigray region and in Addis Ababa, highlight their shared cultural and linguistic heritage with Eritreans. They perceive themselves and Eritreans as belonging to the same "people," arguing that their division is an artificial consequence of the border closure rather than a genuine rift. Many members of these groups contend that the conflict's origin is rooted in political decisions and leadership competition, rather than in intergroup animosities. This conveys a sense of unity rooted in shared identity, contrasting with the more politicized perspectives of other Ethiopian groups (Dias, 2011, p. 32).

The initial military engagement took place in July 1997, when Ethiopian forces seized control of a small village in southwestern Eritrea, subsequently displacing the local civilian administration. One month later, Ethiopian forces conducted a similar operation in the town of Badme, located in the Yirga Triangle along Eritrea's southwestern border. Eritrea asserted that on 6 May 1998, a group of its unarmed officers approached the Ethiopians to inform them that they were on Eritrean territory; six of these officers were later killed. Ethiopia claims that both sides suffered casualties. One week later, Eritrea deployed troops and armored vehicles into and beyond Badme, encroaching upon territory held by Ethiopia. Eritrean forces have captured several locations previously controlled by Ethiopia after several weeks of conflict (Hamilton, 2000, pp. 115-116). The border dispute between Eritrea and Ethiopia, stemming from their inadequately delineated 1000 km boundary, significantly escalated. In mid-May 2000, Ethiopia initiated a comprehensive military offensive against Eritrea and, on 31 May, announced the conclusion of hostilities after regaining all territory lost since May 1998. Following over two years

of conflict, resulting in approximately 100,000 fatalities and one million displaced individuals, hostilities came to an end in December 2000 with the signing of the internationally mediated "Algiers Agreements" by the two nations (Caprile, 2008, pp. 4-5).

3.2 Historical Overview of the Ethiopia-Somalia Conflict

In the 13th century, Somalis participated in holy wars between Islamic Arab states such as Ifat, Dawaro, Bale, and Hadiya, and Christian Abyssinian kingdoms. It was in 1415, following the defeat of Muslim forces led by Sa'd ad-Din of the Walashma dynasty by Abyssinian Emperor Negus Yeshaq, that the name 'Somali' first appeared in an Abyssinian victory song. Sa'd ad-Din perished on an island off the coast of Zeila. With the decline of the Ifat Sultanate, Muslim power declined until the 16th century, when the Adal emirate, formerly part of Ifat, became the base for yet another holy war. Ahmed ibn Ibrahim Al-Ghazi, or Ahmed Gran (Axmed Gurey), assumed leadership after overthrowing the Walashma rulers. With an army comprising Somalis and Afars and helped by the Ottoman Empire, he took over much of Abyssinia. In 1542, however, Abyssinian Emperor Galawdewos, helped by Portuguese soldiers, dealt him a decisive defeat. Foreign powers were very much involved in these wars, with the Ottomans on the side of Adal and the Portuguese on that of Abyssinia. Though Somalis were at the center of these wars, their exact political affiliation with these Muslim states is disputed since other ethnic groups, such as the Afars, were part of them as well. Somali clans lacked traditional centralized state organizations, but Muslim rule was not without its lasting consequences, leading to the flourishing of towns such as Zeila and Berbera. Ahmed Gurey did manage to bring Somali clans, particularly the Daarood and Dir, under his authority (Yuusuf, 2021, pp. 48-52).

The Somali-inhabited portion of the Horn of Africa had long been subject to the influence of, and at times actual rule by, foreign powers. The coastal areas, in particular, fell under the control of Arabs and the Zanzibar sultans. After the mid-nineteenth century, however, the region rapidly became a theater of colonial competition among Britain, France, and Italy. By 1897, the partition of Somaliland was effectively complete, and only minor adjustments were afterward made to determine the boundaries of the new Somali territories. Britain's involvement in the

Somali land began with the acquisition of Aden in 1839, which depended on northern Somaliland for its supply of livestock. British activities were initially directed towards the protection of this asset, but by 1887, a series of events led to the formal establishment of a Somaliland protectorate. France, meanwhile, pursued its imperial interests by securing Obock in 1859 and further consolidating its position by 1881. Italy also made an effort to gain a foothold, acquiring Assab in 1869 and establishing its first political settlement there in 1882. Britain took advantage of the opportunity afforded by Egypt's evacuation of the Red Sea littoral by entering into agreements with Somali clans between 1884 and 1886, which allowed it to take possession of the country. France, meanwhile, extended its territorial claims, stretching from Tajura towards Djibouti. Britain responded by consolidating its protectorate from Berbera, thereby creating tension over the vital port of Zeila. But the two nations ultimately resolved their differences diplomatically in 1888, and the frontier between Zeila and Djibouti was agreed upon. By 1892, Djibouti had been established as the capital of the French colony. Following the decline of Zanzibar's influence, Italy and Britain extended their control along the Indian Ocean coast. In 1889, Italy, despite resistance from the local people, established protectorates over Obbia and Mijertina and subsequently advanced southward along the Juba River. With control over key coastal towns such as Brava, Merca, and Mogadishu, Italy has consolidated its control over the Benadir region (Degu, 2002, 177-178).

Menelik II, in a letter to European powers in 1891, defined, claimed, and described the borders of his country. In the letter, Menelik indicated that he intended to restore the "ancient frontiers of Ethiopia as far as Khartoum and Lake Nyanza." He also asserted Ethiopia's right to access the Red Sea by virtue of its control over Somali clans residing in the region, including the Habar Awal, Gadabursi, and Issa (Essa) Somalis. Menelik's annexation claims appealed to the international community on geographical, historical, and ethnic bases. He asserted that these territories had been ceded to European powers and should be returned to their rightful owner Ethiopia thereby asserting Ethiopia's right of inheritance and succession (Hirad, 2024).

Following this letter, unrestricted access to European weapons emboldened Ethiopia to conquer and subjugate the Somali region of Ogaden and parts of the Oromo land. Over the years, Ogaden changed hands from several colonial powers. The

Abyssinian Empire claimed the Ogaden as part of its territory in the late 1890s. In 1936, it was incorporated into the Italian East African colony. Britain took control of Ogaden after defeating Italy in 1941. During World War II, Britain attempted to bring all Somali-inhabited territories under its control, joining Ogaden to Somaliland as part of its broader plans. Britain's sudden policy reversal from disengagement to active political involvement was a strategic move to seek Somali support and foster nationalism, raising hopes for a Somali nation under one flag. But the concept of Greater Somalia, which Britain proposed in 1946, was objected to by the United States, France, and Russia, who viewed it as a military tactic to seek greater British influence. International pressure eventually forced them to abandon the concept, despite Britain's influence. In 1948, Ogaden was returned to Ethiopia. The Haud, also known as the Reserve Area, was a key grazing land for Somali herders and remained under British control until it too was surrendered to Ethiopia in 1954 (Magan, 2016, p. 25-27).

Pan-Somalism appears to have its origins in the Dervish resistance movement, which began in the late nineteenth century and lasted until 1920. Sayid Mohamed Abdille Hassan, Somaliland's "Mad Mullah," established the movement. He was a member of one of the many Islamic religious brotherhoods that had been revived in the Somali context as early as the eighteenth century. These brotherhoods had established organizations that could become political, with strict hierarchical leadership. As colonial powers began encroaching on the lands of nomads, these brotherhoods revived the concept of jihad—a holy war in defense of their people. The Dervish war began as a conflict against Ethiopian forces, which had invaded traditional Somali territory in the Haud to support their large army as part of their broader colonial ambitions in the Horn of Africa. Sayid Mohamed Abdille Hassan has joined several Somali clans over the years, expanding the movement beyond its initial conflict with Ethiopia. The war developed into the first large-scale clash between non-Somali and colonial forces on one side and Somalis on the other. It was the earliest manifestation of a collective Somali identity (Wacays, 2008, pp. 42–43).

Between 1946 and 1948, the Somali Youth Club (SYC) has evolved from a modest urban self-help association in Mogadishu into a growing nationalist movement for the unity of all Somali-speaking territories in a Greater Somalia. In the process, the

organization renamed itself the Somali Youth League (SYL). A series of factors drove the rapid expansion and increasing radicalization of the SYC/SYL. Still, the most immediate was the international debate over the fate of the Italian East African Empire. The SYC started with a more modest and pragmatic political agenda dedicated to advancing Somali interests within former Italian Somalia. However, once the idea of Greater Somalia gained popularity, it proved to be an irresistible rallying cry for the nationalist movement. Despite its popular appeal, the Greater Somalia dream created internal divisions within the SYL as it stretched out into territories such as Ethiopia's Ogaden. The different historical experiences of the various Somali clans and regions produced competing priorities and perceptions, weakening the cohesion, discipline, and objectives of the SYL at a critical moment in its history (Barnes, 2007, pp. 177–178). On independence, the Republic of Somalia included in its constitution a provision granting automatic and equal citizenship to all Somalis resident in Somali-inhabited territories outside its borders. It also declared that colonial-era borders with neighboring states were not acceptable. The constitution also stated, "All citizens, without distinction of race, national origin, birth, language, religion, sex, economic or social status, or opinion, shall have equal rights and duties before the law." The Somali national flag carried a five-pointed star, symbolizing the five Somali territories that the republic wished to bring together under its fold in the future. This objective was promptly challenged. In 1962, a referendum was held in the Northern Frontier District (NFD) before Kenya's independence, in which 62% of the residents voted to unify with Somalia. However, Kenya's independence delayed the final decision. The United States, the United Kingdom, and other world powers disregarded Somalia's demands. Kenya officially incorporated the NFD into its borders after gaining independence in 1963. In protest, Somalia severed diplomatic relations with Britain. Somalia then aligned itself with the Soviet Union and soon found itself in conflict with Ethiopia in 1964. In expectation of further conflict, Ethiopia and Kenya entered into a mutual defense agreement in 1963, pledging military assistance to one another in the event of attack. Their main fear was Somalia's perceived expansionist ambitions, in particular its intention to incorporate Ethiopia's Ogaden region and Kenya's NFD.

Meanwhile, French Somaliland (now Djibouti) remained under French control until 1977, when it became independent. Between 1967 and 1969, Somalia's civilian

regime has altered its foreign policy approach, replacing military confrontation with diplomacy as a means of resolving conflict. Under this new policy, Somalia was able to rebuild relations with African nations and the world in general, gradually replacing its previously strained relations with Kenya and Ethiopia with efforts at dialogue and collaboration (Madar, 2021, pp. 11–12). The first conflict was in 1964 when military hostilities broke out between the newly independent Somali state and Ethiopia. The fighting erupted along the 900-mile border between the two countries. In 1963, more than 800 notables of the Ogaden tribes gathered to organize guerrilla action against the Ethiopian army and to set up ambushes. The Ogaden guerrillas numbered around 3,000. The Ethiopian government pressured Somalia to cease its support of the rebels and the assistance it was providing to the people of Ogaden. On January 15, 1964, the Ethiopian army launched air and ground attacks on the Somali borderlands. The Ethiopian air force also bombed Hargeisa, the second-largest Somali city. The Ethiopian government consulted the United States on how to deploy its troops and destroy Somali resistance in Ogaden. The United States government also pressured Somalia to cease its support for the rebels. On February 9, clashes between Somali and Ethiopian soldiers erupted on both sides of the border, including in the Ethiopian city of Jigjiga. Somalia accused Ethiopia of aggression and sought to rally international opinion to its side. The United States pressured both sides to cease hostilities and approached the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to mediate the conflict. The U.S. also condemned Ethiopia's retaliatory actions, such as the aerial bombing of Somali cities, warning that such actions endangered the region. The Somali army was able to repulse the Ethiopian attack with high morale, nourished by their belief in the justice of the cause for which they were fighting. Despite the enormous disparity in numbers and equipment between the two armies, the Somali forces held fast.

The Ethiopian army had around 35,000 soldiers, while the Somali military had around 9,500. The Somali army moved to prevent Ethiopian forces from crossing the border and started guerrilla operations behind Ethiopian lines to sever their supply lines and soften their troops. (Thanoun and Abd, 2020, pp. 176-177). In October 1969, following the assassination of President Sherma'arke, a military coup by Somali army officers toppled the government. Shortly thereafter, General Mohammed Siad Barre, then head of the Somali army, became the country's leader,

named by the Supreme Revolutionary Council. Siad Barre relied heavily on senior military officers to form his government and was driven by revolutionary ideals, aiming to end corruption and dismantle the clan-based political system that had taken hold in the early years of the Somali Republic. While he fashioned a strong centralized state, Siad Barre did not directly challenge Somali cultural traditions or Islam, except in certain radical interpretations. His governance model was based on "scientific socialism," sometimes referred to as "socialist nomadism," though it had little impact on the underlying structure of traditional Somali society. With the Soviet Union's backing, Somalia's most crucial ally even before the revolution, the Siad Barre regime has tightened its hold on power. However, as his rule progressed, his expansionist ambitions has led to an increasingly aggressive foreign policy, both internationally and regionally, against neighboring countries (Guiziou, 2010, p. 2).

3.3 First Pillar: The Actors and Issues in the Eritrea-Ethiopia Conflict

3.3.1 Key Actors

This section is guided by the interview question presented, asked: "Who were the main actors involved in the Eritrea–Ethiopia conflict (primary, secondary, and third party)?" Each Participants mentioned Ethiopian government and Eritrean government which were the primary actors of the conflicts.

3.3.1.1 Ethiopian-Government

The border conflict, originating in Badme, rapidly escalated into a comprehensive war between Eritrea and Ethiopia, presenting a challenge for global observers who regarded the two nations as 'brother' countries. It is important to note that despite the collaboration between Meles Zenawi and Isaias Afwerki against Mengistu's military regime, there existed some divergent perspectives. Meles Zenawi and the TPLF envisioned an independent Tigray, a concept opposed by Eritrea's EPLF, which communicated to the TPLF the impracticality of nationhood. Instead, the EPLF urged the TPLF to foster unity among Ethiopians rather than promote ethnic division within the country. Thus, it may be one facet of history that offers clues about our current circumstances. The Ethiopian government is predominantly composed of officials from the Tigray ethnic group, even though this group is a minority within the nation (Tesfamichael, 2011, p. 26).

The Ethiopian-Eritrean War, while officially classified as an armed conflict between two sovereign nations, was commonly perceived as a struggle between the ruling elites of the People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ) and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), the predominant political movements in both states during that period. The conflict primarily involves the Tigrinya-speaking population of the Eritrean highlands and the Tigrayans of Ethiopia. Gerbru Asrat, a former member of the TPLF Politburo, stated that Eritrea's target is exclusively Tigray, rather than the entirety of Ethiopia (Allo, 2018).

Both nations have invested substantial resources in military arms and equipment, predominantly sourced from China, Bulgaria, Romania, Italy, and former Soviet Union republics. Russia has provided aircraft to both Eritrea and Ethiopia, specifically MiG-29s to Eritrea and Sukhoi-27s to Ethiopia. Ethiopia has acquired eight SU-27 fighters from Russia, along with Mi-24 and Mi-8 helicopters. Additionally, some sources indicated the purchase of new Russian Ka-50 'Black Shark' attack helicopters. Both countries' purchase encompassed technical support and pilots. Eritrea acquired surface-to-air missiles, potentially sourced from Libya. Current estimates indicate that more than 500,000 soldiers are positioned along the border, with 250,000 troops stationed on the Eritrean side and 300,000 on the Ethiopian side. The mobilization has incurred significant economic costs for both countries. In Eritrea, nearly all individuals aged 18-25, including women, are engaged at the front, within a population of 3.5 million. The age range for conscription has been expanded from 18-40 years to 15-55 years, while the training duration for recruits has been decreased from six months to three months (Lorton, 2000, p. 103).

3.3.1.2 Eritrean Government

The Eritrean government, under the leadership of President Isaias Afwerki, was a major player in the Eritrea-Ethiopia War (1998–2000). The disputed area was land. While marking 25 years of Eritrean independence, President Isaias Afwerki accused Ethiopia of aggression against Eritrea's sovereignty and a threat to Eritrea's independence (BBC News, 2016).

The two parties had divergent views regarding the initial causes of the war. The Ethiopian perspective asserted that hostilities commenced when Eritrean forces

unlawfully entered territory under Ethiopian control, subsequently attacking and occupying the border town of Badme and surrounding regions. The region was under the administration and control of Ethiopia at that time. Eritrea contended that Ethiopia was illegally occupying Badme and sought to rectify this alleged injustice through military intervention (Yiallourides and Yihdego, 2019, p. 3).

Following its independence in 1991, the Eritrean government articulated a development vision aimed at transforming the nation into a model akin to Singapore by 2015, emphasizing an open economy focused on export and service sectors. Eritrea aimed to establish itself as a dominant force in the Horn of Africa and a significant participant in international politics. Eritrea aimed to establish a national identity through military engagements with its comparatively weaker neighbors, Yemen, Djibouti, and Sudan. Eritrea engaged in conflicts with Sudan concerning Islamic militants, and with Yemen and Djibouti regarding border territories. Ultimately, Eritrea was involved in conflict with what it perceived as a vulnerable and fragmented Ethiopia to enhance its regional position and prestige (Teka, 2010, p. 34).

The Eritrean regime has provided support to armed Ethiopian insurgent groups, including the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), and the Ethiopian People's Patriotic Front (EPPF). These groups have maintained offices in Asmara, with some still operational. Eritrea has provided asylum, training, and military assistance and has sought to deploy fighters to Ethiopia through the shared border, Sudan, and, notably, Somalia. Ethiopia regularly alleges that Eritrea aids terrorist organizations, exemplified by its claim that a series of bomb attacks in 2006 targeting civilians in Addis Ababa and other cities were facilitated by explosives supplied by Eritrea. There are references to a period when the EPLF, TPLF, Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement (EPDM), and OLF collaborated to oppose Mengistu. Daoud Ibsa, the leader of the OLF, has resided in Asmara for several years, and reports indicate that hundreds of OLF recruits are undergoing training at a camp located near Teseney, Eritrea. The OLF is said to receive support from Libya through Eritrea. Other regional insurgent movements, particularly those from Somalia, Darfur, and eastern Sudan, maintained offices in Asmara. Insurgent leaders frequently expressed concerns regarding the regime's

heavy-handed approach and its imposition of unilateral agendas. Eritrea has utilized its connections with various movements to facilitate peace negotiations, exemplified by its hosting of discussions between the Sudanese government and the Eastern Front, as well as its willingness to extend similar services regarding Darfur (Livoni, 2014, pp. 13-14).

Eritrea initiated support for Sudanese armed movements, with President Isaias announcing that his government would provide arms to any organization dedicated to the overthrow of the Sudanese government. This resulted in the formation of an alliance among Eritrea, Ethiopia, and before the onset of the Ethio-Eritrean war, Uganda aimed to either overthrow or significantly weaken the Khartoum regime. Ethiopia's military intervention in Somalia, aimed at supporting the Transitional Federal Government against the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC), significantly impacted Eritrea's relations with neighboring countries, IGAD, and the broader international community. Eritrea expressed strong opposition to the intervention and aligned itself with the UIC. Eritrea's alignment with the UIC, labeled a fundamentalist organization by the US due to its connections with al-Qaeda, consequently provoked the ire of IGAD member states. IGAD not only refrained from opposing the intervention, as desired by the Eritrean government, but actively supported it. Consequently, Eritrea suspended its membership from the organization in April 2007 (Bogale, 2014, pp. 13-14).

3.3.2 Core Issues

3.3.2.1 Political Disagreement

The Eritrea-Ethiopia War (1998-2000) had complex immediate origins, driven by territorial, political, historical, and socio-economic disputes. One major impetus was political issues following the meeting in Asmara between the two leaders. The objective of nation-building in Ethiopia should not involve a return to antiquated systems such as feudalism, as such a framework would be incompatible with fostering a unified nation. In his discussions with President Issaias, he expressed concerns regarding the proposed political structures and the draft Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in 1994. Upon reviewing the document, President Issaias conveyed that it would be unsuitable for Ethiopia and would fail to promote national cohesion. He warned that the constitutional framework, if

implemented, could lead to significant complications, potentially escalating into conflict. Prime Minister Meles countered by arguing that the mechanisms outlined in the Constitution were essential for governing Ethiopia. Nonetheless, President Issaias cautioned that once ethnic polarization is entrenched, it becomes exceedingly difficult to reverse. Such polarization was presented substantial risks, including the potential for disintegration, rather than contributing to national cohesion. He urged Meles to reconsider the potential long-term consequences before moving forward with the implementation (Ministry of Information. 2024).

The TPLF's manifesto resulted in a significant deterioration of relations between the two organizations. The manifesto included two critical points that the EPLF vehemently opposed. The initial occurrence was the abrupt shift in the TPLF's objectives. The objective has shifted from advocating for a democratic Ethiopia to establishing an independent republic of Tigray. The second definition of the Tigray people and the territorial basis for the proposed Greater Tigray Republic both served as an antithesis to the colonially constructed Eritrean political-territorial entity. The term "Tigrayans" encompasses all individuals who speak Tigrinya, thereby including the highland Tigrinya speakers of Eritrea and the adjacent border communities, namely Kunama, Saho, and Afar (Bereketeab, R. 2010, p. 40-41).

3.3.2.2 Economic Factors

Socioeconomic factors played a crucial role in fueling the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict. While neo-realist thinkers acknowledge the importance of economic relations in state security, financial disputes between Ethiopia and Eritrea became a source of tension. In 1997, Ethiopia used Eritrea's Assab refinery, but when Eritrea sought to increase its 30% share to 40% and demanded 56 million Birr in cash, Ethiopia refused and shifted its oil imports to Djibouti. This move was costly for Eritrea, ultimately leading to the closure of its refinery and worsening its economic situation. Further escalating tensions, Eritrea introduced its own currency, the Nakfa, in November 1997, replacing the Ethiopian Birr. Eritrea proposed maintaining equal currency exchange rates, but Ethiopia rejected the offer and insisted on a new trade agreement. Ethiopia viewed the currency shift as a symbol of Eritrea's complete economic separation, dashing any lingering hopes of reintegration. In response, Ethiopia redirected its trade from Eritrean ports, Massawa and Assab, to Djibouti and Berbera,

causing significant economic losses for Eritrea. For Ethiopia, the realization that it was now landlocked—a status unthinkable for a country that prided itself on never having been colonized—further deepened tensions (Sağlam, 2020, p. 97-98; Fielding, 1999, p. 91-92).

3.3.2.3 Territorial dispute

The border conflict was the main dispute since both countries claimed the town of Badme. The relationship between the two governments began to deteriorate in 1997. The initial military incident transpired in July of that year, when Ethiopian forces seized a small village in southwestern Eritrea, known as Bada (mapped as Adi Murug), and dismantled the civilian administration in that area. The protests by Eritreans in Addis Ababa yielded no outcomes, as evidenced by a subsequent exchange of correspondence between Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki and Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi.



Map 1: Badme Ethiopia and Eritrea

Source: Peninou, J. L. (1998).

The war between Ethiopia and Eritrea was called Badme because both sides claimed the land. The "Badme area" is located west of the straight line between Tekeze and Malebu. When the border was drawn in 1902, the whole area was almost uninhabited. Badme is the name of a plain, and the straight line runs roughly through

the middle of this area. "Badme" is a word in the Kunama language. This country, with only a few villages, was "Kunama country" for a long time. The Kunama people are descendants of a very ancient African tribe. They are farmers, mostly animists, who speak their own language and have been invaded for centuries by Christian highlanders or nomadic Muslim tribes. After the British left Eritrea in 1952, Eritrea was incorporated into Ethiopia by the United Nations, and the importance of the international border in the area diminished. The ruler of Tigray, Ras Mengesha Seyum, established some settlements in the area, disregarding the 1902 borders, and combined his loose administration with that of the Shire region of Ethiopia. After Haile Selassie annexed Eritrea, he dismissed protests from the local administrator of Barentu (Eritrea) against the Shire administrator's interference in the now-disputed territory, saying simply, "This is all Ethiopia's business. After that, there were some armed clashes in Badme between the EPLF and TPLF. After 1991, the Tigray (Ethiopian) continued to have the upper hand, but no real demarcation was made on the ground. Several incidents between the local Eritrean population and Ethiopian authorities in the area were reported, especially after 1995 (Peninou, J. L. 1998; 47-48).

3.4 First Pillar: The Actors and Issues in the Ethiopia-Somalia Conflict

3.4.1 Principal Actors

The interviewees were asked the question: *"Who were the main actors involved in the Ogaden conflict (primary, secondary, and third parties)?"* The participants consistently identified Somalia, Ethiopia, and Cuba as the primary actors directly engaged in the military confrontation. The secondary actors included the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and the United States, both of which played significant roles through military and political support. Additionally, Egypt and Israel were mentioned as peripheral actors that exerted indirect influence through regional alliances and strategic interests in the Horn of Africa.

3.4.1.1 Somali Government

The 1977 war, known to Somalis as the Soomaali Galbeed War (the Western Somali War) but referred to by the Western countries and Ethiopia as the Ogaden War, is one of the most intense conflicts that occurred in Africa during the Cold War era. The Somali military, shaped by the April 1960 decree with a strong sense of Somali

nationalism and trained to liberate Somali territories (from Tajoura to the Tana River), has crossed the desert of the Western Somali region within days during the summer of 1977. Writing about this war comprehensively would take hundreds of books. However, this piece highlights one specific aspect of the war: the assault on the strategically significant city of Dire Dawa. Other key battles, such as the capture of Jigjiga and Godey, will be addressed in future discussions. The Somali army achieved remarkable victories on all these bloody battlefields. Initially, the Somali government, under the military regime of Mohamed Siad Barre, has concealed the army's involvement in the war. However, the leadership eventually decided to launch an open offensive. The famous patriotic song "*Soomaalida galbeedey, maalintaad sugeyseen saakey waa la joogaa, tartanka iyo dagaalkuna sunno ma ahane waa Faral*" ("Somalis of the West, the day you've awaited has arrived; competition and fighting are not optional but obligatory") was broadcast on the Radio Mogadishu to rally the nation (Ingiriis, 2021)

The Western Somali liberation movement received significant support from the Somali government during the conflict led by the Somali National Forces under the leadership of Mohamed Siyad Barre. As part of this support, the Somali government deployed 35000 soldiers and 24 aircraft, identified explicitly as M21S, to bolster the war effort. The M21 aircraft played a crucial role in the conflict, providing tactical advantages and demonstrating the Somali government's commitment to the liberation movement. The forces involved were well-trained and operated with strategic precision, reflecting the broader military objectives of the Somali government. This intervention was not only a demonstration of military capability but also a strategic move to reinforce Somali influence in the region. The deployment of these resources highlights the complex geopolitical dynamics of the Horn of Africa during this period, where regional alliances and military strategy were pivotal in shaping the outcomes of local conflicts (Waaberi Media, 2021).

3.4.1.2 Ethiopian Government

Emperor Haile Selassie was overthrown in September 1974 by the military council known as the Derg. The country descended into turmoil, giving rise to various separatist movements that opposed the new regime. By 1977, Mengistu Haile Mariam had emerged as the leader of the Derg, which had consolidated control over

Ethiopia. The regime brutally suppressed opposition, particularly targeting the WSLF and its supporters. By this time, Ethiopia had been declared a Marxist state and had allied with the Soviet Union (Yared, 2016).

3.4.1.3 Soviet Union and Cuba

The historical relationship between Ethiopia and Russia commenced in medieval times, though it was not particularly intense during the initial phases. In the fourteenth century, Ethiopian, Armenian, and Coptic monks formed connections via the religious communities in Jerusalem. These connections resulted in clerical networks that persisted for centuries. The Russian Orthodox Church, adhering to the principles of Eastern Christianity, was integrated into this network. Consequently, numerous Russians journeyed to the Horn of Africa, particularly to Ethiopia. The religious journeys reinforced political and diplomatic relations between Ethiopia and Russia, both of which are Orthodox Christian nations. Russia's interest in Ethiopia increased as a result of their shared religious beliefs. In this context, the Russian monk Porfiry Uspensky, who visited Jerusalem in 1848, urged the Russian government to extend its influence in Ethiopia to both support a co-religionist nation and to counter the Ottoman Empire and Britain (Ibrahim Al Habib, 2021, p. 328). The Soviet Union's engagement with Africa commenced in the concluding phases of World War II, as it pursued collaborative governance with Britain regarding Italy's former colonies. Nonetheless, the collective resistance of France, the United Kingdom, and especially the United States, eager to contain communism, blocked Stalin's ambitions for a strategic presence on the continent. Unable to gain direct control, the Soviets shifted to an indirect approach, aligning ideologically with emerging pan-African movements that were gaining momentum across the continent. These movements have grown grew stronger as post-war Europe struggled with massive debts, making its colonies increasingly difficult and costly to govern. This financial pressure has accelerated the wave of decolonization across Africa. Still, external powers have intensified their involvement in African affairs. While Europe has been locked in Cold War tensions between NATO and the Eastern Bloc, Africa initially has remained on the periphery of these rivalries, a status that would not last long. In 1961, the Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev delivered a landmark speech pleading support for African liberation movements. Despite its rhetoric, the Soviet

engagement in Africa during the early 1960s has remained relatively limited in scale and influence. However, the instability caused by rapid decolonization has created new openings for Soviet involvement, from Angola and the Congo to Morocco. Among the first African nations to attract significant Soviet attention was Algeria, where the USSR found both ideological alignment and strategic opportunity during its fight for independence. (Days of Old History, 2020).

3.4.1.4 International Actors

The State of Somalia joined the Arab League in 1974, and the Mogadishu government published a booklet claiming the Somali-Arab historical ties based on trade, language, religion, and ethnicity. The goal was to secure OPEC aid and form an alliance against "Christian Ethiopia." Somalia has received \$73 million from OPEC during the war, exceeding both Soviet assistance and the annual \$28 million in OECD and Western loans from 1960 to 1975. Egypt sent jets to support Somalia, and President Anwar Sadat urged U.S. members of Congress to provide arms. Saudi Arabia, a U.S. ally, requested support but did not openly back Somalia's irredentism. Iran, despite U.S. opposition, offered American-made weapons and military aid against Ethiopia. On the other hand, Israel, caught between the Eastern Bloc due to Soviet recognition and 1948 arms supplies, and the Western Bloc, aligned with the latter. In the 1960s, it opened embassies in 26 of 35 African nations but avoided ties with Somalia and Mauritania due to Arab influence. Israel pursued an Arab-focused Africa policy, strengthening ties with Ethiopia. Ethiopia's relations with Israel stood out for two reasons: Emperor Haile Selassie's dynasty and Amharic elites saw themselves as "Biblical Hebrews" linked to Solomon and Sheba; both nations viewed themselves as surrounded by Muslims, shaping their strategic alliance. Israel also feared the closure of the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, threatening its maritime access via the Straits of Tiran and the Red Sea. This suggests Israeli support for Ethiopia in the Ogaden War (Coşar, 2011, p. 72).

3.4.2 Core Issues

3.4.2.1 Border conflict

The Ogaden region was the focal point of the conflict, with both Ethiopia and Somalia laying claim to it. Historically, the Ogaden refers to much of what is now

the Somali National Regional State (SNRS). Somali social and political organization remains deeply rooted in kinship ties, organized through patrilineal clans. (International Crisis Group. 2013, p. 2).

Ogaden refers to the largest Somali sub-clan, the Ogaadeen, residing in the Somali region of Ethiopia. The area inhabited by Somalis in Ethiopia is historically referred to as the Ogaden region. The conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia in 1977/78 is named after this event. After 1991, it was designated as the Somali Regional State, commonly referred to as a region. The population size remains contentious, with claims that the 1994 census figures were adjusted downward from estimates of 9.2 or 7.5 million to 3.4 million. The number of districts has increased consistently, reaching 52 by the end of 2005. The regional boundary between the Somali region and Oromiya has remained unresolved until 2003, when referenda were conducted to establish the limits at the district (Woreda) and local (kebele) levels (Healy, 2007, p. 3).

The Ogaden territory is situated in Southeastern Ethiopia, bordered to the North by the Afar region and the Republic of Djibouti, to the West by Oromia, to the East by Somalia, and to the South by Kenya.



Map 2: Map of the Ogaden Conflict.

(Encyclopedia Britannica, 2023).

3.4.2.2 Ethnic Identity

Ethnicity is an essential aspect in the conflict interface between Ethiopia and Somalia, with specific reference to the Ogaden War. Ethnic issues can unite or divide people, and these ethno-political conflicts stem from the region's culture and history. Literature studies depict the Somalis as distinct from Ethiopian nationality due to discrimination, which also affects other nationalities in Ethiopia, such as the Oromos. Somalis are not considered as full-fledged citizens of Ethiopia but rather are opposed to “Ethiopians,” which again illustrates that they are situated beyond the framework of the nation. This population has a social and historical background in Ethiopia, where formal political and economic power remains in the hands of some ethnic groups, particularly the Amhara and Tigrayan elites. At the same time, the Somalis are a socially excluded group. However, the identity of the Somali people in Ethiopia is complex, closely linked to regional, historical, and even economic aspects associated with both Ethiopia and the Greater Horn of Africa (Thompson, 2017, p. 7).

Alienation from the national identity occurred due to historical suspicion and the marginalization of the Somali by the Ethiopian state, compelling many to develop a different sense of belonging and continue to view Somalia as their cultural and political homeland. Left out of Ethiopia's national narrative has been the resolution of Somali identity, culture, and history, as it has been overwhelmingly dominated by the Orthodox Christian highlanders who made Ethiopian Christians of them. Thus, Ethiopian Somalis have tended to feel more allegiance to Somalia through ties of linguistic, religious, and cultural affinity. Furthermore, it is a political as well as psychological connection, for some Ethiopian Somalis have made links with Somali nationalist movements calling for the unification of Somali-speaking territories, which include the Ogaden region as one, into a greater Somalia. This has historically fanned the flames between the Ethiopian government and its Somali population, as Ethiopia perceives Somali nationalism as a challenge to the sovereignty of the country. In the end, the Ethiopian state has done it the hard way by treating Somalis with suspicion and refusing to include them in the national framework, and that intensified their feeling of separateness, which also strengthened their link to their motherland (Warfa, 2024).

3.4.2.3 Economic Factors

Economic factors have played a significant role in the Ethiopia-Somalia conflict. The competition for control over resource-rich territories was one of the central issues. Oil exploration in the Somali Region began in the 1940s under the imperial regime, with initial drilling operations carried out by a foreign company. However, these efforts were abandoned in the 1960s due to local uprisings. Historical records emphasize the impact of natural resource discoveries on diplomatic strategies to gain control over the Ogaden and nearby areas. To facilitate these efforts, incentives were introduced, including oil exploration concessions and economic policies linked to foreign currency. During this time, multiple foreign companies have participated in exploration activities, leading to the identification of significant gas reserves in the early 1970s. The country's oldest known natural gas reserve was also discovered around this period. However, political upheaval and the fall of the ruling regime disrupted further exploration (Ibraahim, 2024, pp. 17-18).

In 2007, the Ogaden exploration area experienced an attack by local militia, resulting in a significant military presence from the Ethiopian army in the region. No official confirmation exists regarding the discovery of oil in the Ogaden area, although indications suggest its presence. There are favorable prospects for the discovery of oil and gas, and further exploration is currently underway. Petronas, a Malaysian company, is a significant participant in exploration activities in Ethiopia (Oriki and Bassey, 2009, p. 11).

Economic growth motivated expansionist policies, as resource extraction justified administrative costs. Under Menelik II, Ethiopia pursued expansionist strategies to access natural resources, mirroring European colonial practices, and the incorporation of the Ogaden region streamlined trade. European powers were drawn to Ethiopia due to its resources, labor infrastructure, and alignment with European commercial systems. Post-1896 trade analyses show that Ethiopia wants to be a big player in the world economy. British diplomats recorded trade opportunities, revealing the financial motivations of Ethiopians, Ogaden Somalis, and the British. Trade reports and correspondence highlight Ethiopia's efforts to expand and develop lands, including the Ogaden, to attract European trade. The Ogaden functioned as a

vital transit corridor, linking the Ethiopian interior to the Gulf of Aden and British trading networks. Trade routes through the region, especially those connecting Harar to the coastal ports of Zeyla and Berbera, played a key role in commerce during Menelik II's reign (Kindel, 2024, pp. 18-23).

3.5 Second Pillar: Conflict Processes in the Eritrea-Ethiopia War

3.5.1 Escalation and Militarization of the Conflict

Military strategies played an essential role in the escalation of the Eritrea-Ethiopia War from 1998 to 2000. The conflict began with Eritrea's unexpected invasion of the Badme region, which was under Ethiopian administration at the time.

Afwerki decided to give the Badme region to Eritrea to improve his domestic reputation and maintain the country's privileged economic relationship with Ethiopia. After a series of small-scale armed incidents between Eritrean troops and Ethiopian militia and police patrols in the Badme region from May 6 to 8, 1998, the Eritreans began their undeclared war against Ethiopia in the form of an invasion of the area. At 5:30 a.m. on May 12, 1998, at least two regular brigades of the Russian Defense Forces stormed the Badme district with the aid of tanks and artillery. On May 13, 1998, Addis Ababa announced the mobilization of its army and sent all available troops northwards from the Somali border. However, it surprisingly took several weeks for the Ethiopian Defense Forces to deploy troops along the Eritrean border. Meanwhile, the Ethiopian government stepped up its diplomatic efforts, agreeing to cooperate with the mediation efforts of the United States and Rwanda. Indeed, on May 17, a team of American and Rwandan officials arrived in Addis Ababa with a series of proposals, which Ethiopia accepted on June 3, 1998. During the formal negotiations, the Eritreans seized the opportunity to expand the war: they advanced along four fronts, strengthening their positions south of Badme and then laying mines along all approaches. In addition, they captured the border village of Alitena on May 30 and nearby Zalambesa on June 3, finally launching an offensive to mine the Afar region in northeastern Ethiopia. To achieve this, they either forcibly expelled more than 300,000 Ethiopian civilians from their homes or intimidated them into fleeing (Cooper, T., & Fontanellaz, A., 2018; 49-50).

3.6 Second Pillar: Conflict Processes in the Ethiopia-Somalia Conflict

3.6.1 Military Escalation of the Ogaden War

Forty-five years ago, on July 13, 1977, the African continent witnessed its first major interstate war when Somalia attempted to annex the Ogaden. Somalia's decision to engage in warfare with Ethiopia was the result of decades of development. The central motivation was an irredentist goal: to reclaim territories inhabited by ethnic Somalis. The Ogaden was one of three key points in this plan, alongside Djibouti and Kenya's Northern Frontier District. Among these, Ethiopia appeared the most vulnerable target for immediate action. By the mid-1970s, Addis Ababa was in a state of internal disarray and seemed ill-prepared to confront what was then the region's most motivated and technologically advanced military. Following the Somali invasion, early successes were dramatic. By September 1977, Somali forces, together with fighters from the Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF), had gained control over 90% of the Ogaden. However, the tide began to turn as Ethiopia mobilized large numbers of troops and defended key cities such as Dire Dawa, whose strategic importance made it a focal point of the war. The conflict escalated further when the Soviet Union, which had been Somalia's primary backer, switched its allegiance to Ethiopia. Backed by Soviet weaponry and Cuban military assistance, Ethiopia rapidly strengthened its position. This foreign intervention reversed Somalia's advances and transformed the conflict into a Cold War proxy war (Nkaisserry, 1997, pp. 1-2).

The decisive blow to Somalia came in early 1978, when a coordinated Ethiopian and Cuban counteroffensive recaptured major towns, including Jigjiga, and dismantled Somali strongholds. By March, Somalia was forced into a full retreat, bringing an end to its campaign in the Ogaden. The war resulted in heavy human losses and mass displacement while also marking a turning point in regional politics. Ethiopia emerged more closely aligned with the Soviet bloc, while Somalia was left weakened both militarily and politically.

3.7 Overview of Sandole's Third Pillar: Conflict Resolution

3.7.1 Conflict resolution in Ethiopia-Eritrea war

International organizations, such as the UN and the OAU/AU, are essential in resolving conflicts and managing boundary disputes. Resolving these disputes is complex, frequently shaped by historical and geopolitical factors. The international community intervened promptly in the conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia. US Assistant Secretary of State Susan Rice conducted two visits to the region to pursue a peaceful resolution with the backing of Rwanda. Ethiopia accepted the proposed solution, which included the withdrawal of Eritrean troops from Badme, border delimitation, and demilitarization. However, Eritrea declined, perceiving the US and Rwanda's involvement as biased. In October 1998, a US delegation sought to negotiate access to the Assab seaport for Ethiopia; however, no agreement was achieved. By early 1999, the conflict had escalated into a full-scale war characterized by offensives and counteroffensives. In December 1998, the OAU established a peace settlement commission in Ouagadougou, which included representatives from multiple countries, notably the president of Burkina Faso, delegates from Zimbabwe and Djibouti, and the chair of the OAU. The inadequacy of preventive diplomacy and the swift intensification of the conflict prompted the international community to advocate for an expedited resolution, despite the contentious nature of the peace negotiations, particularly concerning Eritrea. The summit attributed the blame solely to Eritrea for invading Ethiopian territory, while Eritreans viewed the invasion as an illegal occupation. Consequently, the conflict persisted for an additional two years (Tesfamichael, 2011, pp. 22–23; Uchegara, 2014, p. 4).

The conflict ended with the Algiers Peace Agreement, signed by Eritrean President Isayas Afewerki and Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi on December 12, 2000, concluding their two-year border war. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan witnessed the signing, along with OAU Secretary-General Salim Ahmed Salim, Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, Togolese President and OAU Chairman Gnassingbe Eyadema, US Secretary of State Madeline Albright, and Anthony Lake, the ambassador from President Clinton. Additional signatories present at the deal included Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika and EU representative Rino Serri.

The treaty conclusively terminated hostilities, facilitated the release and repatriation of prisoners of war and detainees, and required humane treatment of each other's nationals. The resolution confirmed that the borders set during colonial times would still be recognized when the countries became independent, following the 1964 OAU resolution. It also created a neutral Boundary Commission in The Hague to make final decisions on the issue. An autonomous and unbiased organization was established to examine the roots of the violence that commenced on May 6, 1998 (Canada: Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 2001). The African Union facilitated peace negotiations, whereas the United Nations conducted security guard activities under the United Nations Mission for Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). The accord resulted in the establishment of two pivotal commissions: the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC) for border delimitation and delineation and the Eritrea-Ethiopia Claims Commission (EECC) for assessing requests for compensation (Dias, 2008, pp. 131-132).

The Algiers Agreement set up a neutral border commission with five members. Its job was to draw the border based on colonial treaties from 1900, 1902, and 1908, as well as relevant international law. The principle of *ex aequo et bono* was not included. This approach aligns with regional customary law, as described in Resolution AHG/Res. 16(1) ratified by the OAU in 1964. The EEBC rendered its delimitation ruling on April 13, 2002; nonetheless, the status of Badme remained ambiguous, as the verdict provided only border coordinates without clarifying the town's location. Both sides claimed victory until the EEBC subsequently clarified its decision (Amoroso, Jasutis, Kebebew, Marcucci, Baron-Mendoza, Muscarella, and Sulce, 2019, pp. 44-45).

The central point of contention in the conflict was the location of Badme, commonly recognized as the source of the dispute. The initial battleground emerged as a significant emblem of national integrity for both Ethiopia and Eritrea. Following the capture of Badme by Eritrean forces in May 1998, President Isayas Afewerki asserted that surrendering the territory was inconceivable, likening it to the sun rising in the east, and maintained that Badme had historically belonged to Eritrea. The loss

of Badme was perceived as a humiliation for Ethiopia, given that the region had been under Ethiopian administration since its establishment and was forcibly taken by Eritrea (Abbink, 2003, p. 220).

The Ethiopian government voiced significant opposition to the clarification of the border ruling and took several steps to delay compliance, short of initiating hostilities. Prime Minister Meles characterized the EEBC verdict as "entirely illegal, unjust, and irresponsible." They advocated for an "alternative mechanism" for boundary determination in a letter to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan in September 2003. The public repudiation of the EEBC significantly jeopardized the Algiers peace process and the prospect of a definitive, legally binding agreement. In November 2004, Meles proposed a five-point peace proposal that endorsed peace-building dialogues while theoretically recognizing the ruling on the border. Addis Ababa's initial rejection damaged its reputation on the issue, even though it later unambiguously acknowledged the verdict. In October 2005, Eritrea took steps to enforce the boundary demarcation issue because it was unhappy with Ethiopia's stance and perceived international indulgence for Addis Ababa. The United Nations withdrew from about half of its deployment sites after Eritrea banned UNMEE helicopter operations. Resolution 1640, enacted by the UN Security Council in November 2005, demanded that Ethiopia adhere to the EEBC's border demarcation judgments, that Eritrea lift its limitations, and that both countries rescind recent army mobilizations. The resolution threatened to impose sanctions on Eritrea if it failed to remove the UNMEE restrictions. An International Crisis Group analysis from late 2005 noted "worrying signs that the countdown to renewed conflict may have begun" (Lyons, 2009, p. 4).

The Jeddah Peace Agreement, formally called the Agreement on Peace, Friendship, and Comprehensive Cooperation between Ethiopia and Eritrea, was finalized in 2018. The signing took place in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, on September 16, 2018, in the presence of UN Secretary-General António Guterres and King Salman bin Abdul Aziz. According to Article Four of the agreement (Stauffer, 2018, pp. 4–5), both nations committed to enforcing the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission's ruling. This accord marked the official end of two decades of a "no war, no peace" stalemate, laying the groundwork for lasting stability between the two states.

3.7.2 Conflict resolution in Ogaden war

Interviews conducted for this study indicate that, notwithstanding the official alignment of both Ethiopia and Somalia with revolutionary socialism, governmental diplomatic efforts repeatedly failed to achieve resolution. One of the most famous attempts was Fidel Castro's effort in March 1977 to bring Somalia's General Siad Barre and Ethiopia's Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam closer together. Several people who were interviewed said that Castro's plan, which was supported by the Soviet Union, called for a loosely confederated socialist federation that would allow both countries to keep their ideological commitments and give the Ogaden Somalis some self-rule in Ethiopia. The idea behind this suggestion was that the socialist bloc in the Horn of Africa should stay within "socialist frontiers" on the continent, like Somalia, Ethiopia, and South Yemen. But this attempt was bound to fail because it didn't help Mengistu combine his complete rejection of decentralization, which could hurt Ethiopia's unity, or Somalia's desire to gain full control over the Ogaden.

Interviewees made it clear that Castro's involvement was just one of many failed diplomatic efforts that took place in the 1970s. They stressed that both local and international actors always tried to avoid the escalation of hostilities, even though competing national interests and the Cold War often got in the way. Some of the most important projects that were mentioned by Interviewees 4 were: The 1972 Yaqubu Gwen mediation from Nigeria, which the OAU set up to stop a border war by talking politics and building trust; The diplomacy employed by Kissinger and Herman Cohen, amid the evolving dynamics of the Cold War, sought to reconcile the interests of both Addis Ababa and Mogadishu; The Djibouti mediation of 1974 sought to address the Ogaden issue through a regional accord among the involved states, yet lacked adequate backing; Muammar Gaddafi's attempts to mediate in Libya in the late 1970s showed that Tripoli wanted to be the leader of Pan-African and Pan-Arab solidarity movements.

But interviews showed a pattern of distrust, competing nationalisms, and foreign alliances that made it almost impossible for real compromise to happen. The ideological rigidity of the Cold War and a long history of deep-seated rivalry between Ethiopia and Somalia made it impossible for anyone to mediate. One person who was interviewed said, "The negotiation process during this time did not fail

because there were no mediators, but because there was no political will and no mutual recognition." So, these failed talks were a factor in the full-scale war that started in 1977. This shows how ideology and territorial sovereignty, as well as ethnic identity, continued to shape the conflict.



4. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE ERITREA-ETHIOPIA AND ETHIOPIA-SOMALIA CONFLICTS

This chapter presents a comparative examination of the Eritrea–Ethiopia War, the Ethiopia–Somalia War, and the Ethiopia–Somalia Ogaden conflict (1977–1988) with reference to Sandole’s Three-Pillar Approach. This analytical framework enables a methodical analysis of the primary issues and stakeholders in a particular conflict (Pillar I), the underlying structural and historical factors (Pillar II), and the interventions or resolution strategies employed to mitigate them (Pillar III). In so doing, the chapter highlights not only the conflicts, including legacies of colonial geopolitics and war, geopolitical dreams, and both main and non-nationalist dreams, but also how they differ in their dynamics and as political factors.

4.1. Pillar I: Latent Conflict – Key Issues and Actors

In the Eritrea–Ethiopia war, the primary state actors were the Eritrean government under President Isaias Afwerki and the Ethiopian government led by Prime Minister Meles Zenawi. The Eritrean Defense Forces, which constitute their armed forces, played a significant role in the conflict. Forces, such as the Ethiopian National Defense, directly affected the border communities of Badme, Irob woreda, and the surrounding areas. The central issues included disputes over the precise demarcation of the border, particularly the status of Badme, questions of territorial sovereignty, and the economic significance of port access for landlocked Ethiopia. Both governments sought to consolidate their control over contested areas as a means of solidifying their territorial claims and asserting political dominance in the Horn of Africa. The means employed ranged from full-scale military confrontations to diplomatic isolation campaigns and economic sanctions. The conflict unfolded in a complex environment shaped by regional power dynamics, including the influence of Sudan, Djibouti, and Somalia, as well as global actors such as the United Nations, the African Union, and the Western powers. The historical backdrop of colonial-era treaties between Italy and Ethiopia, which established the border, provided a source of contention (Bayeh, 2015, p. 73). This historical backdrop served as a source of contention.

The Ethiopia–Somalia Ogaden conflict involved the Ethiopian government led by Mengistu Haile Mariam and the Somali government under Siad Barre, alongside armed groups such as the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) and the Western Somalia Liberation Front (WSLF). External involvement was significant, with the Soviet Union and Cuba providing direct military support to Ethiopia, while Somalia initially enjoyed Soviet backing before realigning with the United States. The main issues include the territorial status of the Ogaden region, control over scarce water resources and grazing land, and broader aspirations for political influence in the Horn of Africa. Somalia sought the incorporation of the Ogaden into the “Greater Somalia,” while Ethiopia aimed to preserve its territorial integrity and suppress separatist movements. The conflict environment was marked by the fragility of both states, with Somalia moving towards eventual state collapse after 1991, and by overlapping regional security challenges, including armed insurgencies and cross-border militant activity.

Deep-rooted territorial disputes and questions of national identity sparked both conflicts. External actors played decisive roles in each civil war, with neighboring countries and Cold War superpowers shaping military and diplomatic developments. The Eritrea–Ethiopia war was between two centralized states with clear political leaders. On the other hand, non-state actors quickly intertwined with the Ogaden War, contributing to Somalia's gradual erosion of centralized power.

4.2. Pillar II: Structural Conditions and Conflict Causes

Most interviewed mentioned that the colonial legacy, the Ethiopia–Somalia ethnic identity in the Horn, cultural differences, superpower differences, and the involvement of world superpowers are the leading causes of the Ogaden War and the fragility of the Horn of Africa states. The Ogaden is also included.

All respondents indicated that, as Key stated, the colonial legacy is significant and a major factor in the conflicts between various forces and interests, particularly in the disputes arising from colonial Ethiopia. When colonial neighbors arrived in Horn, they began to subjugate and divide society, with superpowers aiming to achieve their interests. In 1954, Ethiopia added the British identity, the colony, and the Ogaden region to its borders through a secret agreement. At that time, Ethiopia and most Western countries faced similar challenges, and Ethiopia sought greater access to the

sea. This division led to significant issues and prolonged hostilities between the Somali government and Ethiopia following Somalia's independence in 1960. The colonial demarcation of borders is a fundamental cause of both conflicts. In the Eritrea–Ethiopia case, the boundary was determined by bilateral treaties between Italy and Ethiopia, without regard for ethnic or cultural realities, and left poorly delimited areas such as Badme in dispute (Kebebew, 2018, p. 2). The Ogaden War is one of the major conflicts in Africa. Some respondents asserted that NATO and the USSR solely aligned themselves in the Ogaden War. The interests of the major powers led them to perceive Somalia as a powerful nation that required containment. These arbitrary borders, preserved under the principle of *uti possidetis juris* at independence, created heterogeneous states and entrenched ethnic fragmentation. Ylönen notes that ethno-nationalist mobilization frequently exploits these borders, leading to violent secessionist movements (Ylönen, 2015, p. 2).

The geopolitics of the Cold War exacerbated these legacies. Eritrea's prolonged liberation struggle unfolded against a backdrop of shifting alliances. The Soviet Union initially supported the Ethiopian Derg regime but later withdrew its backing. Simultaneously, the Soviet Union backed the Ethiopian Derg regime. In contrast, during the late 1980s, the Soviet Union's actions created a power vacuum that facilitated Eritrea's independence. In the Ogaden, the Soviet Union decisively reversed Somalia's military gains in 1977 by abandoning Somalia and supporting Ethiopia, with Cuban troop deployments as a supplement. In both cases, superpower involvement prolonged hostilities, altered military balances, and constrained local agency (Fiorelli, 2024, p. 10).

Ethnic and identity politics further deepened the structural causes. Eritrean nationalism was forged through decades of armed struggle and opposition to the Ethiopian central authority. At the same time, Somali irredentism was grounded in the idea of uniting all Somali-inhabited territories into a single nation. The fragility of state institutions in the Horn, combined with environmental stressors such as drought, population pressures, and economic underdevelopment, intensified vulnerabilities and contributed to the recurrence of armed conflict.

While both conflicts share the colonial legacy as their origin, the Eritrea–Ethiopia war represented a post-independence interstate dispute over sovereignty. In contrast,

the Ogaden War was an interstate conflict that transitioned into a complex web of insurgencies and proxy warfare. Cold War alignments had more immediate effects on the battlefield in the Ogaden, but they also changed the political situation in both cases.

4.3. Pillar III: Attempts at Conflict Intervention and Resolution

Structured and formal mediation processes marked the efforts to resolve the Eritrea–Ethiopia war. The Organization of African Unity (OAU), supported by the United Nations, facilitated negotiations culminating in the Algiers Agreement of December 2000. This agreement established the Eritrea–Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC), which issued a legally binding ruling in 2002, awarding Badme to Eritrea. At first, Ethiopia rejected implementing the decision, resulting in an extended “no war, no peace” stalemate until a political breakthrough in 2018. Although the legal resolution was clear, mutual mistrust and domestic political considerations delayed its practical application (Schraeder, 2006, p. 24).

In the Ethiopia–Somalia conflict, mediation efforts by the OAU and the Arab League have failed to produce a comprehensive settlement. The end of open warfare in 1978 was not the result of a negotiated agreement, but rather military intervention. Ethiopian forces, with help from the Soviet Union and Cuba, retook the Ogaden. Somalia’s subsequent alignment with the United States did not alter the territorial status quo. The absence of a formal peace treaty left Somali irredentism unresolved. In contrast, the collapse of the Somali state after 1991 allowed the Ogaden issue to resurface in the form of insurgency by groups such as the ONLF.

The contrast is notable: The Eritrea–Ethiopia conflict concluded with a formal agreement and legal adjudication, even if implementation lagged. At the same time, support for the Ogaden War ended with a military stalemate and no binding resolution. The relative success of mediation in the Eritrean case was enabled by the presence of two functioning governments able to enter and enforce agreements, a condition absent in the Somali case after state collapse.

Interviewees all stated that these conflicts exhibit many parallels; nonetheless, they possess distinct differences in their underlying origins, dynamics, and consequences. Both wars were motivated by territorial disputes, with Ethiopia asserting claims over

regions inhabited by non-Ethiopian ethnic groups specifically Somalis and Eritreans to advance its geopolitical and national interests. Both conflicts were also rooted in deep historical grievances and struggles for self-determination and national identity. Ultimately, these conflicts exerted a profound regional influence on the Horn of Africa, resulting in massive casualties, destruction, displacement, political instability, and foreign intervention. The Eritrea–Ethiopia war (1998–2000) was primarily a border dispute over the town of Badme, whereas the Somalia–Ethiopia war of 1977 commonly referred to as the Ogaden War was instigated by Somalia’s attempt to reclaim what it regarded as its ancestral territory, a Somali-inhabited region annexed by Ethiopia. The Somalia–Ethiopia war unfolded amid the Cold War, marked by the direct involvement of foreign powers, including Soviet military advisors and Cuban forces supporting Ethiopia against Somalia. In contrast, the Eritrea–Ethiopia conflict remained largely confined to regional dynamics.

Politically, Eritrea achieved independence from Ethiopia in 1993 after a prolonged liberation struggle, while Somalia had long existed as a distinct sovereign state aspiring to unite all Somali territories under the vision of the “Greater Somalia.” In terms of consequences, although both conflicts caused significant human and material losses, Eritrea and Ethiopia ultimately signed the Algiers Agreement in 2000. Meanwhile, the Somalia–Ethiopia dispute over the Ogaden region remains unresolved, perpetuating tensions. Despite Ethiopia’s military occupation of the area, it consolidated control by suppressing and undermining Somali nationalist movements.

While incisive and comprehensive, the research admits to some limitations. These barriers include restricted availability of the official records, physical distance from the conflict theatres and cost considerations. However, the use of online platforms and multilingual interviews as well as a broad array of secondary sources makes it possible to counteract these obstacles to a certain extent.

By conducting in parallel qualitative interviews and documentary examination with pertinent conflict data (e.g., timelines, mediation attempts, and casualty figures), the research avoids superficial comparison. This research design helps further our understanding of the locus and context in which border and ethnic issues influenced

each conflict and what broader implications they may have for post-colonial conflict resolution in Africa.



5. CONCLUSION

The thesis has analyzed how border conflict and ethnicity contributed to two major wars in the Horn of Africa: The Eritrean-Ethiopian war and the Ethiopia-Somali conflict. Using Sandole's three pillar framework, which provided a straightforward way to systematically explain actors, root causes of conflicts, forms of escalation, and efforts at resolution.

Despite the distinct time periods of each conflict, the escalation of colonial border-drawing served as the foundation for both. The Independence War ignored the complexities of ethnic relationships. In contrast, the Eritrea-Ethiopia conflict centered on sovereignty and territory after Eritrean independence, border-drawing, the symbolic use of Badme, and military support. Ethiopian domination of a predominantly Somali area in the Ogaden led to irredentist cries for independence in Somalia, where war and conflict ensued. The research also highlighted the crucial role of third parties, such as Cold War superpowers, regional organizations like AU or OAU, and international mediation in the conflict process. Each case only achieved partial settlements, leaving unresolved grievances that could escalate tensions. These events led to renewed fighting.

The top three most fascinating things we learned from these comparisons are:

1. **Deal with historical grievances** early to stop them from becoming entrenched drivers of violence.
2. **Support a political system** that respects various ethnic groups and doesn't leave anyone out.
3. **Make regional mediation** systems more powerful so that they can help African-led, context-sensitive solutions to problems.

Ultimately, lasting peace in the Horn of Africa will be achieved not by staking ancient territorial claims but by securing cooperative security arrangements that take into account statehood and ethnic rights. The evidence generated from this study has the potential to provide a basis for policymakers, mediators, and academia to structure realistic policies for conflict prevention and resolution within Africa and other regions with similar circumstances.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Research Informed Consent / Assent Form

Name of principal researcher: Robleh Mohamed Robleh

Name of institution: Çankırı Karatekin University

RE: Consent for Participation in a Research Study

I am currently a master's student at Çankırı Karatekin University, and I am in that stage of final research." I would like to have your part in my research because you are knowledgeable about the conflicts around the Horn of Africa and the security-related issues. The title of my research work is A Comparative Analysis of Border Disputes, Ethno-National Identity, and Dynamics of Conflict: The Eritrea-Ethiopia War (1998–2000) and the Ethiopia-Somalia Ogaden Conflict (1977–1988). This request is an informed consent form to provide you with information about the study and help you decide whether or not to participate. I'd like you first to read this form, and then, if you have questions, ask afterward. It is in my interest to have you on this project. The study seeks to consider the problems of border disputes, ethnic identification, and the fusion of these conflicts, including the Ethiopia-Eritrea War (1998–2000) and the Ethiopia-Somalia Ogaden Conflict (1977–1988). This study examines the causes of the wars, the role of ethnicity and identity in warfare, and how these conflicts affect security and power in the Horn of Africa.

The aim is to improve one's knowledge about conflict studies and the political landscape in Ethiopia. Participation in this study involves answering the questions outlined in the interview guide, which the researcher will administer through a face-to-face meeting, a virtual meeting, or a phone call. The interviews should last less than an hour each, and for research purposes, they will be audio-recorded, transcribed, and analyzed. Participation in this research is entirely voluntary, and you may choose to withdraw at any time without penalty. All belongings obtained during this study will remain confidential and will be used solely for academic purposes. All belongings obtained during this study will remain confidential and will be used solely for academic purposes. By signing this consent form, you confirm that you

have read and understood the purpose of the study and that you agree to participate voluntarily. Please note that there will be no monetary compensation for participating in this study.

Printed Name

Participants Signature

Date

Researchers Signature

Date

Researcher:

Name: Robleh Mohamed Robleh

Address: Çankırı Karatekin University, Institute of Graduate Studies, Political Science and International Relations Department, Uluyazı Campus, Central/Çankırı/Turkey

Supervisor:

Name: Prof. Dr. Sezai Özçelik

Address: Çankırı Karatekin University, Institute of Graduate Studies, Political Science and International Relations Department

Ethics Concerns:

For ethical concerns about this research, contact:

Chair, Çankırı Karatekin University Central Research Laboratory

Address: Uluyazı Campus, Central/Çankırı/Turkey

Appendix II: Interview Guide

1. Who were the main actors involved in the Ogaden conflict (primary, secondary, and third party)?
2. From your perspective, what were the primary causes that led to the Ogaden War?
3. In what ways did ethnic and cultural differences contribute to the conflict of Ogaden?
4. How did the conflict escalate, and what factors led to its de-escalation (Ogaden war)?
5. What mediation efforts were attempted during the Ogaden War, and why did these attempts fail?
6. From your perspective, why have the grievances of ethnic Somalis in the Ogaden region remained unresolved, and what are the potential implications for future conflicts?
7. Who were the main actors in the Badme conflict (primary, secondary, and third party)?
8. From your perspective, what were the main issues that led to conflict in Badme?
9. What are the key similarities and differences between the Eritrea-Ethiopia War and the Ethiopia-Somalia Ogaden conflict?
10. In your evaluation, what are the final outcomes of the conflict in Somalia-Ethiopia (1977)?