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**MASTER'S GLOBAL POLITICS AND
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**MARITIME SECURITY IN SOMALIA:
IMPLICATIONS FOR FOREIGN POLICY**

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ETHICS STATEMENT

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ABSTRACT

MARITIME SECURITY IN SOMALIA: IMPLICATIONS FOR FOREIGN POLICY

This dissertation delves into the issue of the Somali maritime security and how the foreign policy can be utilized as a tactical tool to handle it. Located in a strategically important position along key global shipping routes, Somalia has been exposed to persistent threats such as piracy, poaching of fishes, smuggling of arms and destroying the environment coupled with lack of proper governance, a history of war, and inadequacy of enforcement capabilities on the sea. The analysis is based on Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) and the application of the theory of realism to assess the foreign policy reactions of Somalia in ensuring that the Somali maritime sphere is safe. This dissertation employs a qualitative case study approach supported by elite interviews and secondary international reports to examine how Somalia's foreign policy actors—both domestic and external—shape maritime governance. The findings show that although Somalia actively participates in international cooperation, it struggles to achieve policy coherence due to weak institutional coordination, fragmented governance, and high dependency on external actors. The central argument advanced here is that Somalia's maritime insecurity persists not because of a lack of international engagement, but because the state lacks the institutional capacity and strategic autonomy required to translate foreign policy actions into effective maritime governance. This dissertation that we argue that Somalia should pursue a foreign policy by informed realists and pragmatically aligned to exploit external cooperation to build capacity and at the same time to strengthen sovereign institutions in an effort to realize long and self-sufficient, maritime governance.

Keywords: Maritime security, Somalia, Foreign Policy Analysis

ÖZET

SOMALİ'DE DENİZ GÜVENLİĞİ: DIŞ POLİTİKAYA İLİŞKİN SONUÇLAR.

Bu tez, Somali deniz güvenliği meselesini ve dış politikanın bu sorunu çözmek için stratejik bir araç olarak nasıl kullanılabileceğini incelemektedir. Küresel deniz ticaret yollarının kesiştiği stratejik bir konumda yer alan Somali, yetersiz yönetim, uzun süreli iç savaş geçmişi ve deniz güvenliği uygulama kapasitesinin zayıflığıyla birleşen korsanlık, yasa dışı balıkçılık, silah kaçakçılığı ve çevresel tahribat gibi kalıcı tehditlere maruz kalmaktadır. Çalışma, Somali'nin dış politika tepkilerini ve deniz alanını güvence altına alma yönündeki kapasitesini değerlendirmek amacıyla Dış Politika Analizi (FPA) yaklaşımına ve realizm teorisinin uygulanmasına dayanmaktadır. Nitel bir vaka incelemesi yönteminin benimsendiği bu araştırma; elit görüşmeler ve uluslararası ikincil kaynaklarla desteklenerek, Somali'nin dış politika aktörlerinin —hem yerel hem de dış aktörlerin— deniz yönetişimini nasıl şekillendirdiğini analiz etmektedir. Bulgular, Somali'nin uluslararası işbirliğine aktif olarak katılmasına rağmen, zayıf kurumsal koordinasyon, parçalı yönetim yapıları ve dış aktörlere yüksek bağımlılık nedeniyle politika bütünlüğünü sağlamakta zorlandığını göstermektedir. Bu araştırmanın temel savı, Somali'de deniz güvensizliğinin uluslararası etkileşim eksikliğinden değil, dış politika girişimlerinin etkili deniz yönetişimine dönüştürülmesini sağlayacak kurumsal kapasitenin ve stratejik özerkliğin yetersizliğinden kaynaklandığı yönündedir. Bu tez, Somali'nin dış politikasını realist bir bakış açısı ile pragmatik şekilde uyumlandırarak dış işbirliğini kapasite inşası için kullanması, buna paralel olarak egemen kurumlarını güçlendirerek uzun vadeli ve kendi kendine yetebilen bir deniz yönetişimi sağlaması gerektiğini ileri sürmektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Deniz güvenliği, Somali, Dış Politika Analizi

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ABBREVIATIONS

CMF	Combined Maritime Forces
CSS	Critical Security Studies
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EU	European Union
EUCAP Somalia	European Union Capacity Building Mission in Somalia
EU NAVFOR	European Union Naval Force
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FGS	Federal Government of Somalia
FPA	Foreign Policy Analysis
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDI	Human Development Index
ICG	International Crisis Group
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IMB	International Maritime Bureau
INTERPOL	International Criminal Police Organization
IUU	Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (Fishing)
MARPOL	International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships
MRCC	Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SNMS	Somali National Maritime Strategy
SUA Convention	Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Maritime Navigation
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNSC	United Nations Security Council

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1 INTRODUCTION

Maritime security has emerged as a critical matter of global stability, particularly in regions with fragile governance and decades of conflict. With the sea route like the Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden being very crucial in the world, Somalia has emerged as a global hot spot due to the constant maritime threat of piracy, fisheries incursion, human trafficking and smuggling of weapons. All these and other phenomena did not merely impact the economic development and livelihood of the shores of Somalia, but were also posing actual threats to the international shipping trade and the onshore security. The international and regional interventions since the success of the strategic value of the waters off Somalia are spread between the naval patrol to capacity building efforts.

The chapter goes on to establish a conceptual and contextual ground of the research when it begins by addressing the meaning, development and the most important aspects of maritime security. It proceeds further to the describe the case study of Somalia and examines the historic, political, economic and institutional causes of its maritime insecurity. The chapter also provides a critical analysis of the literature and discusses research questions, research aims, and significance.

1.1 Maritime Security

Maritime security can be defined as that kind of action and activity meant to maintain that the maritime environment is not threatened with the danger that would threaten the safety of the maritime trade, security of the international and national seas and attainment of stability in the littoral regions. It is a very wide concept covering an enormous span of issues, from national resource defense and sovereignty to the defense of sea lines of communication and the hindrance of criminality such as piracy, illegal fishing, and smuggling of weapons (Li, 2023). Maritime security can only be attained through multilateral coordination of national governments, regional players, and international players to tackle traditional and non-traditional security threats.

The concept of maritime security has evolved over the years from a focus on national defense to more comprehensive paradigms that encompass the interlinkage of security, trade, and the environment. The traditional concept of sea security is more oriented towards the security of the territorial waters against external aggression, as naval defense and military strength is the main measure of enforcement of the sovereignty of a state. This view is empathetic to the realist approach to international relations theory where the centrality of national security based on state-related security and military strength is highlighted (Griffiths, 2021).

However, as international maritime trade expanded and new categories of threats emerged, scholars began broadening the conceptual discussion of maritime security—yet realism remained fundamental in explaining how states react to these developments through power, competition, and the protection of national interests. Today, security on the seas also entails; safety of sea lanes, security of merchant ships, and protection of economic and environmental resources dependent on maritime activities (Muhammad & Riyanto, 2021). This broader emphasis is consistent with human security shifting the priorities of state security to those of the people, i.e., economic security, human rights, and the environment (Griffiths, 2021).

Among the unconventional threats are problems like illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, pollution at sea, and smuggling of merchandise, including arms. IUU fishing also poses a danger to marine biodiversity, not to mention that it also interferes with the livelihood of inshore fishers, particularly when fish population constitutes a large portion of the economic viability of the group (Idachaba, 2023). One of the threats to the welfare of marine ecosystems and not only to biological diversity but also economic activity on the foundations of efficient marine ecosystems is marine environmental pollution through oil spillage and dumping of harmful wastes (Griffiths, 2021). These unconventional threats have become the crucial constituents of maritime security that should be addressed collectively to succeed in passing through them.

The nature of the threats to the security of the sea in the regions like the horn of Africa justifies the states to come up with self-interest security options that would ensure their sovereignty and national interests. There is no single state that can deal with sea threats particularly when there are such big common seas. To properly manage maritime

environment, regional and international collaborations are essential with international organizations such as the United Nations (UN), International Maritime Organization (IMO), and regional authorities playing a very important role in ensuring that there is no threat to its security (Ehiane and Uwizeyimana, 2023). All the activities are interrelated in the multilateral agreements and cooperation between these institutions to ensure that piracy, illegal fishing, and the application of international maritime law are curtailed.

The success of maritime security, according to a realist approach, is not in the legal regimes as such, but in the fact that it is strong states that are prepared to exercise it at the point where it is in their interests to exercise it. Global agreements such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) establish the framework for regulating maritime conduct and protecting coastal state interests (Li, 2023). UNCLOS provides legal guidelines on the settlement of oceanic disputes, the determination of exclusive economic zones (EEZs), and the governance of the use of international oceans. The provisions' application, however, remains problematic, particularly in regions with weak institutions of governance. Piracy and IUU fishing would be expected to thrive in such a situation because of the lack of effective legal guidelines as well as enforcement capacity (Eruaga, 2024).

National maritime policies and coast guard capacity need to be built to allow states to enforce their maritime laws and protect their seas from foreign intrusion. However, as observed by analysts, most states, especially the less resourceful ones, are not able to build and maintain maritime security capacity (Muhammad & Riyanto, 2021). The contribution of foreign assistance, either as capacity-building initiatives or as outright intervention, is then necessitated in these situations in order to bridge enforcers' gaps in local capability.

1.2 Maritime Security in Somalia

The map of the world has predetermined Somalia as the epicenter of maritime insecurity, specifically, piracy, associated with its geographical location on the map and the positioning close to the most significant shipping routes in the world, which are the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean (Alsawalqa and Venter, 2022; Ehiane and Uwizeyimana, 2023). Nevertheless, these issues are not to be observed in isolation but, on the contrary, not to be

detached of the internal conflicts in Somalia. The causes of the maritime insecurity situation in Somalia could be traced back to the history of civil wars in the nation that began in 1991 when the government of President Siad Barre was overthrown (Farah, 2024; Twyman-Ghoshal, 2018). The fall of the central authority led Somalia to a number of years of violence, as the clans' militias tried to establish control over one another, the overall lawlessness prevailed, and no functioning central state existed anymore (Day, 2022; Maluki and Njoki, 2024).

The consequence of such power vacuum is that the institutions such as the navy and coast guard are dismantled, which exposes the Somali waters to great risks, and promotes illegitimate exploitation (Ehiane and Uwizeyimana, 2023; Li, 2023). Foreign fishing fleets started plundering the marine resources of Somalia freely and dumping of toxic waste was being widely reported (Ogembo & Ichani, 2024). Such abuses, alongside poverty and joblessness, drove many communities on the coast, including piracy to resist and survive (Alsawalqa & Venter, 2022). A lack of central control and the poor enforcement of maritime laws have allowed piracy, smuggling, and illegal fishing to thrive over the years (Sarjito, 2024; Li, 2023). Therefore, Somali maritime insecurity has not only a geopolitical nature but is also rooted in the disjointed political history and socio-economic fallout of its decades-long civil war (Farah, 2024).

The collapse of Somalia's central government in 1991 precipitated civil unrest that stretched over decades, creating the onset of a persistent power vacuum and institutional failure (Dimitte, 2014; Day, 2022). With no operational national authority, institutions of governance collapsed, and maritime law enforcement practically disappeared, an environment that allowed criminality, such as piracy, to establish itself and thrive (Ehiane & Uwizeyimana, 2023; Alsawalqa & Venter, 2022).

Somalia is currently a federal parliamentary republic via the 2012 Provisional Constitution. Somalia consists of several Federal Member States, including Puntland, Jubaland, Galmudug, Hirshabelle, South West, and Somaliland (proclaimed self-independent but not internationally recognized) (Farah, 2024). The federal system remains, however, a contentious issue and poorly functioning, with unequal power-sharing and constant tensions between regional and federal governments (Asaduzzaman & Virtanen, 2023).

Somalia is ranked second most vulnerable state in the 2023 Fragile States Index, with extremely low levels in state legitimacy, public services, and security apparatus (Fund for Peace, 2023). The per capita GDP in Somalia, as estimated by the World Bank, is approximately USD 309 (2022), one of the lowest in the world, and over 70% of the population are below the poverty line (World Bank, 2023). The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) establishes that Somalia's Human Development Index (HDI) is low at 0.361, which is among the bottom five in the world (UNDP, 2022).

Demographically, Somalia has a youthful and growing population at a fast rate, with over 70% of them being under the age of 30 years, and an estimated 17 million in 2024 (UN DESA, 2024). Youth unemployment stands at more than 67%, causing instability and exposure to piracy, extremism, and migration (Farah, 2024; Ehiane & Uwizeyimana, 2023).

Politically, Somalia has remained involved in highly entrenched institutional vulnerability and governance deadlock (Farah, 2024; Asaduzzaman & Virtanen, 2023). Election modalities disagreement, Federal Government-Federal Member State power-sharing, and residual constitutional ambiguity have negatively impacted policy stability and state construction (International Crisis Group [ICG], 2024). The International Crisis Group (2024) argues that tensions are also compounded by clan-based competition and agreement breakdown over the division of power, which erode national unity and strategic management—especially in the security arena (Day, 2022).

One of the greatest causes of that instability is the persistent al-Shabaab threat, an al-Qaeda-affiliated rebel group that holds large rural territories in central and southern Somalia (Ehiane & Uwizeyimana, 2023). Al-Shabaab conducts regular, deadly assaults against government institutions, foreign enclaves, and civilian territory—i.e., coastal towns and ports—thus denying maritime law enforcement and establishing areas of ungoverned space (Farah, 2024; Maluki & Njoki, 2024). The ICG recommends al-Shabaab to have also penetrated part of the trade routes in the nation and taxes the coastal towns, which has disrupted the economic operation of these jurisdictions and left the state powerless to control the key points in the sea (ICG, 2024).

This line of research is reflected in the 2024 report published by the UN Secretary-General in Somalia which establishes that despite the signs of improvement in the

establishment of core institutions, the Somali government continues to be immensely weakened in the ability to enforce and implement maritime law, judicial processes, and effective coordination between the center and regions (Eruaga, 2024; UN Security Council, 2024). The effects of these governance weaknesses are most pronounced in coastal areas, where the local and national warfare is leaving administrative gaps that are being actively occupied by illegitimate actors (Sarjito, 2024).

All these factors—together with the broader security and political environment marked by prolonged electoral disputes, weak intergovernmental coordination, and the operational dominance of al-Shabaab—constitute a central obstacle to achieving effective maritime governance in Somalia (Farah, 2024). It will require not only greater institutional capacity and foreign aid but also a political compromise that would allow the unified and collective governance of Somalian coasts and waters (Asaduzzaman & Virtanen, 2023).

It was in this context, where piracy was largely indigenous in reaction to foreign vessels illegally fishing and dumping hazardous wastes along the Somali coastline, causing complete destruction of the subsistence livelihood of local fishers (Alsawalqa & Venter, 2022; Twyman-Ghoshal, 2018). But in the absence of any restriction and enforcement, piracy rapidly turned into an advanced and profitable criminal system (Ehiane & Uwizeyimana, 2023). Pirate gangs created hierarchical systems, conducted operations with logistical expertise, and regularly seized international ships to extort ransom (Li, 2023). The period of the greatest piracy attacks along the Somalia coast was 2008–2012, when there were over 1,000 hostages kidnapped as well as over 300 million dollars paid as ransom (IMB, 2013; Alsawalqa & Venter, 2022). This greatly impacted international trade, increasing shipping costs and insurance premiums and causing severe disruptions to international shipping routes in the Gulf of Aden and western Indian Ocean (Maluki & Njoki, 2024).

In reaction to this, the international community took a number of actions, such as naval deployments, guarded shipping routes, and introducing best management practices by the shipping community (Feldt, Roell, & Thiele, 2013; Li, 2023). International intervention by military intervention, international law enforcement and assistance program are other forms that have manifested to deal with Somali piracy (Eruaga, 2024). Naval forces like the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), European Union Naval Force (EU NAVFOR) Operation Atalanta and the NATO Operation Ocean Shield were deployed in the sea to protect the sea

routes, prevent and combat pirates, and secure the sea routes (Sarjito, 2024; Ehiane and Uwizeyimana, 2023). Through these activities, the need to have multilateral collaboration in dealing with transnational security threats was revealed (Farah, 2024). Other than the intervention by the military, there have been other attempts aimed at stabilizing maritime security in Somalia. Indicatively, the training and equipment mission of the Somali maritime forces is that of the EUCAP Somalia (Eruaga, 2024). It can also be applied in legal and judicial systems formulation as well as in formulation of maritime systems. Although such efforts exist, bad institutions, corruption, and land-based strife are all developmental issues (Dalton, 2019; Asaduzzaman and Virtanen, 2023).

Rather than being confined to piracy, maritime instability in Somalia has granted the geopolitical instability of the whole region powers as it does not just impact the people within the neighborhood but also the international stakeholders (Farah, 2024). It also makes an already difficult image of security even more complex because of the presence of non-state armed groups like al-Shabaab that have been using these waters to carry out illegal operations like smuggling and trafficking (Muhammad & Riyanto, 2021). The consequences of maritime security threats for global trade are significant, particularly in the Gulf of Aden, which remains one of the world's most strategically important shipping corridors (Maluki and Njoki, 2024). The flow of maritime traffic through this narrow waterway gives it a special importance altogether in the general system of maritime circulation and storage (Li, 2023). Any interruption brought about by piracy, such as the recent challenges by pirates to shipping companies, impacts not only the individual businesses but also many third parties (Alsawalqa & Venter, 2022).

Illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing is the second point of origin of insecurity as a maritime activity (Eruaga, 2024). IUU fishing also has widespread prevalence with its impacts spilling over negatively into the ocean ecosystem and regional economic fortunes (Li, 2023). IUU fishing is fishing by vessels in territorial waters without a license, catching forbidden species, or fishing outside the jurisdiction of the law (Eruaga, 2024). Indistinctly demarcating the marine borders of most nations as well as high demand for seafood has made IUU fishing a concern on all continents, namely Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific (Eruaga, 2024).

IUU fishing discredits sustainable management of marine resources as it depletes fish stock and jeopardizes the livelihood of legitimate fishermen (Maluki & Njoki, 2024). The most notable forms of IUU fishing include foreign fishing and do not adhere to national laws, a factor that worsens the relations between the states (Ogembo & Ichani, 2024). Food insecurity is also exacerbated by illegal fishing, particularly in developing states, where fisheries constitute a primary source of nutrition for coastal communities (Farah, 2024). The ongoing failure to coordinate and manage globally only continues to perpetuate the problem, and IUU fishing is a significant catalyst for maritime insecurity (Eruaga, 2024).

Arms and drugs smuggling via sea is one of the major security concerns (Muhammad & Riyanto, 2021). Arms smuggling, with more likely terrorist organizations or areas of conflict, is most prevalent in areas of weak governance and ineffective maritime law enforcement (Ehiane & Uwizeyimana, 2023). Smugglers prefer to use merchant ships or smaller, more agile ships to smuggle weapons into international waters, where they are difficult to locate. Small arms and light weapons proliferation destabilize the region, incites conflict, and erodes peace-building efforts, particularly in fragile states (Muhammad & Riyanto, 2021).

Equally, drug trafficking is also done through sea routes, especially where the border controlling is lax and cartels and criminal organizations are taking advantage of the same (Farah, 2024). Illicit drug trade affects countries a lot on the coastlines, especially when a country or country lies between producers and the large consumers (Sarjito, 2024). The venture justifies criminal web pages, and it also adds to the level of instability and invalidates the sovereignty of states that attempt to shut their oceanic entry points (Farah, 2024).

One of the non-traditional sea security threats is currently being considered as environmental degradation (Idachaba, 2023). Oil spillage, toxic waste dumping, and plastic waste are the factors that bring about ocean pollution which directly threatens the health of the ocean ecosystem (Eruaga, 2024). Such environmental disasters are most likely to affect coastal communities that depend on fishing and tourism. Such things as the destruction of ocean life, such as coral reefs, which are of great significance to the food chain, can occur as a result of pollution (Farah, 2024). Moreover, climate change amplifies maritime security issues by raising the frequency of extreme flooding events, including storms and high sea levels, which interfere with shipping operations and undermine critical infrastructure (Idachaba, 2023; Li, 2023).

Such environmental problems are also exacerbated by absence of authority to enforce actions against pollution in the marine spaces (Eruaga, 2024). Most countries cannot police their extensive coastline, and thus illicit and uncontrolled dumping ensues. This is not only a source of environmental insecurity, but it also impacts on coastal societies and the world at large who rely on maritime trade, and sea resources (Maluki & Njoki, 2024).

Maritime insecurity is also a giant source of geopolitical competitions (Farah, 2024). Maritime frontier disputes, be it within the South China Sea or between Somalia and other neighboring states, complicate the ability of states to capture the seas (Ogembo & Ichani, 2024). In situations where states are fighting over territorial waters or rights to access EEZs, chances are high that they would invest in defense technology to protect their interests, thus militarizing the sea space and tension (Muhammad & Riyanto, 2021).

These tensions can be escalated to conflict and extend insecurity in previously stable maritime regions to the extent that states behave in defense of what they perceive as their interests (Maluki & Njoki, 2024). The existence of outside actors, competing to dominate significant sea lanes or natural resources, also results in tensions emerging and the generation of instability (Muhammad & Riyanto, 2021; Li, 2023).

1.3 Literature Review

The academic study on maritime security prophesizes, at the policy level, institutional and collaborative processes which have been devised to counter transnational threats at the seas. The International Maritime Organization (IMO), the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and regional initiatives, such as the Djibouti Code of Conduct are the most important participants in this area, according to the foundational literature on the subject of international maritime governance (Eruaga, 2024; Li, 2023). These are all structures that are systematically quoted as the normative core of the world order in the sea. However, researchers do not support their practical efficacy. Although Eruaga (2024) mentions positive developments in codifying international obligations, Farah (2024) and Maluki and Njoki (2024) claim that enforcement is still piecemeal, especially in states that lack effectiveness (such as Somalia), in which local authority, political stability, and enforcement mechanisms are weak.

Besides institutional evaluation, there is a large amount of literature that criticizes the externalization of the maritime security governance. Onuoha (2013) and Alsawalqa and Venter (2022) argue that international naval activities, such as the ones implemented by the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) and EU NAVFOR Operation Atalanta, are only short-term, in addition to being unsuccessful in addressing structural and political factors. Similarly, Twyman-Ghoshal (2018) and Ehiane and Uwizeyimana (2023) show that foreign interventions, though operationally effective, do not lead to long-term governance and do not address coastal grievances.

Maritime security scholarship in Somalia has gone through various thematic stages in terms of development. Initial literature (Lehr, 2012; Middleton, 2011) put an accent on the tactical and operational aspects of piracy, putting an emphasis on the naval patrols, convoy systems, and personal security. Though mostly factual, the research had failed to include domestic political vulnerability, institutional breakdown, and socioeconomic forces of insecurity. This discourse was later revised by other scholars, with Bueger and Stockbruegger (2017) being the first to apply the practice theory, including the local actors, knowledge systems, and native maritime governance practices. These strategies present a bottom-up perspective on maritime security.

The other important line of inquiry is institutional weakness and government breakdown as the main causes of maritime insecurity. According to the World Bank and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reports, the lack of effectiveness of Somalia coast guard, overlapping jurisdiction, and corruption are a hindrance to the maritime law enforcement (Ehiane and Uwizeyimana, 2023). Asaduzzaman and Virtanen (2023) expand on them, connecting the administrative gaps of Somalia to the general theories of governance and demonstrating how the mistrust of the institution and divided federalism prevent the implementation of maritime policies. Other researchers, such as Maluki and Njoki (2024) and Ogembo and Ichani (2024) also highlight the role of regional maritime conflicts, specifically between Kenya and Somalia, as indicators of sovereignty struggles and geopolitics tensions.

Over the years, research on the degradation of marine environments, unlawful fishing, and the exploitation of blue-economy resources have been more and more the focus of scholarly interest. According to Eruaga (2024) and Idachaba (2023), ecological and

economic consequences of unregulated fishing and marine pollution are recorded, and these results are explained by the absence of governance and failures of the legislation. Expanding on the findings, Andersen-Rodgers and Crawford (2022) and Tickner (2001) introduce a human and gender aspect to the discussion of the security, as in the fragile state of Somalia, maritime insecurity cannot be discussed outside of the context of socioeconomic differences and marginalization of vulnerable groups. The feminist point of view and human security are underrepresented when examining Somali maritime studies (Farah, 2024).

There remains a noticeable gap in the existing literature concerning Somalia's maritime foreign policy, particularly with respect to how the state engages diplomatically and strategically with external actors in the maritime domain. There are very limited studies that explicitly look into the nexus between the diplomatic activities of Somalia, which includes the African Union, the Arab League, and bilateral maritime relations, and its maritime policy (Sarjito, 2024). This exclusion makes it difficult to have a deeper comprehension of Somalia as a strategic actor that can influence, as opposed to responding to, international maritime governance. To fill this gap, the internal decision-making of states should be connected with the external behavior, which Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) is best suited to do.

To address the limited attention paid to the link between Somalia's internal decision-making processes and its external maritime behaviour, this study adopts Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA), which provides a suitable framework for connecting domestic institutions, leadership choices, and foreign policy actions. While the literature on Somali maritime security is broad in its coverage of piracy, IUU fishing, and international interventions, it engages only minimally with the foreign policy dimension of these issues. Whereas the initial discussion was predominantly based on the realist and institutionalist approaches, the current scholarship varies into human, environmental, and governance approaches. However, the realist analysis and the FPA have not been applied to the Somalia maritime milieu. The dissertation thus has the advantage of going beyond previous studies by placing Somali maritime governance in the realist tradition, that is, prioritizing state interests, power and sovereignty, and through FPA to examine the impact of domestic institutions and actors on foreign policy behavior in the maritime space.

1.4 Problem Statement

The study of maritime security in Somalia is an analytical problem of a complicated nature: A central issue examined in this dissertation is how a state with weak institutions, protracted conflict, and limited maritime capacity can effectively govern one of the world's most strategic maritime regions. Despite inefficient governance systems, the maritime territory of Somalia, which lies along the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean, has at the same time become able to gain a new dimension of significance in terms of global trade and the regional geopolitics. The very combination of the weak institutionality and strategic value is the basis of the main area of interest in this dissertation.

However, these expressions of insecurity are further indicators of political and institutional shortcomings. The lack of a unified system of maritime governance, overlapping of duties by federal and sub-national governments, and overdependence on foreign naval support have all weakened the ability of the country to transform international assistance into the long-term maritime control.

The literature is predominantly characterized by externally oriented intervention strategies and tactical counter-piracy operations, but scarce analytical attention is paid to how Somalia can be positioned strategically and how it can make more policy decisions. In line with this, the overall research question aims at explaining why, despite the poor state apparatus, Somalia is attempting to manage maritime insecurity by its foreign-policy decisions and institutional framework. The given research takes a realist approach and uses Foreign Policy Analysis to question the role of power, sovereignty, and national interest in determining the way Somalia reacts to the maritime threats in a weak post-conflict environment.

1.5 Research Aim

The aim of this dissertation is to analyze the maritime security issues of Somalia to understand how foreign policy interventions can address the problem.

1.6 Research Objectives

The objectives of this research to analyze the response of the foreign policy of Somalia to the different maritime threats. The objectives of this research, grounded in the realist school of thought, is to examine how Somalia's pursuit of power—through efforts to develop naval capacity and form strategic alliances—its assertion of sovereignty over territorial waters, and its protection of national interests along critical trade routes collectively shape the country's maritime security policy. It is against this background that such realist dimensions can provide an analytical prism through which one can discuss the manner in which Somalia is defining and executing foreign policy as a reaction to the chronic maritime insecurity and state weakness.

1.7 Research Question

The research question is as follows: How can Somalia mitigate its maritime security challenges through foreign policy strategies? To provide an answer to this question, the dissertation is structured around the following sub-questions:

- What are the primary maritime security threats facing Somalia, and how do they affect national and regional stability?
- How has Somalia's foreign policy evolved in response to these maritime challenges?
- In what ways does realist theory help explain Somalia's approach to maritime security?
- What role do international actors and foreign partnerships play in shaping Somalia's maritime security policies?
- What strategic foreign policy options are available to Somalia to enhance its maritime governance and security?

1.8 Significance of Research

This research is significant because it contributes to understanding how Somalia's foreign policy strategies intersect with maritime security challenges. After a row of foreign interventions and international cooperation, the problem of piracy and illegal fishing and sea crime exists, which indicates that the introduced policies are not effective or they are consistent with the national interests and opportunities of Somalia.

The research offers practical policy advice to policy-makers by analyzing leverage of the foreign policy that can be harnessed by Somali to improve maritime governments and sovereignty. Because global trade and regional stability depend heavily on the security of key maritime corridors, understanding Somalia's maritime challenges is essential for promoting more sustainable and context-sensitive forms of international cooperation.

Furthermore, the research creates space for including voices that are often excluded in security discourses—such as local maritime officials, regional administrators, and operational-level authorities—whose insights are rarely incorporated into formal analyses of Somalia's maritime governance. Their understandings are central to building viable and locally driven policy proposals toward long term maritime stability. In addition, the findings of this research can be used to facilitate the development of more goal-oriented and sustainable plans to improve maritime security and achieve regional stability in Somalia.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

The chapter creates a theoretical basis of the study through a critical examination of the main schools of thoughts in international relations and evaluation of its relevance to the maritime security and foreign policy in Somalia. The theoretical lenses of realism, neo-realism, liberalism, neo-liberalism, constructivism, Marxism, feminism, and green theory are some of the considered theoretical lenses with each giving a different perspective on how states and non-state actors act (Srensen, Moller and Jackson, 2022; Griffiths, 2021).

The theoretical perspectives discussed in the following sections expound on each of the theoretical perspectives, their fundamental assumptions, criticisms and why or how the criticisms apply to the current Somali maritime security situation. The chapter eventually goes on to sanction realism as the most relevant theoretical paradigm in understanding Somali maritime security strategy as it prioritizes state survival, sovereignty, and power-seeking in the face of regional competitive pressures (Alsawalqa and Venter, 2022; Ehiane and Uwizeyimana, 2023).

2.2 Theoretical Discussion

Realism is the central international relations theory on the assumption that the international system is anarchic, and states are most centrally preoccupied with power and survival. It argues that war is the natural state of international politics due to the fact that there is no central authority to enforce order (Sørensen, Møller, & Jackson, 2022). The philosophical foundations of realism go as far back as the works of Thucydides, Machiavelli, and Hobbes, who depicted the nature of human beings as egotistical and power-hungry (Griffiths, 2021). In the 20th century, thinkers like E. H. Carr and Hans J. Morgenthau formalized realism as a theory of international relations, emphasizing the concept of "national interest defined in terms of power" (Carr, 1939; Morgenthau, 1948).

The most significant assumptions of realism are threefold: one, the state is the central and rational actor on the international stage; two, the international system is an anarchical

environment; and three, survival is the fundamental goal of all states (Sørensen et al., 2022). Morgenthau (1948) among the classical realist thinkers believes that security lies on the eternal power struggle; the human nature and the necessity to safeguard state sovereignty. In the case of Morgenthau, national interest, which is defined more in terms of power, is the fundamental determinant of foreign policy. On the same note, Carr (1939) stresses that states seek security by balancing their power as states can only survive in an anarchic world by being able to withstand the oppression of the higher powers.

In naval security, realism provides a discerning eye in understanding the action of coastal states such as Somalia. Protection of territorial waters and Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) is not only economic or environmental but also of sovereignty and survival (Alsawalqa & Venter, 2022). Somali state efforts to claim its sea spacer resonate the realist concern to protect territorial integrity against external threats (Ehiane & Uwizeyimana, 2023). As noted by Li (2023), maritime security policies are more influenced by strategic interests and power asymmetries, as opposed to general global norms.

Realism has, though its enduring influence, been faulted for making overly negative assumptions about human nature and for neglecting international institutions and non-state actors (Andersen-Rodgers & Crawford, 2022). Nevertheless, realism remains a strong paradigm for explaining Somalia's quest for sovereignty and maritime dominance under an anarchic international system characterized by competition and insecurity (Farah, 2024).

Neo-realism, also known as structural realism, emerged as a refinement of classical realist thought in the late 20th century. Keeping the realist assumption of an anarchic global system in place, neo-realism instead focuses attention on the international system's structure rather than human nature as the primary driver of state behaviour. Kenneth Waltz's Theory of International Politics (1979) is the bulwark of this school of thought, arguing that the manner in which power is distributed across states, and not their moral or psychological motives, explains patterns of cooperation and conflict (Waltz, 1979). Neo-realism therefore offers a systemic explanation of international politics, emphasizing the reality that state action is constrained by the nature of global anarchy.

Central assumptions of neo-realism are: (1) states are the central actors in the international system; (2) the system is anarchic, compelling states to concentrate on their

survival; and (3) variations in power distribution explain variations in foreign policy behaviour (Muhammad & Riyanto, 2021). In structural realism, researchers do differentiate between defensive and offensive logic of state behaviour in an anarchic international system. According to the defensive realism by Waltz (1979), states strive to attain the minimum amount of power to enable them gain security and survival. Beyond certain limit, he says, power is counterproductive since it attracts countermeasures by other states and the ultimate effect is a diminished security of a state. Conversely, the offensive realism theory of Mearsheimer (2001) points out that a mere desire to achieve security is not enough, but rational states are also willing to increase power as much as possible, since there is no surest way of gaining long-term security than by dominating other competitors, or becoming a regional hegemon. Collectively these views indicate that there are two strands of realism, one where states seek to maximize their security, and the other where they seek to maximize their power, but both are in consensus that the structural pressures of anarchy have influenced the pursuit of maritime control, strategic resources and territorial sovereignty.

The critics of neo-realism have branded it a simplification of multi-faceted relationships at the cost of domestic, ideological and normative factors (Aran, Brummer, and Smith, 2021; Andersen-Rodgers and Crawford, 2022).

Liberalism was a reaction against the pessimistic, power-seeking conception of realism with an emphasis on the likelihood of cooperation, growth, and the deterrence impact of the institutions towards anarchy. Under Enlightenment philosophy, liberalism believes that human beings are rational and can attain peace grounded on law, democracy, and economic interdependence (Sørensen, Møller, & Jackson, 2022). Philosophers such as Kant and Locke worked out its central assumptions — states can overcome war by shared institutions, shared interests, and norms. After two world wars, liberalism further picked up pace in demonstrating how international institutions such as the United Nations can provide peace and order to the world. The liberal theory was pushed to the limits of interdependent world by neo-liberalism of authors such as Waltz in 1979 at the end of the 20th century.

It takes the realist premise of an anarchic international system but posits that complex interdependence, trade, communication and international regimes can greatly diminish the probability of conflict contrary to the realist scholars like Waltz (1979) and Morgenthau (1948). The other reason advanced by the neoliberal institutionalists is that states can still

have no incentives to cooperate when issues of relative gains exist although cooperation can be absolute gains (Keohane, 1984). The means to achieve predictability, introduce norms and complement security through collective governance are then the international organizations, including the International Maritime Organization (IMO) (Eruaga, 2024). Transnational hazards affecting the maritime industry, including sea pollution, illegal fishing, and piracy, are to be balanced using cooperative programs, as suggested by the liberal and neo-liberal literature sources.

Constructivism emerged as a reaction against realism and neo-liberalism during the late 20th century, pushing back against their materialist and state-centric assumptions. It contends that international relations are not solely institution- or power-driven but socially constructed by ideas, identities, norms, and common meanings (Sørensen, Møller, & Jackson, 2022). Previous scholars such as (Waltz, 1979; Morgenthau, 1948; Mearsheimer, 2001) criticized that "anarchy is what states make of it," (Wendt, 1992, p. 395) stating that the action of a state is conditioned by its perception and social interaction and not by structural forces inherent to it (Berling et al., 2022). Constructivism, thus, focuses on the agency of identities and beliefs in determining how states make their interests and security.

Unlike in realism, where security is seen as material and objective, constructivism views it as ideational and context bound. Security threats do not only emanate from power imbalances but also from socially constructed threat perceptions and legitimacy (Andersen-Rodgers & Crawford, 2022). Critics argue that constructivism's emphasis on ideas comes at the cost of material power's enduring role (Rosenberg, 2024).

Feminist theory of international relations emerged in the 1980s to challenge the gendered presuppositions of mainstream theories. Scholars such as J. Ann Tickner protested that realism's focus on power, rivalry, and state sovereignty is proving out masculine assumptions excluding women and non-state actors (Tickner, 2001). Feminist perspectives are focused on human security, cooperation, and social justice rather than military supremacy, and imply that the subaltern experiences are essential to comprehend global politics (Andersen-Rodgers & Crawford, 2022).

Marxism, on the other hand, sees international relations through the lens of economic inequality, class struggle, and dependency. It views global politics as a capitalist exploitative

apparatus where hegemonic states and capital impose their ascendancy on vulnerable states to gain economic superiority (Rosenberg, 2024). Marxist theory in naval diplomacy illustrates how Indian Ocean resource extraction and global trade seams are structured to impose capitalist stratification.

Green Theory brings an ecological approach to international relations by focusing on ecological interdependence, sustainability, and the limitations of state sovereignty over natural resources. It reworks security in terms of survival in the environment and not military or economic control (Masys, 2022). Maritime security, under the Green Theory model, also talks about oceanic governance issues, preservation of marine biodiversity, and exploitation of blue economy resources sustainably (Li, 2023).

Table 1: Comparative Overview of Major International Relations Theories and Their Application to Maritime Security

Theory	Key Assumptions	Main Scholars	View of Security & Sovereignty	Approach to Maritime Security	Criticisms / Limitations
Realism	International system is anarchic; states seek power and survival; conflict is inevitable.	E. H. Carr, H. Morgenthau	Security = state survival; sovereignty is absolute.	Focus on protecting national waters, deterring external threats, and asserting sovereign control.	Overly state-centric; neglects cooperation, non-state actors, and global norms (Griffiths, 2021; Sørensen et al., 2022).
Neo-Realism (Structural Realism)	International structure determines state behavior;	K. Waltz, J. Mearsheimer	Security achieved through balancing and	Explains how global power asymmetries influence	Ignores domestic politics and social factors;

	distribution of capabilities shapes outcomes.		deterrence in an anarchic order.	weaker states like Somalia (Alsawalqa & Venter, 2022).	presents a static view of change (Rosenberg, 2024); limited systemic analysis and reduced predictive capacity.
Liberalism / Neo-Liberalism	Cooperation possible through institutions and interdependence; states can achieve mutual gains.	J. Locke, I. Kant, R. Keohane	Security arises from law, trade, and institutional frameworks; sovereignty can be shared.	Emphasizes role of IMO, UNCLOS, and multilateral coalitions in stabilizing maritime spaces (Eruaga, 2024; Li, 2023).	Underestimates inequality and power asymmetry; assumes rational cooperation; economically reductionist in some variants (Ogembo & Ichani, 2024).
Constructivism	Reality is shaped by norms, ideas, and identities.	A. Wendt, N. Onuf, P. Katzenstein	Security is subjective; sovereignty influenced by legitimacy and identity.	Focuses on changing norms around sovereignty, legitimacy of foreign intervention, and evolving maritime practices (Berling et al., 2022; Farah, 2024).	Highly abstract; limited predictive ability; downplays material forces.

Feminism	IR and security practices are gendered; women and marginalized groups are excluded from traditional security agendas.	J. A. Tickner	Security defined in human and social terms.	Highlights gendered effects of piracy, coastal displacement, and maritime livelihood disruption (Tickner, 2001; Andersen-Rodgers & Crawford, 2022).	Limited systemic analysis; sometimes lacks predictive power.
Marxism	Global politics reflect capitalist exploitation; economic structures shape state behaviour.	K. Marx, I. Wallerstein	Sovereignty constrained by global capitalist dependency.	Explains foreign exploitation of Somali fisheries, coastal resources, and blue-economy wealth (Rosenberg, 2024; Sarjito, 2024).	Economically reductionist; neglects cultural, institutional, and identity-based factors.
Green Theory	Environmental sustainability is central to security; ecological health precedes state stability.	A. Dobson, R. Falk	Environmental integrity is essential for sovereignty and survival.	Emphasizes ecosystem protection, climate threats, and sustainable maritime governance	Limited engagement with power politics; often normative in orientation.

				(Masys, 2022; Li, 2023).	
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2.3 Realism as the Theoretical Lens for Somalia's Maritime Security

Realism is used as a major theoretical focus in interpreting the maritime security behaviour and foreign policy decisions of Somalia. Realism is based on the classical assumptions of Morgenthau (1948), but further elaborated by the neo-realist scholars like Waltz (1979), according to which the international system is anarchic in nature and there exists no authority to impose rules. In this system, states are the primary and rational actors that demand the maintenance of sovereignty, maximisation of security, and protection of national interests (Griffiths, 2021; Srensen, Moller and Jackson, 2022).

When applied to Somalia, this offers a useful rationale as to why maritime security is handled more in terms of survival and sovereignty need than a developmental or humanitarian initiative. The Somali state sees the threat at sea, piracy, IUU fishing, and arms smuggling, as a direct threat to its territorial integrity and bargaining power due to weak institutions and long history of political fragmentation.

In this view of realists, the main policy initiatives like the rebuilding of the naval force, the declaration of authority over the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and the negotiation of the security relationship, and countering the exploitation of foreigners are all attempts to recover the sovereignty and bring back control over the strategic maritime space (Ehiane & Uwizeyimana, 2023; Alsawalqa and Venter, 2022). Equally, the involvement of Somalia in multilateral naval operations or alliances is not seen as acceptance of liberal co-operation, but a rationality of power, security and strategic gain where security is considered insecure.

Therefore, the coherent theory of the maritime policy and foreign policy behaviour of Somalia can be analyzed using realism. It explains the reason why the Somali state, although institutions are weak, still places a high value on hard security, territorial control and strategic alliances as the basic survival mechanism in a competitive regional environment. The fact that Somalia has maritime governance issues that cannot be explained without the concepts

of sovereignty, asymmetries of power, and structural limitations of an anarchic international system supports this theoretical congruity.

This study uses realism, with Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) insights as its primary theoretical framework. Applicability is justified by the continuing relevance of realist theory in explaining Somalia's pursuit of maritime sovereignty and national security within a highly competitive regional setting.

Realism, defined by power, statehood, and national interest as the focus of its theory, best accounts for Somalia's strategic conduct as it strives to reassert hegemony over its maritime region after decades of politico-security instability (Alsawalqa & Venter, 2022). The Somali government's maritime governance policy is actually based on the principles of self-help within an anarchy regime. Absence of a global central authoritative institution, which could apply the maritime law, compels Somalia to distribute its limited institutional and military capabilities in ensuring its seas are not penetrated by piracy and illegal fishing and military occupation by the rest of the powers (Ehiane & Uwizeyimana, 2023).

It aligns with the initial assumption of realism according to which security and sovereignty are the things states continually desire to possess (Griffiths, 2021). However, at the same time as the application of Foreign Policy Analysis can provide an individual with a fine-tuned account of the endogenous factors to determine the foreign and maritime policy of Somalia including leadership, institutional mistrust, and coalition government (Aran, Brummer, and Smith, 2021), it is also there that the why of Somalia taking action in the international system is enriched by the how, domestic decision-making that makes its strategic outcomes perspective.

Through this approach, the union of realism and FPA is capable of providing a critical analysis of Somalia's maritime security policy in the sense of balancing between external structural forces and domestic politics. This theory is best suited to explain how a new weak state of post-conflict origin, balances sovereignty and survival in a world dominated by strong regional and international players.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter provided a theoretical context of wide reach to Somalia's maritime security concerns. It charted the evolution of dominant international relations theories—realism, neo-realism, liberalism, constructivism, marxism, feminism, and green theory—according to their key assumptions, prominent scholars, and utility to concepts such as security, sovereignty, and governance of the seas.

Realism is best suited as an explanation of Somalia's maritime action. The state's failure to protect sovereignty, define space, and oppose foreign influence converges with realist survival requirements and rivalry for power. The addition of Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) enhances this approach by linking systemic pressures to domestic decision-making and illustrating how domestic political institutions in Somalia influence its foreign and maritime policy. Combined in this way, these approaches offer this study both practical and theoretical explanatory power.

Having established this, the next chapter describes the research design, data collection, and analysis methods employed to examine Somalia's means of implementing its maritime security policy through this approach.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the research methodology employed to analyse the theoretical and practical issues of Somalia's maritime security. The chapter discusses the research design, methodology, data collection process, and the analytic method applied to analyse the core research question of the study.

The chapter begins with offering a rationale for undertaking a qualitative research approach. It goes ahead to outline the use of case study approach whereby Somalia was the case due to its privileged geopolitical position, and the seriousness of its maritime security issues.

The chapter provides an overview of utilizing in-depth interviews as the major data collection method, participants' recruitment, and the ethical process carried out. The chapter outlines the procedure undertaken under qualitative analysis of the data under thematic analysis allowing patterns and emerging themes of employment of theory and maritime governance. The aim is to be transparent and clear, valid, and academic when it comes to the generation of results and their interpretation.

3.2 Research Design

In this study, qualitative research is conducted because social experience like maritime security is subtle, contextual, and dynamic. Qualitative research is depth oriented but not breadth oriented and is geared towards understanding how people experience their realities and not generalization (Creswell, 2014). This kind of methodology especially relates to this research, to the extent that it not just attempts to say what maritime insecurity in Somalia is but also how foreign policy analysis can be used and explanation of such occurrences.

A case study helps to study complex phenomena in detail in their natural environment in qualitative research, in particular, where no distinct lines can be drawn between the phenomenon and the environment (Yin, 2018). At this point, Flyvbjerg (2006) highlights the importance of key cases because they have the highest chance to have an outstanding

illumination of theoretical concepts, test general propositions, or be symptomatic of more general patterns. Key cases are highly representative, revealing, or paradigmatic cases and studying them enables researchers to conduct context-specific analysis and generate conclusions that have wider theoretical and practical applications. The case study research assists both academic research and policymaking (Yin, 2018; Flyvbjerg, 2006).

This research core methodology is a case study methodology, as it offers an opportunity to explore a particular case of maritime security in Somalia in detail, based on its real-life context (Yin, 2018). The country of Somalia is a key case because of its geopolitical position, its maritime rule of law problems. As a vulnerable state where sovereignty is called into question, institutions are weak, and external politics intervenes in direct ways. Using Somalia as a key case, this research has further implications in terms of illuminating maritime insecurity in other critical coastal environments. To accomplish these objectives, the research uses semi-structured interviews of stakeholders involved in the maritime security.

The advantage of this type of research data is that it can be used to investigate individual experience but with a certain level of conformity of structure among the interviews. This study, being qualitative in nature, enables rich and in-depth observation of the decision making and strategic outlook of major players in the maritime security in Somalia, and aptly cuts across the top-down approach to policymaking and implementation. In addition, qualitative research enables the researcher to react genuinely well to the emergent characteristics of information and to restructure interview queries and questions to be expanded upon when new inconsistency or themes emerge during the fieldwork. This responsiveness will be particularly helpful when conducting research in fluid and dynamic environments such as Somalia where political conditions and security threats change quickly (Andersen-Rodgers & Crawford, 2022).

3.3 Data Collection

To achieve a subtle and context sensitive insight into the Somali maritime security environment, this study used in-depth, semi-structured interviews as the main tool of data collecting. This is typically most effective in qualitative case studies where one is interested

in exploring experience, perception, and meaning. In-depth interviews would enable the researcher to generate abundant and qualitative information and be prepared to address unforeseen issues and explanations (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009).

The semi-structured interviews are between rigidity and flexibility. Although an interview guide was developed in a way that similarity was maintained among the participants, an open-ended question and probing questions were permitted. This format was helpful to comprehend the Somali stakeholders' perceptions of maritime threats, and to interpret national and international actors' responses meaningfully.

12 interviews were conducted against a spectrum of stakeholders engaged in or impacted by maritime security as demonstrated by Table 2. They included representatives of the Office of the Prime Minister, directors from the Security and Justice Department, coast guard or maritime unit commanders, and other practitioners with policy- or operations-focused experience. They were selected by purposive sampling, having experience or expertise towards maritime issues in Somalia. The diversity of perspectives—those of national policymakers, security experts, and technocrats—created a three-fold comprehension of the question.

Table 2: Overview of Interview Participants

Participant	Affiliation	Role	Interview Mode	Interview Date
Participant 1	Office of the Prime Minister	Policy Analyst in Maritime Affairs	In-person	03 March 2024
Participant 2	Ministry of Security and Justice	Senior Security Advisor	Online (Zoom)	06 March 2024
Participant 3	Somali Coast Guard	Commanding Officer	In-person	08 March 2024

Participant 4	Maritime Directorate	Legal Advisor	Online (Zoom)	10 March 2024
Participant 5	Regional Port Authority	Infrastructure and Logistics Head	In-person	13 March 2024
Participant 6	Independent Maritime Consultant	Maritime Policy & Governance	Online (Skype)	15 March 2024
Participant 7	NGO working on coastal development	Community Liaison Officer	In-person	17 March 2024
Participant 8	Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources	IUU Monitoring Specialist	Online (Zoom)	20 March 2024
Participant 9	Naval Training Unit	Training Commander	In-person	22 March 2024
Participant 10	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Diplomatic Liaison on Security	Online (Teams)	24 March 2024
Participant 11	Local University (Research Institute)	Research in Maritime Security	In-person	27 March 2024
Participant 12	Somali Maritime Association	Technical Advisor	In-person	29 March 2024

All the interviews lasted between 30 and 60 minutes. Interviews took place in English, Somali, or both depending on levels of fluency and comfort. The participants in the research

were informed of the research purpose and informed consent provided as per research standards of ethics.

The questions for interviews had already been set within significant thematic fields of relevance to the theoretical study framework and research objectives. The issues were: (1) perceptions of maritime security within Somalia, (2) awareness of the significant maritime threats, (3) national and international response determinations, and (4) local society contributions to maritime governance views. To explore these issues, the interview schedule had four general categories: background and working life, maritime security context at the current time, global and regional partnerships, and challenges and solutions. Because of ethical considerations and in order to maintain participant confidentiality, full transcripts are not provided. Only the authorized questionnaire items are left in the appendix for documentation and transparency purposes.

3.4 Participant Selection and Sampling Criteria

Recruitment of the participants in this study was informed by purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling method commonly used in qualitative research where the researcher selects people with the needed knowledge, experience, or expertise related to the research problem (Creswell, 2014). In Somalia's maritime security, this meant selecting stakeholders who were directly involved in developing, implementing, or assessing maritime policy and maritime security programs. This research utilized elite interviews for the collection of primary data, and the researcher selected individuals holding high-position or specialist professions with expert power and authority on maritime security. Purposive sampling with reference to two important factors--professional position and relatedness of study--was followed in the selection of the sample.

These qualifying recruits were working for national government institutions, security institutions or maritime authorities and were representing the government in offices. These persons were very much engaged in the policymaking process, making it a reality or guiding maritime rule. On issues of experience in the subject matter, participants were selected on the basis of having demonstrated experience and expertise in issues of maritime security specific to Somalia. These participants were very important to the research because their

views provide authoritative assessments of the perceptions and understandings adopted to address maritime threats in the institutional mechanisms and the ability to employ foreign policy measures for countering the threats.

12 participants were interviewed in total, a sample size supported by qualitative saturation principles. Early interviews provided initial insights, while later ones reinforced thematic patterns. This was considered to be an adequate number to deliver diverse perspectives but also facilitate rich qualitative analysis. According to recommendations made by Yin (2018), case study research is more facilitated by depth and quality of data than big samples.

The sample was made sector- and occupation-diverse to ensure that the answers were multi-dimensional. By including policymakers, operational commanders, and analysts, the study acquired an encompassing view of how maritime security is perceived and addressed at different government and policy stages.

Snowball sampling was also used to obtain more participants, where there were official directories or access was limited through bureaucratic hurdles. The process entailed referring the initial participants in order to introduce others who fit the requirements and can be included. Snowballing was most suitable in order to obtain access to actors in sensitive or political dimensions of security. Whereas purposive and snowball sampling approaches undermine generalizability in the statistical meaning of the word, they are analytically defensible for theory-guided exploratory qualitative research like this one (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012).

3.5 Consent and Ethical Considerations

Ethical practice is a fundamental expectation for all research involving human participants, especially when dealing with sensitive topics such as national security, government, and conflict dynamics. It has been done in adherence to the ethical and principles of the ethical committee of the Scientific Research and Publications of the Beykoz University as laid out in the Scientific Research Ethical Evaluation Application Form. Nothing that was collected started until an ethics approval had been received and any data collection process, that included informed consent and confidentiality and anonymity and

secure data storage had been strictly followed and formulated according to the institutional ethical standards.

At the beginning of each interview, participants were presented with a consent form outlining the purpose of the research, the voluntary nature of their participation, the estimated duration of the interview, and the manner in which their data would be used. Participants were informed that they could withdraw at any point without penalty or reason. Written or verbal informed consent was obtained before interviewing.

Confidentiality was maintained during the research process. Participant anonymity was maintained by utilizing coded labels (e.g., "Participant 1," "Participant 2") for all final analysis, transcripts, and notes. Identifying information (such as job titles or institutional affiliations) was removed or anonymized for all participants, except in cases where explicit consent was granted to disclose it. All interview data were stored on password-protected devices accessible only to the researcher.

Since politically sensitive responses were provided—most significantly foreign policy and security operations-related ones—the even greater caution was used to ease the respondents in expressing themselves. Interviews were at the respondents' convenience, and other means (i.e., over the phone or encrypted video conference) were offered as a backup when necessary.

By adhering to such ethical norms, the study ensured dignity, autonomy, and privacy of all respondents and academic honesty of the study. All recordings and transcripts were securely stored on encrypted, password-protected devices in compliance with institutional data protection guidelines.

3.6 Data Analysis

Qualitative interview data were analysed using thematic coding, a qualitative data analysis technique in which patterns or themes of textual data are recognised, structured, and interpreted (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic coding is well suited to studies with the aim of exploring how actors conceptualise, account for, and attribute meaning to complex social phenomena—here, Somali maritime security's multi-dimensionality.

The first step in thematic analysis was to transcribe the interviews completely. The transcripts were subsequently read several times in an attempt to get to know the data. Preliminary notes were taken at this point to capture oft-mentioned issues, surprising views, or strongly emphasized remarks. The intention was to remain receptive to expected themes (drawn from the theoretical framework) and emergent themes (drawn from participant testimony).

Early codes were subsequently developed next. The coding was inductive and deductive. Deductive codes were derived from the theoretical basis of the research, inductive codes, by contrast, were created in reaction to unintentional knowledge produced through modes of interviews—like problems of donor reliance, perceptions of worldwide naval powers, or doubt about regional cooperative mechanisms.

After the initial coding, similar codes were included in broad themes. As an example, such codes as foreign naval patrols, UN operations and EU coordination fell under the theme of international cooperation in maritime security. Similarly, lack of coast guard capacity and requirement of maritime laws in the category of governance and enforcement issues. These theme categories were subsequently shrunk in order to facilitate internal uniformity and brevity across themes (Nowell et al., 2017).

The codes and data were then entered into Excel and arranged manually so as to be able to cross-case compare the differing groups of participants (e.g., government actors and operational actors). Although computer-based qualitative data analysis software like NVivo or Atlas.ti were a worthy consideration, the size of the data and the type of the study indicated manual coding is the most suitable and situation-relevant choice.

The analysis did not lose reflexivity. The preservation of an audit trail of coding decisions and returning to the original data avoided researcher bias to test interpretations. Member-checking through and when necessary was employed—participants were provided the chance of checking to ensure accuracy and clarity of interpretation of what they had responded.

3.7 Limitations of the Research

It should be noted that there are certain limitations which can affect the scope, magnitude and the generalizability of the findings. First, the study involves a single case (Somalia), hence limiting the applicability of the findings to other cases. Even though Somalia provides a challenging and rich setting to view maritime insecurity, due to the specificities of its political, economic, and geographical conditions, the conclusions cannot be easily generalized to other states or regions with similar threats.

Second, the sample size of 12 interviews was used as this research has faced difficulties in accessing the Somali officials and maritime stakeholders. Though purposive and snowball sampling facilitated the identification of informed respondents, the sample did not necessarily represent the spectrum of opinions, including those of marginalized or grassroots constituents, including small-scale fishers or coastal women. This might have curtailed the perception on the impact of maritime insecurity on the various sections of the society.

Third, the politicized nature of the research issue was difficult to the gathering of data. Issue of overseas military bases, state power, and regional rivalry has a tendency to propel threats for respondents, where respondents may have undertaken self-censorship or evasive responses. Even though an ethical procedure is observed, and confidentiality ensured, a social desirability responding is a qualitative research methodology problem in a sensitive issue of power (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012).

Fourth, along with the semi-structured interviews being the major method of data collection, secondary data sources such as official government documentation, policy briefs, international maritime security analyses, and seminal publications of such agencies as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and EU NAVFOR were also used in the frame of the research. Not only was this data triangulation validated with the key results of the interview but also gave a larger picture of the maritime security scenario in Somalia. The data on the field observation and the classified operation such as the coast guard records were not in immediate availability due to the logistic and security related constraint, however, the utilization of the publicly available documents and the reports submitted by the institutions overcame the constraint and contributed to the empirical validity of the research.

3.8 Conclusion

The chapter has described methodology that was applied in the study of Somali maritime security. The reason why it was employing qualitative and case study design was explained, it stated that there was a need to gain access to rich knowledge that is context specific and cannot be obtained through quantifiable indicators. The chapter clarified the reasons it had selected Somalia as its case study; the methods it used to conduct in-depth interviews as well as how the participants were selected based on their relevancy to the maritime governance and policy.

The ethics problems were taken into account through the informed consent, confidentiality, and respect to the political character of research topic. Thematic coding assisted in the enumeration and expoundation of thick data in an orderly way and ingraining empirical knowledge in a broad theoretical argumentation. Notwithstanding the fact that study is likely to be affected by such limitations as: small sample size, the research is a valid and an accurate way of studying maritime security within the scope of most prolific stakeholders of maritime governance of Somalia.

4 FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

The chapter addresses the maritime security situation of Somalia through an FPA analysis framework. Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) provides an approach that focuses on the domestic players, the institutions and decision-making processes that dictates the foreign behaviour of a state. The chapter begins by giving the definition of Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) extends to offer the applicability of FPA to the post-conflict environments.

It also proceeds to deliberate on the maritime security within the perspective of FPA to study the compatibility of foreign policy, national institutions and national security issue. It examines the activities and the role of the key players of the Somali foreign policy and the foreign donors and tracks their coordination activities and failure.

4.2 Applying Foreign Policy Analysis for the Case of Somalia

Foreign Policy Analysis is a form of analysis that demonstrates how the decision of foreign policy of states is converted into practice. Although the general theoretical background of this study is realism, the FPA fills the gap of how decisions are translated into the real policy.

This contemptuous attitude may be reflective acutely to the weak and post conflict states such as Somalia characterized by power sharing and decentralization of decision making, thus it is extremely competitive. This is what makes the Somali foreign policy to be the product of low institutional capacity and home-based actors and high external power. To prove that the policy making in the maritime security is not the reserve of the ministry of Foreign Affairs alone, it is suffice to mention that the Ministry of Defense and the governments of the regions such as Puntland and international organizations such as EU and UN also participate.

The FPA provides the theoretical tools to trace such dynamic which is so complex, where it clarifies how Somali leaders are dealing with the issue of institutional fragmentation, and demands of donors and scarce resources. In addition to this, FPA enables the scholars who

are interested in policymaking to disaggregate the role of overlapping jurisdictions, informal networks and piecemeal organization towards the decision-making process in the maritime security sphere. Application of this approach thus allows more realistic actor-based accounts of the actual factors and barriers to Somali foreign policy, especially in the maritime sector.

4.3 Domestic Actors

Somalia's foreign policy architecture is marked by complexity, fragmentation, and the coexistence of formal institutions and informal power dynamics. The collapse of centralized rule in 1991 gave rise to a federal system, but effective power remains largely vested in regional actors and international entities.

Office of the Prime Minister is the lead coordinating organization, chairing inter-ministerial committees and directing foreign assistance and security cooperation. Even as the lead institution, it is still hampered by institutional distrust, professional under-specialization, and politicization of foreign policy.

Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation nominally tasked with matters of foreign policy, treaty negotiations, bilateral and multilateral affairs, and representing Somalia in international institutions. Its mandate, particularly maritime affairs, overlaps with security and development portfolios, most frequently resulting in issues of coordination (Ismail, 2021).

Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Internal Security, and Directorate of the Sea are mandated to implement the security elements of foreign policy, including naval cooperation and anti-piracy activities. Their mandates converge and are compromised by inadequate resources, thereby making them less effective. Occasionally, such ministries treat international partners independently of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and therefore collective policy implementation is challenging.

Council of Ministers (CoM) that is between the federal cabinet, which is chaired by the Prime Minister, and ratifies international agreements and facilitates the adoption of policy. Its mandate in maritime protection is still poor and underreported, showing that there is room for greater formal legislative oversight and institutionalization into foreign policymaking.

Regional States (e.g., Puntland, Galmudug) take a lot of liberty, and conduct foreign trade, porting and fishing licences. This non-consultative practice tends to create conflicting interests and undercut the unity of the national maritime policy. There are areas where it has their own maritime enforcement services and sign contracts outside of the federal government. The foreign policy-making institutions of Somalia are highly fragmented, institutionally competitive, and dependent on the outside. The proper comprehension of these actors and how they relate is critical to determining the ability to build effective maritime policies and implement strategic diplomacy in Somalia.

In the federal system of Somalia, regional states like Puntland, Jubaland, Galmudug, and South West State had been assuming their own foreign policy functions, even though foreign policy was constitutionally the prerogative of the federal government. These regional groups have shown a significant level of independence in finding partners abroad, especially concerning maritime security, granting of natural resources, and portfolio concessions (Bryden, 2020).

To illustrate, Puntland has entered into fisheries and port development agreements with foreign firms on its own, without explicit supervision by the federal government in Mogadishu (Hansen, 2019). This decentralized method also indicates weak implementation of federal government and illustrates how fragmented the Somali government is. These arrangements enable responsive and locally sensitive decision making but also bring inconsistencies and even conflicting international commitments.

The differences between the federal and regional interests are mostly experienced where there is a disconnect between them. An example of diverging foreign policy lines is the friendly relations between Puntland and the UAE contrary to the foreign policy of the federal government due to the former identifying with Turkey and Qatar (Elmi, 2022). Such inconsistencies render it difficult to build national coherent maritime policy and can negatively influence concerted diplomacy.

Even if the regional states have little institutional capacity, they find themselves in a strong position because of their geographical position. They have access to an agreement with international donors or private maritime security companies where it does not

necessarily have to be in the national interest. This is an undesirable relationship in terms of accountability, openness, and protecting national sovereignty.

In sum, regional administrations in Somalia have both positive and negative roles: they are responsible for local governance and institution establishment, but they also generate significant national policy coherence problems. Designing any effective maritime policy should therefore engage regional players under one political and diplomatic umbrella.

4.4 External Actors and International Donors

Historically, international donors and external actors have dominated the formation of foreign and maritime policy in Somalia, both owing to the post-conflict circumstances and low levels of institutional capacity in the country. They are involved in security and naval activities, technical support, institutional financing, and diplomatic activity (Williams, 2016).

The efforts of security organizations like Operation Atalanta by the EU, NATO, and the Combined Maritime Forces are some of the key factors that have helped to curb piracy along the coast of Somalia. However, such interventions have remained mostly externally-led, with minimal Somali ownership or focus on domestic institution-building (Murphy, 2020). The long-term viability of such missions as well becomes open to question because of the short-term, donor-dependent nature of these missions.

Figure 1: Structure of Somalia's Foreign Policy Actors in Maritime Security



International organizations, including the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO), have invested in training Somali officials, establishing maritime courts, and enhancing port security. Despite these efforts, much of the support remains project-based and often disconnected from national policy goals (Hassan, 2021).

Somalia's maritime policy has also been greatly influenced by external diplomatic and economic pressure from external players such as Turkey, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the United States, and the United Kingdom. Evidence shows that such partnerships, while vital in securing technical capabilities and resources, tend to introduce competitor geopolitical interests, which it becomes much harder for Somalia to secure integrated maritime control (Farah, 2024; Sarjito, 2024; Maluki & Njoki, 2024). For example, Turkish investment in Mogadishu port infrastructure, the UAE's previous agreements in Berbera and Bosaso, and Western-funded security operations show different strategic interests of allies (Ogembo & Ichani, 2024). Consequently, scholars note Somalia's foreign policy behavior to be predominantly reactive—diligent in the face of external inducements and ad hoc security

policies—rather than a strategic, proactive approach that reflects autonomous national interests (Ehiane & Uwizeyimana, 2023; Aran, Brummer & Smith, 2021).

Briefly, critical capacity shortcomings in Somali port management have been filled by the global community. Nonetheless, this assistance can be counterproductive to Somali agency and long-term strategic autonomy. To achieve sustainable development, it is necessary that donor interventions build on Somali-led activities and institutional ownership and cultivate lasting capacity.

4.5 Institutional Coordination

The sea governance of Somalia is not complete as there is a lack of evidence that manifests in coordination failures, overlapping roles of the institutes and lack of trust amongst key players which is well captured in the policy literature and supported by the series of interviews with the maritime officials. According to studies conducted by Ehiane and Uwizeyimana (2023) and Eruaga (2024), such aspects of Somali governance as fragmented leadership, lack of institutional integration, and the inability to build coherent maritime structures remain characteristic features of this system.

The federal ministries, regional governments, security services and even the donor-funded programmes normally work in a loosely linked fashion. In spite of developed mechanisms of cooperation, inter-agency cooperation in practice is still superficial, and organisations again turn to siloed approaches (Farah, 2024; Asaduzzaman and Virtanen, 2023). Such organisational culture will cause redundancy in responsibilities and biased reaction to the maritime security outbreaks. An illustration to this is having two or more agencies that would be patrolling the same coastal area without sharing information, thus, inefficiency and lack of operational opportunities.

The second issue is the unwillingness of local governments to be subject to federal control, as well as disagreements on revenue distribution that has led to parallel systems and procedures that in most cases are not in line with national structures (Ogembo & Ichani, 2024). The resultant power dynamics undermine trust and hamper the combination of efforts. These are the power asymmetries and the felt marginalisation of the local actors; these are

cited as the main reasons of the chronic coordination impasse as reported by the stakeholders in this research.

Although capacity building is evident, international donors may not necessarily strengthen distributed systems but instead they may finance selective ministries or independent projects by neglecting nation-building bases (Sarjito, 2024; Maluki and Njoki, 2024). These externally enforced programmes promote short-term interventions at the expense of long-term structural reforms that are necessary when it comes to sustainable governance.

Lack of centralized leadership remains the key challenge to efficient maritime governance (Ehiane & Uwizeyimana, 2023). The overlapping of ministries jurisdictions such as Fisheries, Defence, Internal Security and Ports and Marine Transport has created a de facto division of power, which has been worsened by legislative uncertainty. There is also an overlapping in the mandate of the Navy and the Coast Guard, which has led to inefficiency in operations, interviewees cite a donor competition, and lack of national ownership.

There is mistrust on an institutional and governmental level. The central government has been criticised by regional leaders, including those in Puntland, on its control of external funding and decision-making, and on the federal agencies losing sovereignty to regional arrangements with external partners (Farah, 2024; Alsawalqa and Venter, 2022). This hesitancy of suspicion still leads to disintegration and undermining of policy.

The maritime security system will be fragmented, reactive, and reliant on international support. Institutional confusion is another issue that is confronting the international community and is more inclined to ad-hoc assistance instead of reforming governance. The implementation of effective harmonisation of laws and establishment of a central coordinating body, preferably in the Office of the Prime Minister, with adequate powers and resources to make the institutions coherent is important in addressing these problems (Day, 2022; Asaduzzaman and Virtanen, 2023).

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has explored the dynamics of foreign policy decision-making in Somalia using the perspective of Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA), showing the complexity and fragmentation of the core of the maritime governance system in the country. The evaluation determines a serious gap of coordination at the institutional level, the recurring legal grey area, and distrust between the various levels of government.

FPA is useful as it shows the way in which the foreign policy decisions in Somalia are not driven by high-level strategic requirements but by institutional constraints, political orientations, and the pressures of the external environment. This frame of reference facilitates the understanding of why Somalia tends to adopt a reactive foreign policy and does not develop a consolidated policy towards its sea interests.

To enable Somalia to strengthen its maritime security posture, institutional processes must be fundamentally transformed, intergovernmental trust needs to be developed, and a full foreign policy framework established. These results will be the basis for the following chapters, which will focus on maritime threats, policy gaps, and opportunities for coordinating a nationally-led response.

5 LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a general overview of the law of pertinence to maritime security in Somalia. It starts with explaining the principal international instruments regulating maritime behaviour, and whether Somalia is subject to such legislation or not. It is followed by references to the national legislation, institutions and mechanisms of law enforcement, analysis of them, their strengths and weaknesses as they stand today. The chapter addresses the contribution of regional and international institutions to the legal and institutional development in Somalia. The chapter attempts to give a holistic picture of the legal framework backing maritime governance in Somalia and ascertains the gaps that must be addressed to ensure long-term security and stability at sea.

5.2 International Legal Instruments and the Status of Somalia

Somalia is formally bound to several key international maritime conventions, but in reality, there is a severe limitation in enforcement and implementation of such instruments. These legal frameworks provide a ground to address maritime problems in Somali waters. Their successful implementation has, however, been thwarted by institutional weakness and resource poverty in Somalia.

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) is the most important of them and was signed by Somalia in 1982 and ratified in 1989. UNCLOS offers legal frameworks governing maritime management by establishing maritime boundaries such as the territorial waters, the contiguous zone, the exclusive economic zone (EEZ), and the continental shelf (United Nations, 1982). In Somalia, under UNCLOS, Somalia has sovereign rights in exploring and exploiting marine resources within 200 nautical miles of its EEZ. Yet, the fragile national naval capabilities and weaknesses of its institutions, suggest that these rights are not often exercised, and this means that its waters are prone to illegal exploitation (FAO, 2023).

Somalia is not a signatory to the Convention on the Suppression of Unlawful acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation (SUA Convention), which is an important legal

instrument in the fight against maritime terrorism and piracy (IMO, 2022). SUA criminalizes acts of piracy against a ship as well as acts of violence against the ship. This inability of Somalia to participate in the process of prosecuting the perpetrators according to the norms of the international law and to cooperate with other countries or even extradite the culprits to them when conducting joint operations.

At an environmental level, Somalia is a signatory to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), ratified to prevent marine pollution resulting from oil, chemicals, and rubbish (IMO, 2021). The strength of MARPOL regulations is, however, undermined in practice by the lack of the necessary monitoring equipment and trained staff. Foreign vessels continue to dispose of garbage and illegal discharges without strong recourse.

The other crucial treaty is the FAO Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA), with the purpose of combating illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing based on port inspections and enforcement measures against suspect vessels. Somalia is not a signatory to the PSMA, which strongly reduces its capacity to regulate foreign fishing activities and limits maritime law enforcement and port administration (FAO, 2023).

Therefore, Somalia's adherence to a number of conventions represents an outward commitment to maritime regulation, yet actual implementation is hindered by the lack of national legislation, ineffective institutional frameworks, and scarce technical capacity. Legal reform bolstered by ratification of critical conventions such as SUA and PSMA would increase Somalia's potential for combating maritime threats through international cooperation and rule-based enforcement.

Table 3: International Legal Instruments and Somalia's Status

Convention	Key Focus	Somalia's Status	Notes
UNCLOS (1982)	Defines maritime zones and rights	Party (ratified 1989)	Implementation challenges persist

SUA Convention (1988)	Suppression of unlawful acts at sea	Not a Party	Hinders legal prosecution of piracy
MARPOL (1973/78)	Pollution prevention	Party	Weak enforcement mechanisms
FAO Port State Measures Agreement	IUU fishing controls	Not a Party	Limits enforcement against foreign illegal fishers

5.3 National Maritime Legislation

Maritime national law in Somalia is underdeveloped despite the country having a long shoreline and increased security challenges. Somalia does not have a single contemporary and inclusive maritime legislative code that can regulate and secure its marine ecosystem, deal with fishing, claim jurisdiction over territorial waters, and prosecute maritime offenses. While laws that were in existence before 1991 exist, the majority of the laws are dated and piecemeal with little relevance to such contemporary threats as piracy, smuggling, and IUU fishing.

Maritime law reforms have also been ongoing through the assistance of international partners like the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), International Maritime Organization (IMO), and the EU. Bills like the Somali Maritime Code and the Somali Fisheries Law were written but did not advance significantly towards legislation because of political instability, institutional weakness, and lack of coordination between federal and regional governments.

Lack of clear legal jurisdiction between the member states and the government further complicates the enforcement. Lack of clarity in laws has granted little guideline and authority to maritime enforcement agencies, which in most cases leaves them doing nothing to foreign illegal fishing ships or piracy syndicates. Limited adoption of international conventions by national law demotes Somalia's legitimacy as an international maritime governance state.

5.4 National Maritime Security Institutions

There are a number of institutions responsible for the provision of maritime security in Somalia but these operate with few resources, duplicate mandates, and dispersed authority. The Somali Coast Guard, designed with foreign assistance in terms of training and equipment, is the first line maritime enforcement agency. It lacks sufficient funds and appropriate equipment to police the nation's 3,300 km coastline.

Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources is a regulatory body particularly in the licensing and administration of fisheries. Lax enforcement due to lack of co-ordination with the security organs. The ministry of Ports and Marine Transport has Maritime Administration tasked with providing policy oversight, regulatory frameworks and maritime coordination but it is not seriously affected by capacity deficiencies.

The development of maritime capacity has been influenced by foreign aid. The development of maritime capacity has been influenced by foreign aid. An example of this is the Berbera Regional Maritime Training Centre, established with support from the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the European Union Capacity Building Mission in Somalia (EUCAP Somalia), where maritime personnel receive training on technical and legal aspects (IMO, 2021; EUCAP Somalia, 2023). Other organisations such as Somali Maritime Administration, albeit at infant stages, are being formed to advance adherence to international laws like the Djibouti Code of Conduct and UNCLOS.

The institutional coordination issue is still present in the maritime governance of Somalia. Studies by Ehiane and Uwizeyimana (2023) and Eruaga (2024) identify overlapping mandates between federal and regional authorities as a major obstacle to coherent maritime policy implementation. Interviews conducted with officials from the Ministry of Fisheries and the Coast Guard further support this observation, revealing that limited inter-agency communication and competition over donor funding continue to hinder effective coordination. Federal and regional institutions tend to overlap their functions with vague lines of command. Moreover, the maritime security institutions in Somalia lack a centralised command and control structure that would enable them to respond effectively and the policy implementation process is slow. The promise contained in the Somali National

Maritime Strategy (SNMS) must be supported with funding and political will to bring the institutions mandate to their fullest potential.

5.5 Implementation Challenges

The implementation of the maritime legal framework and the institutional structure of Somalia is undermined by various problems of good governance and the realization of security. Institutional fragmentation is the largest obstacle. As the maritime roles are partitioned across several ministries, departments and federal member states, attempts of overlaps or lack of coverage will result in an ineffective enforcement of activity and lack of integrity in the policies.

Primary authorities such as the Somali Coast Guard and the Maritime Administration have minimal equipment, trained officers and working ships to defend or act upon the water. Foreign aid has helped in sealing some of the loopholes but there is the concern of foreign actor dependency with regards to both sustainability and ownership on a national level. There is legal uncertainty which removes enforcement. The allocation of maritime authority between the government and the regional states remains poorly defined in the Somali federal constitution and this leads to delays in decision making and in enforcement. The courts are ill-prepared to handle maritime offenses, and reforms in the legal framework lag and do not match the budget.

They also do not have any data collection and monitoring ability. In lieu of a satisfactory maritime domain awareness capability, Somali governments have no ability to track ship traffic, illegal fishing, or detect regional pirate hotspots. Strategic planning and operational success are greatly hampered by failure of situational awareness. The problem with the Somali system of governance is political instability and corruption (Ehiane & Uwizeyimana, 2023; Transparency International, 2023). Maritime contracts and concessions can be given in secret, discouraging international cooperation or investment and diminishing the rule of law (Ogembo & Ichani, 2024; Eruaga, 2024). Maritime security framework will not be sound and vulnerable to manipulation until the following core issues are resolved: legal reforms, building capacity, inter-agency and anti-corruption.

5.6 Conclusion

Maritime insecurity issues in Somalia fall squarely within the institutional and legal gaps in the country. Although the country has ratified major international agreements has taken incremental steps in crafting national laws, there is a wide disparity between goodwill and practice. The obsolete law, duplication of mandates by the institutions, and lack of coordination serve as significant limitation to the ability of Somalia to control and guard its sea space.

The international donors have played a significant role in supporting parliamentary reform and strengthening institutional capacity. They will, however, be sustainable because there is a possible scenario in which Somalia assumes more and more responsibility in regard to its maritime governance institutions. Creation of a unified maritime code, federal-regional jurisdiction, and implementable legislation should be brought to national priority. Besides, this will also need the development of maritime institutions in capacity by training, budgeting and the establishment of functional monitoring systems. Stronger, more complex legal systems with functioning institutions can facilitate maritime security as well as economic progress, resource management, and international coordination.

6 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

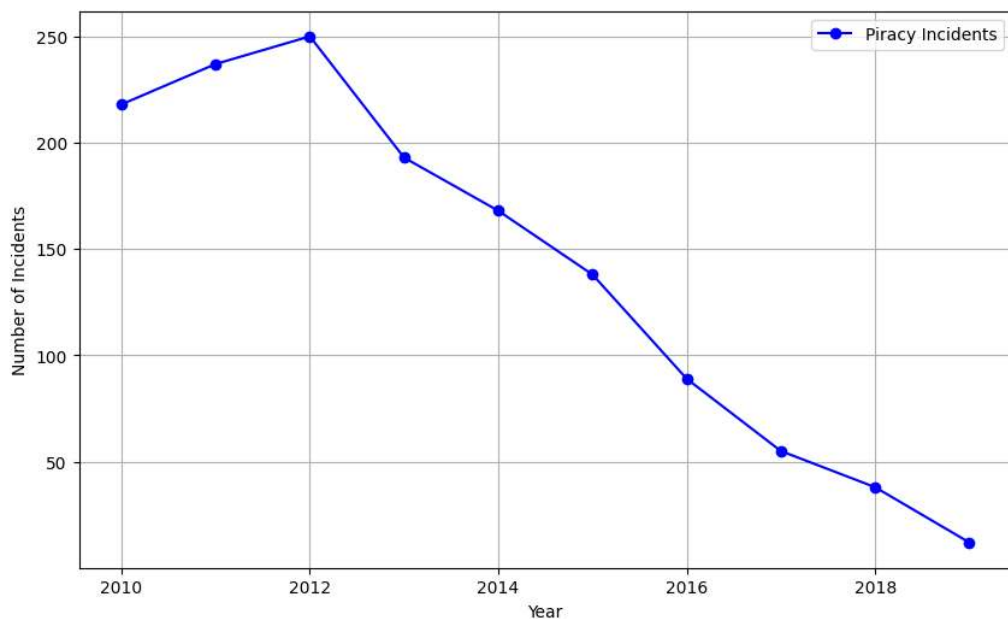
6.1 Introduction

This chapter analyzes the collected data of Somali maritime security. It is an attempt critically to evaluate key threats to Somali waters, the effectiveness of policy and international cooperation, and the value of legal and institutional provisions for such threats. The gaps and traps that impact negatively on the implementation of the current security practices are analyzed. When considering economic and social effects of maritime insecurity, the chapter also emphasizes the effects on the stability and development of Somalia in general. Lastly, the chapter discusses how Somalia can improve its maritime security policies, find regional collaborators, and access international resources in a bid to overcome marine challenges with ease.

6.2 Maritime Threats in Somalia

A chain of maritime security concerns is afflicting Somalia which affects greatly the maritime security of Somali waters, the residents of the coastal communities, and Somali economic growth.

Figure 2: Number of Piracy Incidents in Somali Waters Over Time



Somalia is faced with a multifaceted package of maritime security threats that have national, economic, and regional maritime governance dimensions. Here, evidence-based analysis of the four most widely known risks: piracy, illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, smuggling of weapons, and environmental degradation—ranked in Table 4 and provided with graphical data in Figures 2 to 4—is presented.

The most widely known of all of Somalia's maritime threats is piracy. Figure 2 illustrates the trend in piracy attacks over time, peaking between 2008 and 2012 when over 200 attacks occurred annually (IMO, 2023). As illustrated in Figure 2, piracy incidents have significantly declined after 2012 (McCarthy, 2014). Despite international naval patrols under efforts like Operation Atalanta having tremendously reduced the attacks, recent reports indicate intermittent outbreaks of violence in poorly surveilled off-shore areas (Farah, 2024). As shown in Table 4, piracy disrupts international shipping, increases insurance and transit costs, and discredits the image of Somalia in maritime trade.

Foreign Fleets' Illegal Fishing is yet another persistent and increasing issue. Somalia stands to lose around \$300 million annually from IUU fishing (FAO, 2023). Figure 4 shows that illegal fishing comprises approximately 35% of overall maritime dangers, becoming the second-highest threat following piracy (Galgano, 2024). The activity not only sucks dry fish stocks vital to coastal communities' survival but also challenges Somalia's sovereignty over its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Poor legal enforcement and the lack of an operational coast guard worsen the situation (Eruaga, 2024).

Arms trafficking via Somali waters is a regional and internal security threat. Figure 4, based on the interview respondents' answers, depicts 20% of the participants indicating that arms trafficking is a high-level naval threat. The illegal arms trade enables local militias and other non-state actors to increase conflict, along the way destabilizing Somalia and surrounding nations (UNODC, 2023). Somali coastline openness and low enforcement capability open up a platform for such illegal arms trade to flourish.

Degradation of the environment, e.g., dumping of toxic wastes, marine pollution, and climate change consequences, is equally important. Figure 4 places this category at approximately 15% of overall perception of threat. Rising sea levels, oil spills, and illegal waste dumping have direct impacts on the marine environment and the fisheries industry. They are not only environmental but also reduce fish stock availability, increase coastal migration, and create long-term food poverty (Idachaba, 2023).

Figure 3: Maritime Security Threats in Somalia - Percentage Breakdown

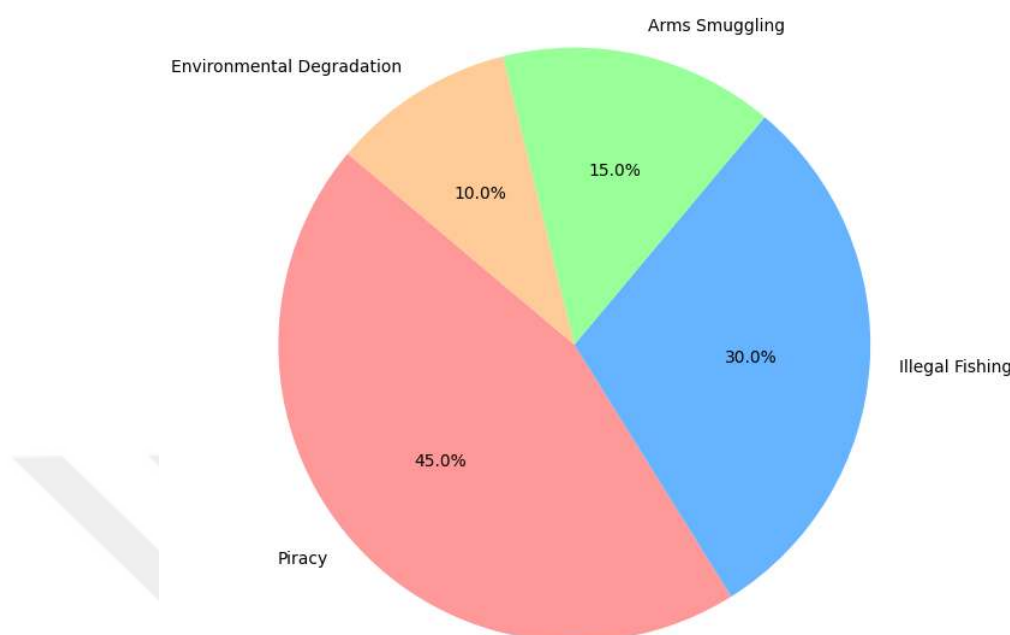
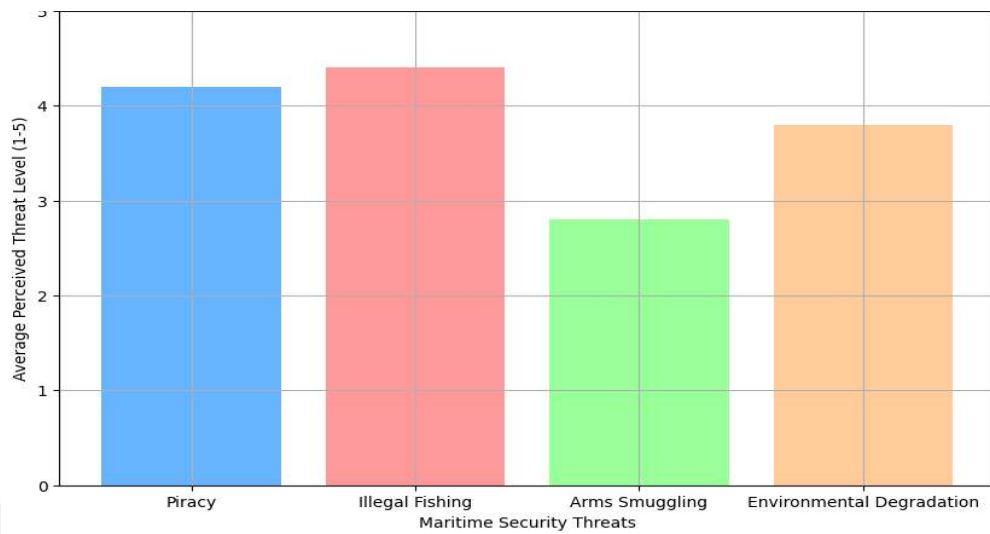


Figure 3 illustrates the proportional distribution of major maritime security threats in Somalia, with piracy accounting for the largest share, followed by illegal fishing, arms smuggling, and environmental degradation (Galgano, 2024).

Galgano (2024) quantitatively describes the nature of the Somali coast marine security threats and lists four primary types of threats as the top one, such as piracy, illegal fishing, smuggling of weapons, and environmental degradation. As can be seen in his work, piracy (49.7) beats all the reported incidents of the sea by almost two times, followed by illegal fishing (30) then the arms smuggling (15) and the third is the environmental degradation (10). According to Galgano, the idea of piracy as a security problem has been steadily leading and, in addition, it outlines the amplified economic and ecological effects of non-traditional sea crime. These bits of evidence prove the research statement that the problem of the Somali maritime instability is a multi-faceted one, which cannot be addressed either by means of the law enforcement of the law of the sea or foreign involvement.

Figure 4: Participant Perspectives on Maritime Security Threats



Such threats to the maritime security are not only contravening the sanctity of the Somali waters, it also endangers the stability of the region not mentioning the economic development of Somalia. The coordination of the presence of local, regional and international community intervention is necessary to make an effective intervention.

Table 4: Types and Impacts of Maritime Security Threats in Somalia

Threat Type	Description	Impact on Somalia
Piracy	Hijacking of ships for ransom and robbery	Disrupts global shipping, increases shipping costs, damages Somalia's reputation
Illegal Fishing	Foreign vessels fishing illegally in Somalia's waters	Depletes fish stocks, threatens livelihoods of local fishermen
Arms Smuggling	Transporting weapons through Somali waters	Fuels local conflicts, destabilizes the region, increases violence
Environmental Degradation	Pollution, illegal dumping, and oil spills	Damages marine ecosystems, impacts fishing industry and coastal communities

In line with Table 4, the four most prevalent maritime security threats will be addressed in detail. The most noticeable and global-known problem is piracy that put a strain on trade routes, commercial shipping, and increased international insurance premiums and hurt the reputation of Somalia as a shipping destination between 2008 and 2012 (McCarthy, 2014; Farah, 2024). The second-highest threat is the illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing which is mainly caused by the foreign industrial fleet targeting unprotected Somali waters and causing fish stocks and loss of livelihoods and food security (Ogembo & Ichani, 2024). The weaponry trade remains a source of internal conflict and militant groups, particularly the al-Shabaab, have been supplied with arms by the smuggling, which has extended insecurity and reduced the ability to govern the seas (Muhammad & Riyanto, 2021). A less immediate but equally harmful risk is environmental degradation, specifically, in the form of toxic waste disposal and oil spills, which harm marine ecology and lower fisheries production, eventually impacting the existence of coastal communities (Idachaba, 2023; Li, 2023).

The conclusions validate the image of the insecurity of the Somali naval as the short-term solution that is oriented towards the absence of the governance and the fall of the institutions. The absence of long-term execution and the relationship between the local communities and the navies have failed to prevent the short-term containment of piracy since there are still other menaces such as piracy and environmental degradation. These results re-feed the demand of the problems that combine the law reformation, the unification of the areas and the improvement of the functioning of the state.

6.3 Perceptions of the Current Maritime Security Policies in Somalia

This section gives the account of the most critical maritime security policies in Somalia currently as per the lessons of the elite interviews. Rather than analysing their efficiency in the form of empirical metrics—something that this method cannot accomplish—this section outlines the policies as defined and explained by participants within maritime governance. Each policy is outlined with history background, institutional context, and problems identified.

6.3.1 Somali National Maritime Strategy (SNMS)

The Somali National Maritime Strategy (SNMS) is the main policy document in Somalia guiding the running of maritime affairs. Initiated in 2015 and continuously developed with its international partners such as the UNODC and EUCAP Somalia mission in subsequent years, the SNMS has established as its goals securing Somali waters, preventing piracy, regulating maritime traffic, and ensuring marine resource use sustainably. The policy establishes a shared vision of sea security from a shared strategic framework for civilian, law enforcement, and military actors. It proposes a pyramid model of seas governance from surveillance, through patrol to legal enforcement. But it is fragmented and underfunded according to interviewees, particularly at the regional scale. Even as it is considered a vital document, other respondents noted that the SNMS is politically inconsistent and institutionally owned in key ministries.

6.3.2 Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC)

The MRCC in Mogadishu has been established with the assistance of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and regional stakeholders as part of emergency response capacity development efforts. Operational since 2020, the MRCC's mandate is to coordinate responses to maritime accidents, distress alerts, and pirate attacks. It is within the context of the Djibouti Code of Conduct regional approach. Interviewees were eager to highlight that the MRCC has improved coordination of maritime incidents among the government and international agencies. However, there were problems with regard to a lack of sophisticated communication equipment, insufficient staffing, and a lack of coordination with regional port authorities as well as coastal police forces. The interlocutors have testified that MRCC is a very symbolic structure, but with low functionality.

6.3.3 International Maritime Security Cooperation

Its maritime policy basis is made on maritime cooperation with Somalia. This has seen the collaboration with the EU Naval Force (EU NAVFOR) integrated into the operations, Atalanta, the combined maritime forces (CMF), and other United Nations assisted operations. These have sent technical training, monitoring capacity, and naval law enforcement support. Interviewees highlighted that this cooperation has played a key role in reducing piracy activity and drawing Somalia into international maritime regulation forums.

Notwithstanding that, the majority of the interviewees were concerned about the high level of over-reliance on foreign naval capability by the nation. There was a general consensus that foreigners dominated security efforts and Somali agencies are often not in charge and do not have operating independence.

6.3.4 Somali Coast Guard Development Plan

The Somali Coast Guard is the primary national maritime law enforcement body. This organization's development plan, redesigned in 2014, is designed to build a well-equipped, professional, and sustainable coast guard capable of delivering maritime order independently. The plan includes training programs (partially funded by EUCAP), purchases of patrol boats, and base construction in the region. Interviewees largely viewed the Coast Guard as being more symbolic than functional and underdeveloped. Several of them mentioned that many of the units are idle because of a lack of fuel, pay, and basic equipment. The chain of command was also reported to be ambiguous, with overlapping federal and regional powers making coordination difficult.

Table 5: Summary of Current Maritime Security Policies in Somalia

Policy	Objectives	Strengths	Areas for Improvement
Somali National Maritime Strategy (SNMS)	To enhance maritime governance and secure Somali waters	Focuses on increasing surveillance, combating piracy	Limited funding and implementation at local levels
Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC)	To respond to maritime emergencies and coordinate security efforts	Improves communication and emergency response times	Lacks modern technology and sufficient personnel
International Maritime Security Cooperation	To foster partnerships with international stakeholders and regional forces	Strengthens regional cooperation and shared resources	Reliance on foreign support, insufficient

			local enforcement capacity
Somali Coast Guard Development Plan	To build a capable, self-sufficient coast guard	Aims to create a sustainable maritime enforcement agency	Requires significant investment and training

The current maritime policy framework of Somalia is based on four basic tools. First of all, the Somali National Maritime Strategy (SNMS) establishes the basis of maritime governance in terms of focusing on surveillance expansion, counter-piracy activities, and consolidation of state capacity. Nonetheless, its performance is limited due to its chronic underfunding, lack of proper coordination between federal and state levels, and the absence of effective implementation systems at the local levels (UNSC, 2024). Second, the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) offers both operational response capacity in search-and-rescue and incident communication, thus, enhancing the reliability of emergency response, but it is also characterized by acute deficits in the use of modern equipment, trained staff, and integrated systems of monitoring. Third, the international maritime cooperation structures, such as the EU NAVFOR, CMF, UNODC and IMO alliances have played a leading role in curbing piracy and empowering capacity-building though the continued dependence of Somalia to the outside-managed patrol capabilities is a major move that shows the lack of sovereign enforcement capacity. Lastly, the Somalia Coast Guard Development Plan is supposed to create an independent enforcement organ that will be able to patrol the territorial waters and intercept trans-national crimes, but the initiative will need a big budget, several years of recurring training patterns, and institutional sustainment to scale the initiative beyond the written word.

6.4 The Role of International Cooperation in Enhancing Maritime Security

Regional partnership has been a key driver of its maritime insecurity. A number of main organizations have taken part in offering both direct and institutional assistance to combat piracy, illegal fishing, weapons trafficking, and general maritime governance failure. Detailed below is an explanation of their role:

6.4.1 United Nations (UN)

The United Nations, and specifically the UN Security Council (UNSC), has played a crucial role in sanctifying worldwide naval intervention in Somali waters. Since 2008, a series of UNSC Resolutions (starting with Res. 1816) have licensed foreign naval forces to enter Somali territorial waters and employ "all necessary means" against piracy. The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has also assisted Somalia's maritime and judicial authorities through programs focused on enhancing law enforcement, training for coast guards, prison facilities, and legal reform. The Trust Fund Supporting the Actions of States Against Piracy off the Coast of Somalia, created in 2010, has been utilized for supporting maritime capacity building of Somalia. The UN derives influence from its universal legitimacy and power to coordinate multilateral programming and funding.

6.4.2 EU Naval Force (EU NAVFOR)

EU NAVFOR – Operation Atalanta, initiated in December 2008, is a European Union operation that offers maritime security off the Horn of Africa, namely safeguarding World Food Programme (WFP) cargo and deterring piracy. Based in Spain with an operational headquarters, EU NAVFOR sends naval ships, surveillance aircraft, and training teams to assist Somali maritime security. Currently, as of 2024, the mission is still active with contribution from over 10 member states of the EU and has helped to strongly decrease piracy cases. It is run under a legal basis, which amalgamates UNSC resolutions and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) directives. The mission has also engaged in training of the Somali Navy and Coast Guard as part of an expanded maritime capacity-building.

6.4.3 International Maritime Organization (IMO)

A UN specialized agency referred to as the IMO has performed a pivotal function in developing the maritime legal and institutional framework in Somalia. It has been active since the early 2000s to help Somalia catch up with key international maritime conventions such as SOLAS, MARPOL, and UNCLOS. Among them is the Djibouti Code of Conduct (2009), prepared with the help of IMO to encourage regional cooperation to address the problem of piracy and transnational maritime crimes. IMO capacity building also includes the support of legal drafting activities, training in maritime administrators, and technical

training for the Somali Coast Guard. It helped to draft the Maritime Law of Somalia (2014) and continues to provide port security and safety advice.

6.4.4 INTERPOL

INTERPOL helps Somalia improve its maritime security by enhancing international criminal law enforcement collaboration. It will facilitate the instant exchange of intelligence, providing notice about piracy suspects, and orchestrating transnational investigations of maritime offenses. Project Compass, which was launched by INTERPOL in 2012, has boosted the ability of law enforcement agencies to fight crimes at sea by uniting law enforcement agencies across the region. INTERPOL has been able to help the Somalia police trace and arrest some of the key financiers and arms dealers of piracy. It also provides training and forensic hardware to develop local investigative capability.

These combined efforts improve the ability of Somalia to police its waters, prosecute marine offenses and undertake legal reform. Their support is both short-term, to help enforce the laws, e.g. anti-piracy naval patrols, and long-term institutional capacity-building, e.g. legal harmonization, training, and governance reform. The Somali National Maritime Strategy (SNMS) of 2015 is the national policy that directs those international activities, focusing on surveillance, jurisdiction of law, protection of assets, and community-based maritime safety.

These measures have in combination resulted in a drastic reduction in the number of piracy incidents per year, which dropped to less than 10 over the last few years in comparison to 2011, when it reached over 200 (ICC IMB, 2023). Nevertheless, there are still obstacles, especially in continuing this work during political instability and capacity deficits in the institutions of Somalia itself.

Table 6: International Organizations and Their Contributions to Maritime Security in Somalia

Organization	Role in Maritime Security	Types of Support	Specific Initiatives
UN	Facilitate global maritime security agreements	Financial support, naval interventions, policy advocacy	UNSC-authorized naval interventions, capacity-building programs
EU NAVFOR	Provides naval presence and protection	Naval patrols, training, and equipment	Operation Atalanta, joint naval patrols in the Horn of Africa
IMO	Develops legal frameworks and maritime governance	Training, technical assistance, capacity building	Development of Somali Coast Guard, maritime law enforcement training
INTERPOL	Supports law enforcement coordination	Intelligence sharing, criminal investigations	Intelligence exchange, support for anti-piracy operations

There are four institutional players that focus on international assistance in Somali maritime security. The United Nations (UN) is the most important player in the world as it authorizes the naval operations, funds the stabilization programs and helps to negotiate the multilateral policy with the assistance of the Security Council (UNSC, 2024). The most operational organ is the European Union Naval Force (EU NAVFOR), which continues to patrol the sea, escort services, and capacity building under the Operation Atalanta which largely curbed the activities of piracy in the Gulf of Aden (Li, 2023). In the meantime, the

International Maritime Organization (IMO) serves as the main regulatory and technical partner of Somalia, helping to draft maritime laws, train legal enforcement officers and help them to create the Somali Coast Guard as an independent enforcement mechanism (Eruaga, 2024). Lastly, INTERPOL promotes cooperation in law-enforcement, exchanging criminal intelligence, tracking vessels, and investigating pirated vessels, as a result of which Somalia would be able to engage in transnational monitoring of networks of smuggling and trafficking (Ehiane and Uwizeyimana, 2023).



Figure 5: Participants’ Views on the Role of International Cooperation

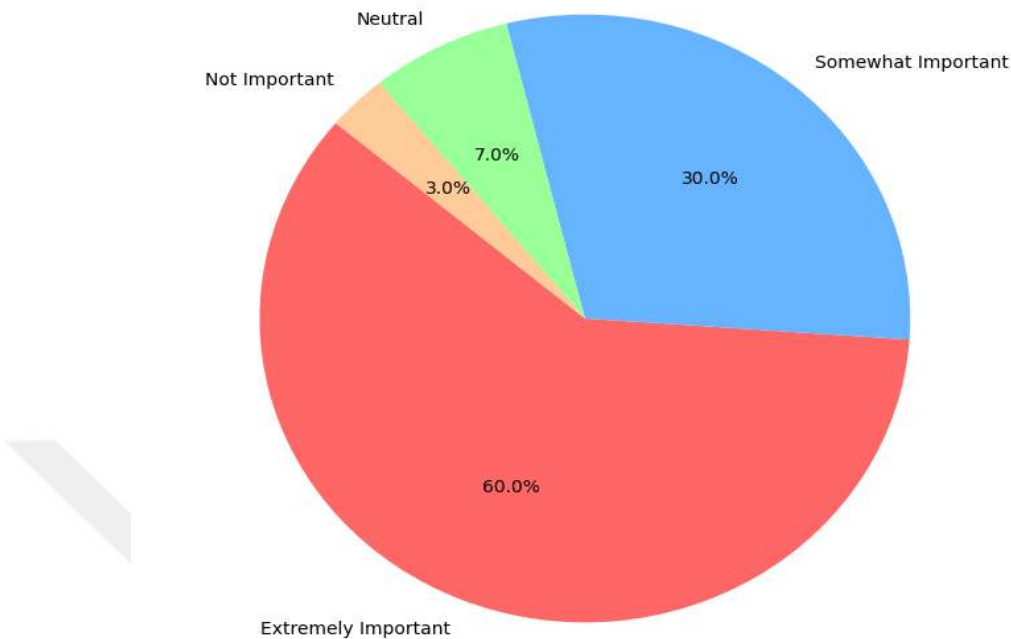
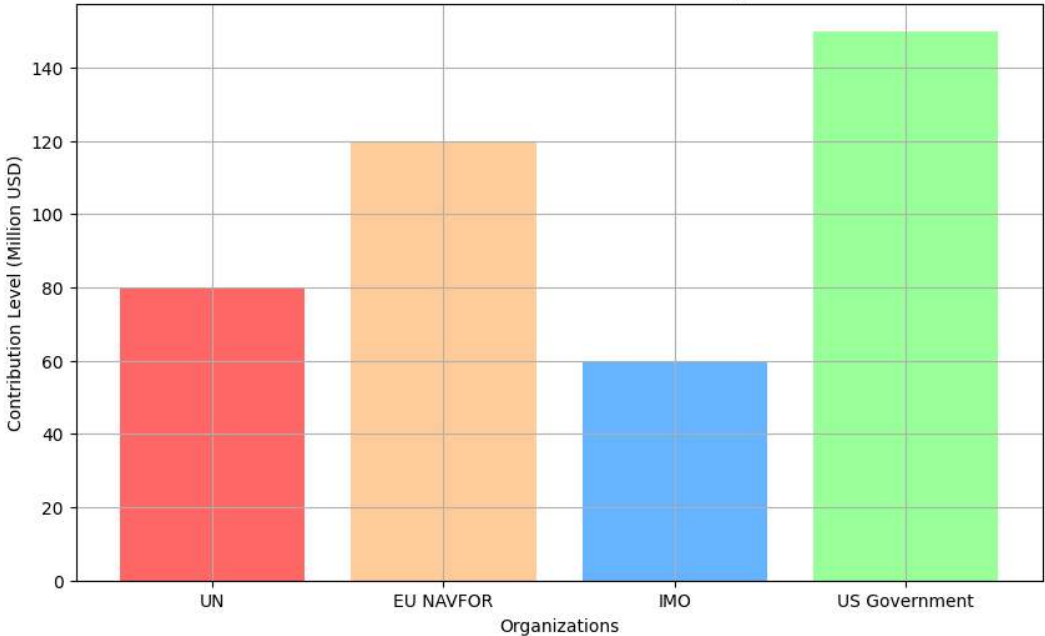


Figure 6: International Contributions to Maritime Security in Somalia



Naval patrol and support have been one of the biggest contributions of the international organizations. Warships have also been deployed by the United States, the EU NAVFOR and NATO to help patrol the waters off the Somali coast, particularly in the Gulf of Aden and the

Somalia Basin, the home of piracy. Another example is the EU Operation Atalanta which has greatly reduced piracy by deploying a correspondingly sized naval force to the region and paralyzing the operation of the pirates through concerted efforts and patrols. On the same note, the United States-led Combat Task Force 151 has complemented the assistance to combat piracy and other crimes of the sea with maritime security operations by providing necessary naval assistance to improve the safety of the seas shipping lanes in the area (Muhammad & Riyanto, 2021).

Besides military assistance, international capacity building programs have also been instrumental. As an example, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) has contributed a lot in training of Somali seafarer, coast guard development of Somalia and equipping the country with operational ready systems. Such operations can be used to make sure that Somali authorities are capable and able to control their maritime territory properly. Effective coordination of maritime security response through information-sharing tools like IORIS (Information Sharing and Incident Management System) and training heavily rely on incident reporting and immediate communication (Eruaga, 2024).

Maritime security cooperation demands collective cooperation in sharing intelligence between Somalia and its external partners. Intelligence sharing on criminal networks, piracy, and illicit fishing activities is the most vital component of cooperation. External partners such as the UN, INTERPOL, and regional bodies like the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) have facilitated such sharing of essential intelligence. Sharing intelligence helps Somalia improve its situational awareness and counter maritime threats more effectively.

Although these are positive trends, there are hindrances to sustaining international cooperation. Political insecurity in Somalia and the challenge of attaining a lengthy coastline at low expense ensure that the country will be extremely dependent on foreign forces for complete maritime security. Therefore, while international cooperation has immensely improved Somalia's maritime security, there remains a need for sustained involvement to develop long-term interventions that will make Somalia solely responsible for its maritime environment.

6.5 Somalia's Foreign Policy Options

The Somali coastline is long and undefended, and given its position on international shipping routes, maritime security should become one of the great preoccupations of Somali foreign policy. The range of foreign policy alternatives available to Somalia in this regard can be divided into four wide clusters, i.e. multilateral cooperation, bilateral relationships, regional alignment and self-containment.

Multilateral engagement deals with the development of Somalia interaction with multilateral agencies like the United Nations, International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the European Union. These actors provide capital, but also technical assistance and capacity-building initiatives that Somali institutions need.

Regional collaboration with regional institutions like the African Union and Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) presents an avenue from which the regional maritime challenges of piracy and illegal and unreported fishing may be discussed and resolved. Regional navy coordination and intelligence sharing are needed, particularly due to Somalia's poor capacity. Self-help, on the other hand, involves investing in Somali state institutions such as the Somali Coast Guard, legislative reform, and public-private partnerships in the longer term. It has the goal of weaning the nation gradually from foreign dependence and establishing national control over territorial waters.

Somalia needs to balance out the right mix in such choices. Excessive dependence may lead to loss of sovereignty and there is no possibility of isolation as capacity is insignificant. A foreign policy balance, as an international interaction-national capacity construction connection, is the most plausible alternative.

This dissertation holds that Somalia should adopt a realistic pragmatist foreign policy that will most optimally maximise external alignments given the consideration of capability building in Somalia and sovereignty. Foreign aid has assisted in ameliorating near-term weaknesses like piracy, but the lasting remedy lies in institutional construction at the national tier with the ability to provide self-financed maritime governance.

Multi-level foreign policy is the most appropriate course of action. Somalia needs to have a national law as its anchor, strengthen the coast guards, and intra-agency coordination. This

was a capability-based beyond realist theory of agglomeration of state sovereignty and power. Second, Somalia must become a member party in multilateral bodies like the Djibouti Code of Conduct and UNCLOS, and in such a way, it can put forward its rights claims and secure financial resources as well as influence the regional security agenda.

Third, the government must work towards selective bilateralism based on strategic solidarity and not through assistance. These relations must be open, legally based and on national policy frontier so as to avoid duplication or dependence on external actors. The system will be transformed into a Somalia-led maritime regime, replacing the externally driven, reactive security framework. This will require political goodwill, long-term investment and consistent diplomatic communication. By rendering both external and internal decision-making procedures transparent and rendering both external actor and internal decision-making machinery central, FPA allows us to pursue such a path in the realization of maritime stability in the design of foreign policies with the state in the lead.

6.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, the maritime security of Somalia has been explored under the concept of Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA), as it is a crucial instrument to be used in studying the country and enhancing its policy. Considering that Somalia has always been vulnerable and at risk of facing threats like piracy, illegal fishing, smuggling and environmental degradation, foreign policy is the main strategic platform to protect its maritime domain. FPA enables us to evaluate how the interaction of internal and external actors, concerns, and choices influence the security decisions and strategic behaviour of Somalia.

As it has been disclosed in the chapter, the foreign policy of Somalia should find a compromise between developing international cooperation and developing national capabilities. Although multilateral relationships (with UN, EU, and regional actors) are vital, they should be connected with the sovereign interests of Somalia and its long-term security objectives. There was an argument in favour of a realist informed approach that demanded a stratified approach to the strengthening of internal institutions, cautiously and selectively using diplomatic alliances. This is a realist-sensitive, multi-level approach which is pragmatic and needs to be in order to meet maritime challenges of the country.

The chapter also analysed the principal maritime threats facing Somalia, such as piracy, IUU fishing, and arms trafficking, alongside the socio-economic impact of these issues on coastal livelihoods and national development. The national leadership and institutional change will not be replaced even by the international aid though this one is useful. The gaps that could not be exploited in the enforcement of the maritime laws in Somalia and absence of harmony in the coordination of the key players were known in the secondary sources and the interviews.

In particular, according to this chapter, maritime security should be considered a complex, entailing legal institutions, the capacity to enforce the law, financial fragility, and the strength of communities. This will entail crackdown on the home level, re-writing of the ancient enactments and more inclusive decision-making process that integrates the civil society as well as the coastal communities in good governance of the sea. This is not the highest rate of growth but a stable one, but this depends on the long-term investment in the change both in the country and the foreign policy which determines the success and viability of Somalia in future.

7 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The dissertation discusses the intricacies of maritime security in Somalia. With the help of the theoretical framework of realism, complemented by the findings of foreign policy analysis. It starts by stating a lead issue the way a weak polity, with weak institutions and high levels of external dependence, can negotiate on increasing maritime anguish in a geopolitically relevant area. The major issue is how the reactions of the Somali foreign policy towards piracy, illicit fishing, and transnational maritime crime can be viewed in terms of the realist paradigm, which focuses on sovereignty, power, and national interest.

Despite the poor structural conditions that influenced the development of the maritime policy of Somalia, the state still demonstrates the logic of realism in its attempts to establish its sovereignty and guarantee its existence in the anarchic regional system. However, these realist demands are checked against contextually relevant realities, such as disjointed governance, resource constriction, and external demands, which make the foreign-policy behaviour of Somalia more of a response than a strategic behaviour. Through this incorporation of FPA, the research proves that a coherent state strategy is not as dominating in defining the foreign-policy decisions of the Somali as local political rivalries, regional autonomy, and donor relationships.

There is a two-fold trend available through empirical evidence. On the one hand, the global efforts at reducing the pirate attacks have been achieved by international forces like EU NAVFOR Operation Atalanta, the Combined Maritime Forces, and IMO efforts among others to stabilize the shipping routes. The substantial foreign naval and financial aid on the other hand has limited the sovereignty of Somalia in its sea territory and hindered the institutional building. This has been worsened by the disjointed nature of the federal government where redundancy of mandates, poor coordination and mistrust between the federal government and the regional governments are the order of the day and are making uniformity of policies a farfetched dream. The research, notwithstanding all these difficulties, points to the emergence of the first positive indicators such as the approval of maritime laws, the strengthening of local coast-guard resources, and the gradual establishment of the Somali command in the maritime discourse of the region.

The research has a contribution to the policy and theoretical discourse. In theory, it is a combination of realism and FPA, as it shows that military power is not the only tool that weak states use to obtain power and sovereignty; diplomatic participation, reorganisation of institutions, and negotiation with external forces also become crucial. The research establishes that Somali sustainable maritime security cannot be realized by external support alone. It requires a sovereignty-based, purposive process that incorporates national interests and structural coherence and regional diplomacy. Although weak states are commonly understood as those that have little or no strategic agency, the case of Somalia shows that policy leadership can build resilience and establish order in the face of vulnerability and disorder through coherence and alignment in policy action. The research argues that Somalia should consider reconsidering its maritime policy as a broader part of its foreign policy agenda, align donor efforts in the country with the national agenda, and enhance more coordination between the government tiers, to create a consistent approach to maritime governance.

Based on the research, following policy recommendations are made:

1. **Strengthen State Maritime Institutions through Strategic Diplomacy:** The Somali scattered maritime administration remains a structural vulnerability. Rather than only increasing capacity in a generic sense, the Somali state must focus on obtaining foreign investment, technical support, and institutional patronage from like-minded partners (i.e., EU, UAE) through area-specialized diplomatic efforts. The National Maritime Strategy must be updated in consultation with foreign consultants and institutionalized via bilateral MOUs with coastal security partners. This requires Somalia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to lead the negotiations for coast guard development, surveillance technology, and naval training and ground these state-to-state commitments in declarations of Somali sovereignty.
2. **Re-orient International Cooperation for Strategic Leverage:** Current maritime partnerships (e.g., EU NAVFOR, UNODC, IMO) need to be renegotiated to shift from donor-led assistance to interest-based cooperation. Somalia can strategically leverage its geostrategic position in the Gulf of Aden by offering port access, naval logistics support, and diplomatic alignment for security guarantees and blue economy investment. This aligns with realist principles where national interest and mutual benefit define

cooperation. Somalia must institutionalize a Maritime Diplomacy Unit within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to coordinate these efforts.

3. Enhance Legal Alignment and Compliance through International Legal Integration: Somalia should align internal legal regime to the international treaties like UNCLOS, SUA Convention and FAO Port State Measures Agreement as a foreign policy alignment and credibility as a path to finding enforcement allies and not as law harmonization. This must also involve the reform of legislations as part of the image-building and state-building foreign policy agenda of the Somali state. It is also facilitated by access to multilateral amenities like IMO technical assistance and World Bank maritime regulatory finances.
4. Situate Maritime Security within Broader Foreign Policy Strategy: Instead of viewing maritime security as a naval or technical problem, it should be placed within the broader foreign policy context of Somalia-most notably the interactions of regional diplomacy in the Horn of Africa, Indian Ocean trade, and the security cooperation of African Union and IGAD states. Somalia needs to take an initiative to hold a regional sea summit under the auspices of IGAD to discuss the terms of anti-piracy cooperation, port building and sharing of marine resources.
5. Use Maritime Security to Rebuild State Legitimacy and Reputation: A realist foreign policy must be able to employ sea power as a method of restoring international respectability and assert sovereign prerogative. It would cause the Somalia to rebrand itself internationally (e.g. African Union, UN General Assembly) and gain foreign allies on more than humanitarian aid terms.

The study accepts weaknesses, especially the lack of insider views, as it depends on secondary literature and does not have enough primary interview information. Future research must then use field-based qualitative designs and comparative analyses of other post-conflict maritime state systems e.g. Yemen or Mozambique to create more insights into maritime security governance within weak settings. The research concludes that the best course of action that Somalia could take is the realist and pragmatic foreign policy of international cooperation to short term aid; however, a focus on the sovereign institution building of maritime security in long term security.

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Appendices

Interview Questions

1. What is your current position and how does it relate to maritime security?
2. How long have you been working in maritime security or related areas?
3. Can you explain how your profession impacts Somalia's maritime security framework?
4. In what ways does your area of work intersect with maritime security challenges?
5. Which dimensions of maritime security do you prioritize in your duties (e.g., legal reform, piracy control)?
6. What is your overall assessment of Somalia's maritime security environment today?
7. What are the main maritime threats currently challenging Somalia?
8. Are existing security measures effective in handling these threats?
9. What contributions have international entities made to Somalia's maritime safety?
10. How do foreign governments assist Somalia's maritime security enhancement?
11. What specific difficulties have you encountered in improving maritime security?
12. Can you name a few successful projects or frameworks that have strengthened maritime security?