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The “failed states” of Somalia and Afghanistan: threats
and challenges to regional and global security

A parallel case study analysis of the intrastate conflicts with focus on
the security dimension

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1. Introduction

This research paper presents the “failed state” problem in international politics with the special emphasis on threats and challenges to regional and global security posed by these states. The prevention of these threats is considered to be one of the key conditions for maintaining peace, stability and security worldwide.

In the modern world, a rapid tendency towards the spread and aggravation of problems can be observed, which are either caused by or related to these socioeconomic and political changes and processes that take place in “weak” and “failed” states. In the times of globalization and increasing inter-dependencies between all actors of international politics, the intrastate conflicts in these states spread way beyond the nation-state borders and thus create a serious threat to regional and international stability.

This paper will concentrate on the political and socioeconomic processes in the internationally recognized “failed states” of Somalia and Afghanistan and their impact on regional security and security worldwide. Subject to analysis are the ongoing unresolved conflicts in both states and the consequences for regional and international security. The following questions constitute a matter of research interest and should be answered in this paper:

1. How and to what extent does political and socioeconomic development in the failed states of Somalia and Afghanistan create a threat to regional and international security?
2. Are the cases of Somalia and Afghanistan significantly different in terms of security challenges? How can the increased international attention to the Afghan conflict be explained from the security-related perspective?
3. How does the shift of international attention impact international efforts to redress the situation in both cases?

In accordance with the research interests stipulated above, the paper’s main objectives are to:

- 1) identify the major threats and challenges posed to regional and international security by the political and socioeconomic crises in each of these two states;
- 2) identify the common patterns that can be observed in both “failed states” with regard to regional and global security;
- 3) elaborate on the security-related differences, if any, which persist between the two

“failed state” cases; and

- 4) stipulate the possible reasons for the considerable prioritization of the failed state crisis in Afghanistan in terms of international attention in comparison to the case of Somalia.

To support the objectives of this paper and in accordance with the research interests, the following thesis questions are formulated, which underpin the analysis provided in this paper:

- a) Have historical and current political and socioeconomic developments in Somalia and Afghanistan produced imminent threats to regional and international security?
- b) Can the threats posed to regional and international security by the intrastate conflicts in Somalia and Afghanistan be seen as security challenges that are conventionally ascribed to “failed states”? Is there a connection between the emergence of certain challenges - such as terrorism and drug trafficking in Afghanistan, and piracy in Somalia –and political and socioeconomic developments in these states?
- c) Are the implications of political and socioeconomic situation in Somalia and Afghanistan similar for international security? If regarded from the security-centric perspective, what constitutes the major difference?
- d) Can the international approach towards the resolution of the “failed state” crisis be seen as predominantly settled within the framework of humanitarian assistance in the case of Somalia and collaboration in the field of state building in the case of Afghanistan?

Accordingly, the following research question should be answered in the respective chapters of the paper:

- Can the shift of international attention to the conflict in Afghanistan be explained by a change in global perception of threats posed by “failed states” to regional and international security since the events of September 2001 and if so, what implications does this change have on international efforts to redress the situation?

In accordance with the main objectives of this paper and in order to confirm or contradict the above mentioned thesis questions, the following conditions should be met:

- the scientific definitions and explanations for the term “failed states” and equivalent categories should be provided;
- the academic approaches towards the problem of “failed states” should be identified;

- the main features and causes of “failed states”, and the persisting linkages between “failed states” and violent conflict should be identified;
- the different approaches to the concept of a “failed state” and its links to security, and its stand in the academic debate should be elaborated and analyzed with regard to the main objectives of this paper;
- the role and importance of the cases Somalia and Afghanistan within the system of academic approaches towards the “failed states” problem should be identified;
- an in-depth analysis of the historical backgrounds of the conflict and sociopolitical changes and processes in the “failed states” of Somalia and Afghanistan should be conducted;
- an in-depth analysis of the current situation and development in Somalia and Afghanistan should be conducted;
- the essential threats to regional and international security, caused or accelerated by the sociopolitical situation and changes in Somalia and Afghanistan should be identified;
- the specific threats, caused or accelerated by the sociopolitical situation and political changes in Somalia and Afghanistan should be identified (piracy, transnational terrorism, drug trafficking); and
- the common patterns, as well as differences between the two cases should be derived from the analysis of the „failed state“ conflicts in Somalia and Afghanistan to answer the research question of this paper.

The theoretical grounds which underpin this paper can be found in the failed state debate. The idea of the increasing connection between underdeveloped failed states and global insecurity – the concept of securitization of underdevelopment – which became popular throughout the 1990s and was subsequently followed by the broader merging of security and development, hence prioritization of the “failed state” threat after the events of September 2001, can largely explain the rise of international attention to the conflicts such as in Somalia and Afghanistan and the need to identify and deal with the impact of these conflicts on international security. However, the increased international focus on Afghanistan since 2001 also suggests that the political significance of a “failed state” can be shaped by the interests of certain (external) actors which are served by the threat of “failed states”, hence the threat is politically prioritized and reiterated. The advocates of this concept of “negative securitization” in policy circles and among some academics argue that the concept of “failed states” is politicized to such an extent that it

is analytically useless (Newman, 2009: 425).

For the purposes of this paper a parallel country study analysis of the two regional conflicts based on the descriptive as well as analytical approaches is conducted. Analytical assessment tools data, available international resolutions, reports, statements etc. and other relevant materials, including academic literature (e.g. books, publications, expert articles), are used to answer the research question.

2. “Failed states” as a global security threat

2.1. “Failed states”: Defining the term

One of the inherent features of the modern international system is the existence of problems that are global in nature and thus require the joint efforts of the international community to find a solution to them. Over the last decade, Western government agencies and international organizations have increasingly turned their attention to the fragility and failure of state institutions as a major international policy challenge in the fields of security and development assistance.

The concept of a “failed state” is nowadays widely used in diplomatic negotiations on global security, peacekeeping, poverty reduction, humanitarian assistance, etc. It refers to a number of underdeveloped or developing countries facing violence and conflict, political instability, severe poverty and other threats to security and development. These countries include, for example, Somalia, Sudan, Yemen, Liberia, Chad, Afghanistan, and many others. In such countries, it is assumed that enduring political tensions, lack of security, and the inability of government to provide essential services for its citizens will impede self-reliant development and thereby pose a potential threat to regional and global security (Nay, 2013: 327).

The term “failed state” is commonly used to describe the state entities where the ruling institutions have long lost control over the most part of the state territory and its population, often against the background of social, ethnic and religious conflicts. Whilst there is no internationally agreed definition of the term “failed states”, or “fragile states”, most development agencies define it principally as a fundamental failure of the state to perform the functions necessary to meet its citizens’ basic needs and expectations. Fragile, or failed, states are generally referred to as incapable of assuring basic security, maintaining the rule of law and justice, or providing basic services and economic opportunities to their citizens. Accordingly, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) characterizes a fragile state as “*a state with weak capacity to carry out the basic state functions of governing a population and its territory and that lacks the ability or political will to develop mutually constructive and reinforcing relations with society*” (OSCE, 2015).

The term “failed state” describes, therefore, a state marked by the collapse of central government authority to impose order, which results in loss of physical control of territory, and/or the monopoly over the legitimate use of force. Crucially, it can no longer reproduce the conditions for its own existence (Crisis States Research Centre, 2007). In the absence of legitimate political power, the wars between different military

groups are often viewed as a source of economic welfare for the war parties, which arouses serious concern on the part of the international community regarding the possible threats posed to international security, e.g. the increase in international crimes and terrorism.

2.2. The history of the problem: approaches

The concept of a “failed state” was introduced by foreign policy analysts in the early 1990s, in the context of the post-Cold War, when scholars sought to describe the alarming proliferation of civil conflicts, which led, in some countries, to the fragmentation of state institutions, economic recession and deterioration of security conditions. The outbreak of wars in Bosnia and Croatia, the factional conflicts in Somalia, poverty and social alienation in Haiti, Cambodia's failed attempts to put an end to the guerrilla activities of the Khmers Rouge and, in general, the development of unconventional forms of warfare induced many political experts to forge new analytical categories – such as “quasi-state” (Jackson, 1990), “failed state” (Helman/Ratner, 1992) or “collapsed state” (Zartman, 1995) – in order to enhance the new threats to peace and security. Subsequently, the concepts of “failing” and “failed state” have been widely introduced and used by U.S. administrations and American policy analysts in the field of international security, especially after the events of September 11, 2001 (Nay, 2012: 1)

The “failed state” problem appeared on the US foreign policy agenda in the early 1990s and has dominated it throughout the last two decades. Throughout the two presidential terms of Bill Clinton (1993-2000), American scholars and political analysts claimed that the very existence of “failed states” impedes international security, since these states are likely to serve as centers of terrorist activities and “gray markets” for weapon and drug trade. Thus, “failed states” are not only politically unstable, but also spread this instability over borders to the neighboring states (Minaev, 2007: 67).

The concept of “democracy promotion”, an official foreign policy doctrine of the USA since 1993, has been developed to justify the active engagement of Washington in addressing the problem of “failed states”. Consequently, over the last decade of the twentieth century, the US were directly involved in resolving conflicts in many crisis states, such as Somalia (1992-1993), Haiti (1994), Bosnia (1995), Sierra-Leon (1998), Kosovo (1999) and East Timor (1999). Although the conflicts in those states did not pose a direct threat to the US national security and did not necessarily endanger the interests of the country, the Clinton administration considered the US involvement in these states as “social work” (Minaev, 2007: 68).

The concept of the “failed state” was further promoted by both Tony Blair's new Labor

Government in the UK and the administration of George W. Bush. The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 led to the escalation of fears that “weak”, “failing” and “failed” states serve as dislocation points for terrorists and support them otherwise, thus endangering global security. In accordance with the new perception of threats to security, the National Security Strategy (NSS) of the United States as of 2002 stated that the country was now threatened less by the conquering states than by the failing ones.

The events of September 11, 2001 taught us that weak states, like Afghanistan, can pose as great a danger to our national interests as strong states. Poverty does not make poor people into terrorists and murderers. Yet poverty, weak institutions, and corruption can make weak states vulnerable to terrorist networks and drug cartels within their borders. (NSS, 2002: 2)

The European Union followed the pattern by claiming in its 2003 European Security Strategy that state failure constitutes one of the key threats to the European security, as it can be associated with such threats as terrorism and organized crime. Collapse of the state is thus viewed as an alarming phenomenon that undermines global governance and contributes to regional instability (European Security Strategy 2003: 4).

2.3. “Failed states” as an analytical category: features, causes and linkages to conflict

2.3.1. Characteristics of “failed states”

Most American theoretical approaches tend to view the phenomenon of state fragility as a permanent development feature of a particular group of international players. Moreover, the existence of “weak” and “failed” states is seen as an inherent structural characteristic of the modern international system. According to Pauline H. Baker (2007: 86), “weak” states share the following characteristics and signify the crisis of statehood, and are likely, eventually, to lead to the total collapse of the state:

- State fails to exercise control over its territory;
- The state does not possess monopoly on the use of violence;
- The ruling institutions are either unstable or weak. The declining legitimacy of the state institutions affects their ability to make binding decisions for the majority of the community;
- The state is no longer able to provide security and social services to the community;
- Frequently the state can no longer act as a rightful member of the international community.

Fragile and failed states are, therefore, ineffective in terms of their ability to formulate and execute state-defined policies and lack legitimacy in the sense that state authorities are no longer considered legitimate and just by the majority of population.

2.3.2. Root causes of “fragile” and “failed states”

The crisis of statehood is a long-term process which can take different forms and is caused and accelerated by various factors. In some cases, it is the rulers' actions and policy that cause destabilization of the central ruling institutions (e.g. Burma, Nigeria). In Nigeria and in parts of the former Yugoslavia, for example, the legitimacy of the state structures was undermined as a result of the strong contacts maintained by the corrupted elites to the organized crime groups. In other states, the disruption of state legitimacy and power and the forced withdrawal of the state from certain territories can create favorable conditions for illegal trade (e.g. Georgia, Columbia). In a transition period, when a change of political regime takes place, the state security institutions can lose monopoly on the use of violence, and the state enters into the chaos of lawlessness. This situation was faced, for example, by a number of states in Central America in the early 1990s. In this case, the total collapse of state power on the major part of the state territory is also possible (e.g. Lebanon from 1970 to the 1980s) (Crocker, 2003: 36).

The crisis of state sovereignty in the so-called “weak states”, especially in those with limited intrastate legitimacy, is often caused by the loss of external support. The collapse of state sovereignty is commonly observed in the former European colonies, who, in the absence of support from the metropolis, are often unable to establish effective ruling institution on their territory (e.g. Somalia, Sudan, Chad).

Eventually, the crisis of statehood can be fueled by the decision of the major international actors to withdraw support for the local state authorities. Thus, as some authors point out, after Moscow and Washington abandoned the idea of strategic influence in Afghanistan in the early 1990s, the Afghan authorities lost control over the territory of the state, whereas the state itself has been practically turned into a “terrorist shelter” (Crocker, 2003: 39). Indeed, the withdrawal of the Soviet troops in 1989 created a power vacuum and boosted a power struggle between various political and religious groups and factions that undermined the central government and worsened the overall situation in the country.

“Failed states” are also characterized by the prevailing specific conditions in the society, which either contribute to the worsening of the state crisis and loss of statehood or underpin them, thus serving as both a cause and a consequence of the “failed states” problem. One of these conditions is socioeconomic crisis. The economy serves as a material basis for the state. Fragile and failed states often lack coherent national

economies which are capable of sustaining and providing a basic level of welfare to the population and of delivering resources for running an effective state. Defective economies often depend exclusively on the world market, because they are primarily export-oriented.

The majority of “failed states” today are developing countries in Africa, the Middle East and South Eastern Asia. These states are characterized by low economic development, extreme poverty and ineffective health care and social services systems. In the economic sphere, there is always a competition going on between legitimate state institutions and lawful business on the one hand, and criminal groups and businesses on the other. The latter often cooperate closely with local warlords and political groups who are generally closely tied to the national security forces. In weak and failed states, this cooperation often leads to the emergence of a broad “shadow economy” sector and fosters corruption. In the absence of control and regulation mechanisms necessary to address these problems, the illegal production and trafficking of drugs (e.g. Afghanistan) and illegal trade with unconventional weapons of mass destruction, such as biological and chemical weapon (e.g. Afghanistan, Pakistan) are the dangerous outcome.

Political and socioeconomic crises in “failed” and “weak” states are also at least partly fueled and followed by a humanitarian catastrophe. In such states the healthcare system is often underdeveloped; there is lack of hospitals and healthcare centers, medical experts and nurses. In many states in Central Africa the scarcity of drinking water, severe weather conditions and unsanitary conditions of living contribute to the spread of pandemic diseases, such as malaria, lung diseases, diarrhea, etc. (Williamson, 2007: 13).

Jodok Troy (2007) speaks of three major groups of causes of the “failed state” problem, namely the background causes, the accelerators and the so-called “trigger factors”. The background causes are, in large part, the unresolved historical inequities, including colonial rule, corrupted elites, and the role of superpowers. Ethnic conflicts in multicultural societies, demographic pressures, and socioeconomic crises as a consequence of the state becoming part of the global economy and an unequal distribution of resources are also considered as possible background causes of the state failure which is, therefore, historically pre-determined (2007: 40).

More specifically, the loss of external support (e.g. the withdrawal of colonial powers, the fall of the communist superpower) is often a background cause for the collapse of ruling institutions in weak states. These states are either unable to create and maintain effective ruling institutions on their territory in an absence of external support provided by the colonial power (e.g. Somalia, Sudan, Chad) or prove themselves incapable of maintaining control over its territory due to the withdrawn support for the local authorities provided by the Cold War superpowers (e.g. Afghanistan in the early 1990s).

The so-called “accelerators” are factors that fuel the persisting crisis of statehood or contribute to its escalation. Along with the most spread ones, such as non-state corruption, civil wars or terrorist activities on the state's territory, the sharp decrease in the standards of living and increasing ecological pressures (e.g. depletion of water resources, desertification) can be viewed upon as contributing to the state crisis. The accelerators are mostly external to the state and its activities and are therefore often considered not as causes, but mainly as escalation-driving factors (Troy, 2007: 44).

The third group of causes, the so-called “trigger factors” influence or even initiate the collapse of the state directly, while acting as catalysts. Military interventions, massive repressions and violence by the regime, as well as massive refugee flows and the sharp worsening of the humanitarian situation (e.g. famine, etc.), and, in certain cases, even the death of the prominent political figure (e.g. the death of Mohamed Bouzizi in December 2010 in Tunisia) may trigger the state crisis and result in the loss of statehood (Troy, 2007: 51).

The accelerators, as well as the trigger factors, put means like governance and the ability to perform crisis management on the agenda, as their effect is often enhanced by such factors as bad leadership. It is, therefore, not always the state that fails, but also the rulers (warlords, dictators etc.) and ruling political groups (elites, military etc.), who can be held responsible for the collapse of the state (Troy, 2007: 57).

2.3.3. Failed states and violent conflict

According to the global perception, threats emerging from violent intra-state conflicts remain the broadest and the most common category of threat to international security. Such conflicts, wherever they take place, may also pose a risk to neighboring areas and may give rise to instability and other types of threats, such as terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, excessive and destabilizing accumulation and uncontrolled spread of small arms and light weapons (SALW), human rights violations, mass expulsion, deterioration of the socio-economic situation, and illegal migration (OSCE, 2012).

In this regard, violent conflicts in fragile and failed states are a matter of serious concern to the international community, as state fragility can be both a cause and a consequence of violence. The provision of security, which includes the prevention of violence in society, can be viewed upon as one of the central purposes of statehood. The inability of fragile states to maintain monopoly on violence leads to rise in attempts by various political, ethnic, religious etc. groups to continually pursue and challenge this monopoly by using violent means to do so. The resulting escalation of intra-state violence further undermines the legitimacy of the state and subsequently creates a threat

to regional and international security (Brock et al., 2012: 48).

The debate around state fragility and violent conflict focuses on the linkages between the two. A first set of analyses generally concentrates on issues related to identity (e.g. ethnic cleavages, religion, language, culture) as the central cause of violent conflict (Brown, 1997). Brock (Brock et al., 2012: 52) argues that ethnic and other sociocultural divisions become important in generating violence in conflict; it is when political leaders successfully politicize them and rally people around them that they induce people to become violent.

The second focus with regard to the cause of violent conflict are struggles over economic resources. In fragile and failed states the major part of population is poor. When poverty leads to crisis due to increasing scarcity of resources, fragile statehood may be accompanied by violent struggles over economic resources which often aggravate conflict. At the same time, countries with abundant resources are likely to experience more instability and violent conflict because of the intensifying struggles over control of these resources (Berdal/Malone, 2000: 176).

With regard to violence, the consequences of state fragility are widely varying. Central America, Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras experience high levels of domestic violence merging politics and crime (Brock et al., 2012: 48). Even within fragile and failed states the situation can be quite heterogeneous. In Somalia, for example, parts of the country (Somaliland and Puntland) have managed to remain relatively peaceful and even to develop and maintain an autonomous governance capacity while the rest of the country is torn by violence (Brock et al., 2012: 55).

Obviously, not all state fragility cases end up in violence and not all violence can substantially threaten legitimacy of the state. For the purpose of analysis, it is essential to look into the specific historical trajectories of the interaction between violence and state fragility in each particular case to understand the nature of the linkage.

2.4. The “failed state” problem in the academic debate

The concept of a “failed state” and the possibility of making a distinction between the concept of “failed states” as represented in the discourse, and the reality of failed states, have attracted attention of many analysts, and there are three main poles of opinion. Firstly, some scholars tend to uncritically accept the concept as a paradigm change in international politics with fundamental implications for how insecurity should be viewed upon and addressed. According to this approach, some scholars argue that weak and failing states have become the single most important problem for international order (Fukuyama, 2004: 92). Secondly, other scholars are skeptical of the analytical value of the concept and argue that it is problematic to objectively define, identify and analyze

failed states with methodological accuracy. Finally, a further approach in the literature rejects the very idea of a failed state as a politicized, ethnocentric, hegemonic concept with interventionist connotations (Newman, 2009: 421).

Policy and scholarship related to security and international conflict have traditionally upheld a Westphalian orientation, with states remaining the central unit of analysis and referent object of security. Within the Westphalian system, threats are largely conceived in state-centric military terms. Even though the historical accuracy of this system of international politics has been challenged many times, predominant norms of international law, foreign policy, diplomacy and scholarship are still based and continue to uphold the Westphalian model (Krasner, 2003: 19).

However, in the 21st century there is a strong belief in certain scholar circles that security threats can also come from failing and weak states. In this context, many scholars and policy analysts have pointed out the dangers inherent to weak and failed states (Rotberg, 2002; Rice, 2003; Crocker, 2003). According to this argument and given the widely accepted definition of state failure as a state condition characterized by weak governance, poor levels of economic and social performance and high levels of conflict, international security no longer rests solely upon a harmonious relationship amongst viable states, but also upon issues traditionally viewed upon as domestic, including social, economic and political factors, and standards of governance (Newman, 2009: 422).

These apparent discrepancies between the real nature and condition of some states and the *de jure* system of state sovereignty have led to the emergence of the failed state debate. Its milestone is largely formed by Robert Jackson's work on the concept of "negative sovereignty" (Jackson, 1990), a normative framework which upholds the *de jure* legal state sovereignty in the developing states (in contrast to the "positive sovereignty" in Europe which followed the consolidation of these states) (Newman, 2009: 423). Such states often lack the capacity to provide public services and largely the ability to maintain order, but they nevertheless enjoy legal freedom from outside interference. Many new and weak "quasi-states" were incorporated into the international community since the 1960s, even though they were juridical, rather than empirical, entities. Jackson characterized this phenomenon as the "sovereignty game" (Jackson, 1990: 5).

Following Jackson's work, theories of securitization, conflict and instability emerged which focused on the weakness of the state as a key factor with regard to violent conflict. Some scholars have put this into a broad social context and pointed to fundamental changes in the nature of conflict reflected by state failure and social crisis, and a collapse of public government (Snow, 1996; Munkler, 2004; Kaldor, 2006). Also,

the social aspects of security were emphasized. Within the theoretical framework of the Copenhagen School of security studies, a post-structural theory of “securitization” was developed by Barry Buzan, Ole Waever and Jaap de Wilde, which viewed security and security threats as a product of discourse (Buzan et al., 1998).

Other analysts have increasingly questioned the concept of “negative sovereignty”, as the consequences of state weakness and civil war posed numerous security challenges on both regional and global scale and some of them (e.g. humanitarian consequences) have increasingly alarmed the international community. Throughout the 1990s the weak and failed states idea was linked to international insecurity and the concept of non-traditional security threats. Failed states became the central problem of political discussion. Initially understood as Somalia-style disintegration, the meaning of the phenomenon transformed after the events of September 2001, resulting in the perception of failed states as an existential threat. In policy circles and among certain scholars, the concept justified emergency policies and even the external breach of sovereignty (intervention). Such prioritization of failed states on the policy level has led to a broader merging of security and development and the “securitization” of underdevelopment (Newman, 2009: 424).

There are, therefore, three different types of opinion on the failed state problematic. Firstly, certain analysts clearly accept the concept of “failed states” as a useful and plausible category for analysis and argue that the dangers coming from these states form an intrinsic part of modern security and insecurity agenda, that is, underdevelopment is “securitized” (Rotberg, 2002; Fukuyama, 2004; Crocker, 2003; Krasner/Pascual, 2005). These authors tend to believe that fundamentally new methods are necessary to address the problem, that is, to respond to humanitarian crises and, more importantly, to respond to the security threats inherent in these situations. The view suggests a paradigm change for international security and demands new principles and methods in response.

The second group of analysts, however, put in question the analytical liability of the concept of “failed states” due to the lack of objective definition and indicators or consensus on the implications for security. Also, gathering of reliable data remains a problem. As a result, “failed states” cannot be viewed as a solid base to formulate policies or undertake serious analysis (Patrick, 2006; Newman, 2007; Ikpe, 2007). The advocates of this approach thus argue that the threat of failed states is often exaggerated or misunderstood, and policies aimed at addressing the problem are ineffective.

Finally, some authors are highly critical of the concept of “failed states” and consider it as part of a hegemonic and ethnocentric political agenda with the goal to de-legitimize states that fail to conform to the world vision of dominant states, such as the United States. This approach suggests, therefore, that the failed states idea is an attempt to

reform developing countries or even “demonize” some of them to legitimize control and intervention (Adibe, 1994; Morton, 2005; Boos and Jennings, 2005). Accordingly, the concept of “failed states” is politicized to such an extent that the whole category appears analytically useless and serves instead as a political construction aimed at promoting interventionist hegemonic interests and specific political agendas. The concept of “failed states” thus represents the worst example of negative “securitization” (Newman, 2009: 425).

2.5. Somalia and Afghanistan as “failed states”: the empirical approach

The growing importance of the state fragility problem on the international agenda encouraged the development of means and instruments to measure and to provide assessment for the phenomenon of “state fragility”. These instruments aim at accomplishing the following goals:

- identifying the cases of fragile and failed states;
- following the trends and analyzing them (early prevention etc.);
- formulating case-specific strategies.

The various instruments (indexes etc.) are also used to evaluate different functions performed by the state. The assessed countries should reach a certain score to qualify as stable ones. If they fail to reach it, certain categories, such as “weak” or “failed” states, might be applied. Among the most broadly used instruments of measuring state fragility are the Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA), the Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI), the Index of State Weakness in the Developing World (Brookings Institution), the Country Indicators for Foreign Policy (CIFP), Fragility Index (University of Carlton), and the Failed States Index (FSI) of the Fund for Peace and Foreign Policy (Indices of Fragility, Peace and Security Studies, UMEA University, 2010).

2.5.1. The Failed States Index of the Fund for Peace and Foreign Policy

One of the most used and effective ways of measurement is provided by the Failed States Index (FSI) of the Fund for Peace and Foreign Policy. The Index relies on three groups of indicators: social, economic and political. Each of these groups can be seen as representing the major features of failed and fragile states. Thus, social indicators measure aspects of nationhood; economic indicators measure the status of economy; and political indicators measure the major dimensions of government.

Further on, twelve different indicators are employed to estimate the three aspects of state fragility, each rated on a 1 to 10 scale with 1 (low) being the most stable and 10

(high) being the most unstable and in danger of collapse (Brock et al., 2012: 22).

I-Social indicators	I-Economic indicators	I-Political indicators
<p>I-1. Mounting demographic pressures</p> <p>I-2. Massive movement of refugees or internally displaced persons creating complex humanitarian emergencies</p> <p>I-3. Legacy of vengeance-seeking group grievance or group paranoia</p> <p>I-4. Chronic and sustained human flight</p>	<p>I-5. Uneven economic development along group lines</p> <p>I-6. Sharp and/or severe economic decline</p>	<p>I-7. Criminalization and/or legitimization of the state</p> <p>I-8. Progressive deterioration of public services</p> <p>I-9. Suspension or arbitrary application of the rule of law and widespread violation of human rights</p> <p>I-10. Security apparatus operates as a “state within a state”</p> <p>I-11. Rise of factionalized elites</p> <p>I-12. Intervention of other states or external political actors</p>

Source: Fund for Peace, <http://ffp.statesindex.org/indicators> (accessed on 25 April 2014)

For example, the ability of Finland which ranks 178 out of 178 countries or Sweden (ranks 177 out of 178) to provide public services to a very high degree, produces a score of 1.9 and 1.5 respectively on the indicator “progressive deterioration of public services”. Meanwhile, Somalia's inability to provide public services amounts to a score of 9.8. As a final step, aggregated data are normalized and scaled from 0 to 10 in order to obtain final scores for the twelve indicators covering 178 countries (Failed States Index, 2013).

2.5.2. The Failed States Index: Somalia

Somalia and Afghanistan, which are subject to analysis of this paper, belong to the 10 top “failed states”, according to the Failed States Index released in 2013. The most

recent assessment shows that Somalia has, for the sixth time in succession, taken top spot on the list of 178 assessed countries (Failed States Index, 2013).

	2010	2011	2012	2013
Score (max. 120) (rank)	114.3 (1)	113.4 (1)	114.9 (1)	113.9 (1)

Source: Fund for Peace, <http://library.fundforpeace.org/fsi13-troubled10> (accessed on 27 April 2014)

Somalia has been regarded as a worst scenario of a “failed state” since the inception of the Failed States Index (FSI). Struggling with the political elites, warlords and terrorist groups in much of the North, widespread poverty and mired by high levels of insecurity and instability of the political system, and a deteriorating sovereignty, as well as marked by the increased pirate activity in its waters, Somalia has performed poorly in almost every indicator measured by FSI in 2013.

Year	I-1	I-2	I-3	I-4	I-5	I-6	I-7	I-8	I-9	I-10	I-11	I-12	Total
2013	9.5	10.0	9.3	8.9	8.4	9.4	9.5	9.8	10.0	9.7	10.0	9.4	113.9

Source: Fund for Peace, <http://ffp.statesindex.org/somalia> (accessed on 28 April 2014)

The most recent analysis conducted by the FSI has, however, signified some positive changes in Somalia's performance throughout 2012. After the deterioration of 2011, the country rebounded slightly on the FSI for several reasons. Firstly, in September 2012, the radical islamist group al Shabaab was forced to withdraw from its main strongholds, most notably Kismayo, after an attempt undertaken by the African Union troops to dislodge the group. Despite this victory, there continued to be large numbers of suicide attacks in Mogadishu carried out by members of the group. Secondly, the famine that claimed an estimated 260,000 lives in 2011 finally ended, although over 2 million people still remained food insecure. Thirdly, the number of pirate attacks, an international challenge for the past five years, finally decreased from 233 reported attacks in 2011 to 70 in 2012, largely due to innovative regional and international efforts. Finally, following a UN-brokered peace process, in August 2012 the first formal parliament in 20 years was sworn in and the presidential elections followed, with Hassan Sheikh Mohamud declared the winner (Failed States Index: Somalia, 2013).

Despite some notable improvements, Somalia is still considered one of the most

dangerous places on the planet and one of the least stable “failed states”. However, the changes seen in 2012 have engendered certain optimism that the country may find itself out of the top spot in the coming years (Failed States Index: Somalia, 2013).

2.5.3. The Failed States Index: Afghanistan

Along with Somalia, Afghanistan also represents one of the least stable countries in the world, ranking among the top 10 “failed states”, according to the FSI assessments conducted in the past several years.

	2010	2011	2012	2013
Score (rank)	109.3 (6)	107.5 (7)	106 (6)	106.7 (7)

Source: Fund for Peace, <http://library.fundforpeace.org/fsi13-troubled10> (accessed on 27 April 2014)

Although the United States and its NATO allies have begun the withdrawal of troops from the country, the process was hampered in 2012 by high rates of violence, with members of the Afghan military and police attacking their international partners. This led to an initial halt in joint patrols and then increased vetting for new recruits and re-vetting of current recruits in an attempt to enhance security. Overall, these incidents also cast a pall over operations due to a lack of trust which persisted despite years of effort and resources. The process of troops' withdrawal was also hindered by the large-scale violent protests that took place across the country following reports of NATO troops burning copies of the Koran and other religious items. In March 2012, an American soldier entered a village in Kandahar province and killed 16 sleeping Afghan civilians, including women and children, triggering further backlashes against the occupation. Assassinations of local Afghan political figures and religious leaders by the Taliban and other groups continued to undermine efforts at an inclusive peace process, most notably with the assassination of Arsala Rahmani of the High Peace Council, a former Taliban Minister and key figure in negotiations with the rebel factions (Failed States Index: Afghanistan, 2013).

According to the analysis of political and socioeconomic situation in the country conducted in the recent period, Afghanistan demonstrates a rather poor performance in almost every indicator.

Year	I-1	I-2	I-3	I-4	I-5	I-6	I-7	I-8	I-9	I-10	I-11	I-12	Total

2013	9.3	9.2	9.2	7.2	7.8	8.2	9.4	8.8	8.4	9.9	9.4	10.0	106.7
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Source: Fund for Peace, <http://ffp.statesindex.org/afghanistan> (accessed on 28 April 2014)

2.6. The role of Somalia and Afghanistan in the context of the “failed states” problem

As argued earlier, violence-prone failed state conflicts generate threats to both regional and international security due to the inability of the state to exercise control over its territory, maintain its monopoly on the use of force and provide security to its population. Somalia and Afghanistan belong to the least stable countries in the world and are seen by the international community and international policy assessment institutions as classical “failed states”, each case viewed upon as a source of security threats leading to regional and international instability.

Thus, Somalia has gained attention in recent years due to increased piracy activities near its coastlines; however, a potentially more dangerous threat roots in the country's southern regions where the militant Islamist group al Shabaab could provide a haven for international terrorists capable of launching attacks aimed at the states of the neighboring region and even those in the West (Bass/Zimmermann, 2013: 2). More than a decade after the events of September 2011 and the start of the conflict on its territory, the security and political situation in Afghanistan also remains unstable and the Afghan central government's lack of legitimacy, pervasive corruption, illegal narcotics trafficking, long-standing and well-documented inter-ethnic tensions, a disputed third-party-imposed border (the Durand Line) and the persistent threat of violence posed by the Islamist insurgents, continue to represent the principal challenges to the security within the state as well as beyond its borders (Vázquez del Pino, 2011: 189).

The critical political and socioeconomic situation in Somalia and Afghanistan, along with a highly unstable and insecure political system and deteriorating sovereignty, raise concerns among the international community with regard to the possible implications for international peace and security. To identify and assess these implications, a thorough analysis of both political and socioeconomic context in the two “failed states” is needed.

3. The “failed state” of Somalia: challenges to regional and international security

3.1. Sociopolitical processes and context in Somalia

Somalia is often described as the example par excellence of a “failed state”. The socioeconomic and political developments taking place in this country ever since its collapse in 1991 and the overthrow of the communist leader Siad Barre do not only have a direct impact on the situation in the Horn of Africa region, but have subsequently claimed a global character. Political crisis, the de facto absence of central government and state means to provide and maintain national security, along with the extreme poverty of the population in times of humanitarian and food crisis have provided for the strengthening of the radical religious groups in the country and resulted in the emergence and thrive of the unique phenomenon of piracy in its waters.

The problem of piracy is central to the analysis of the Somali case and represents a serious challenge with regard to the commitment of the international community to maintaining peace and security in the region. The root causes of this dangerous phenomenon lie in the sociopolitical situation in Somalia.

3.1.1. History of the problem

The Republic of Somalia was created in 1960 as a result of the merge of two former colonies, the British Somalia (today Somaliland) and the Italian Somalia. During the “cold war” between the Soviet Union and the United States, the state was part of the communist block and under the political rule of Siad Barre was actively engaged in building communism. In 1977-1978 Somalia which at the time pursued the goal of creating “the Great Somalia” initiated the Ogaden war with Ethiopia and was defeated. The postwar political and socioeconomic crisis led to a civil war which brought about the dissolution of the Democratic Republic of Somalia in 1991 (Bogaturov, 2003: 47).

The early 1990s can be seen as the period of political anarchy in Somalia. The de-facto absence of any legitimate political authority brought about the political fragmentation of the country and the creation of several small state-like entities controlled or governed by different political groups. Thus, the self-proclaimed state of Somaliland emerged in North-West in 1991, with the local government proclaiming its full independence from Mogadishu. In North-East the autonomous republic of Puntland was created. The most problematic regions in the southern and central parts of Somalia since 1990s have been exposed to clashes between various clan and religious groups.

The situation in the country urged the international community to take measures to

resolve the crisis. In January 1992 the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted the UN SC Resolution 733 (1992) which imposed a general and complete arms embargo against Somalia (UN SC Resolution 733/1992). On 24 April 1992, the UN Security Council adopted the Resolution 751 (1992) that established the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM). A unit of fifty United Nations observers was deployed to monitor the cease-fire in Mogadishu (UN SC Resolution 751/1992).

Subsequently, on 3 December 1992 the UN Security Council adopted the Resolution 794 (1992), where it welcomed offers made by Member states, particularly by the United States of America, to create a "secure environment" in order to provide humanitarian assistance to the civilian population, and endorsed a recommendation made by the Secretary-General that all necessary action should be taken under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter to reach this objective (UN SC Resolution 794/1992).

The United States President George Bush reacted to the adoption of the UN Resolution 794 (1992) on 4 December 1992 by authorizing a military operation in Somalia. On 9 December 1992 the first operational troops of the Unified Task Force (UNITAF), made up of contingents from 24 countries led by the United States, were deployed on the coast near Mogadishu. The mandate of the operation under the name of "Restore Hope" included the implementation of a four-step program of action aimed to secure the main airports and sea harbors, as well as the key infrastructure objects and food distribution points, and provide secure conditions for the delivery of the first need humanitarian aid. The Unified Task Force soon secured all major relief centers, and by year's end humanitarian aid was again flowing. UNOSOM remained responsible for protecting the delivery of assistance and for political efforts to end the war (UN Peacekeeping Missions, Somalia: UNOSOM II, Background).

To put an end to the civil war, the United Nations launched the process of national reconciliation. At a meeting convened by the Secretary-General, 14 Somali political movements agreed on a ceasefire and pledged to hand over all weapons to UNITAF and UNOSOM. In March 1993, the United Nations organized an aid conference at which donors pledged over \$130 million. At a reconciliation conference organized by the Secretary-General and his Special Representative for Somalia on 4-15 January 1993, the leaders of 15 political movements endorsed an accord on disarmament, reconstruction and the formation of a transitional Government (UN Peacekeeping Missions, Somalia: UNOSOM II, Background).

The UN/US-supervised military engagement in Somalia in 1992-1995 is perceived as a highly controversial issue in the academic literature and is often claimed unsuccessful, while still affecting the debate over humanitarian intervention (Crocker, 1995; Clarke/Herbst, 1996). One of the major arguments is that the initially intended limited

humanitarian intervention initiated by President George Bush to provide conditions for an unrestrained flow of aid to the war-torn country began to fail when the second United Nations operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) took over in May 1993, and the mission was expanded to include the component of "nation building", which turned out to be exceedingly ambitious and was gradually opposed by the local clans, warlords and political movements (Clarke/Herbst, 1996: 72)

However, the reasons for the general failure of the US/UN-led operation in Somalia might be more complicated than simply the overstretched capacities of a humanitarian/peacekeeping mission. Some authors argue that the unsuccessful Somali operation was not so much a failure of either humanitarian intervention or international peacekeeping, but rather a failure to apply them in a consistent and continuous manner, with regard to the complexity of the Somali political landscape. In this sense, the failure can be seen as a result of a strategic confusion, particularly on the part of the United States. This can be attributed to several factors, such as the realization of the need for a more open-ended time frame, additional resources required to disarm the Somali factions, and also the possible negative fallout on the home front. These considerations prompted the U.S. administrations under George Bush and Bill Clinton to strongly oppose any further intervention in Somalia and caused the withdrawal of the leading state from the country. As a result, the UN received a more comprehensive mandate than the one which was given to the briefly deployed UNITAF in April 1993, but inadequate means were provided for carrying it out in the absence of its leading member (Crocker, 1995: 4).

3.1.2. The factor of radical Islamism

The foreign military intervention largely caused and contributed to the rise of activities of radical Islamist forces in the country. Supported by the Al-Qaida terrorist network, whose military wing coordinated the activities of the local Somali clans in their struggle against "foreign intruders", an attack against the US sea forces was launched in October 1993. The increase in armed clashes between the US-led UN troops and the Somali clan groups urged the US administration to withdraw its troops from Somalia in March 1994. The civil war resumed. By March 1995, the UN peacekeeping troops left Somalia. In December 1996, parts of the Ethiopian army ceased a number of Somali towns and villages on the South-Eastern border controlled by the radical Islamist organization Al-Itihad Al-Islamiyya. An attempt of assassination of the Minister of Transport of Ethiopia which was launched by the members of this radical group fighting to unite the Ethiopian province Ogaden with Somalia was followed by the Ethiopian intervention to the country.

On 3 January 1997, the meeting of the heads of 26 Somali political factions took place in Soderia in Ethiopia. As a result, it was decided to establish the Somali National Salvation Council (SNSC) and also organize a conference on national salvation in Bosaso in North-East of Somalia with the aim to elect the transitional government (UN SC Press Release on 27 February 1997, SC/6327). However, due to the renewed escalation of violence in 1998 the conference never took place.

In September 1999 the president of Djibouti Ismail Omar Guelleh proposed to organize a National Peace Conference. This proposal was approved by the Permanent Committee on Somalia of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and supported by a number of influential Somali entrepreneurs. Following the extensive consultations between the Djibouti government and the Somali clans' representatives, the Somali National Peace Conference on national reconciliation took place on 2 May 2000 in Arta, 40 kilometers to the North from the capital of Djibouti. Political and religious leaders, entrepreneurs and representatives of civil society took part in this conference. After deliberating in committee and plenary sessions for a month, the delegates approved the Transitional National Charter for governance for a transition period of three years, culminating in the election of a 225-person Transitional National Assembly. In early August, in accordance with the provisions of the Charter and on the basis of nominations from clans, delegates selected the 225 members of the Assembly (Report of the UN Secretary General on the situation in Somalia on 19 December 2000, S/2000/1211).

In 2002 at the session of the Somali Parliament in Djibouti, Abduhl Kassim Salat Hasan was elected president of the country. However, several regional clans refused to swear their allegiance to him. With support of Ethiopia an alternative government under Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed was built in 2004. The number of clashes between numerous local military groups increased dramatically.

The new upsurge of violence occurred in 2006. An attempt to restore peace in Somalia launched by the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), a political group which was established in February 2006 on the basis of the radical Islamist organization "al-Itihaad al-Islamiyya" (AIAI, or "The Islamic Union"), was resisted by the pro-American Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism (ARPCT). Following the invitation from the local government, Ethiopia deployed its troops in Somalia in December 2006 to fight against the radical Islamists, who were already exercising control over the major part of the country's territory. The Ethiopian military troops stayed in Somalia even after the radical forces were defeated in order to maintain national and regional security, which resulted into the rise of the rebel movement (International Crisis Group, Africa Briefing №45, 26 January 2007).

The Ethiopian intervention allowed for the temporary suspension of the offensive by the radical Islamists, hence Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed became president. But the new administration still did not control the vast territory of Somalia. Major parts of the country in the South and the central parts, including Mogadishu, remained under control of the Islamists. In September 2006 an assassination attempt was launched against Yusuf Ahmed. For the first time in Somali modern history, the attack was performed by suicide bombers. The government blamed Al-Qaida for attempting the assassination.

In March 2007, the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) deployed its troops in Somalia. AMISOM was the first peacekeeping mission to be deployed in Somalia after the UN humanitarian operation close in 1995. According to the UN Security Council Resolution as of 20 February 2007, AMISOM was authorized to provide assistance and consolidate stability, peace and reconciliation in the country (UN SC Resolution 1744/2007).

AMISOM was authorized to undertake all necessary measures to carry out the following mandate (UN SC Resolution 1744/2007):

- To support dialogue and reconciliation in Somalia by assisting with the free movement, safe passage and protection of all parties involved with the process;
- To provide protection to the Transitional Federal Institutions to help them carry out their functions of government, and security for key infrastructure;
- To assist, within its capabilities, and in coordination with other parties, with implementation of the National Security and Stabilization Plan, in particular the effective re-establishment and training of all-inclusive Somali security forces;
- To contribute, as may be requested and within capabilities, to the creation of the necessary security conditions for the provision of humanitarian assistance;

On 19 August 2008 a peace and reconciliation agreement was signed in Djibouti between the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) under Yusuf Ahmed and the Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia (ARS), which was created in 2007 by the less-militant members of the Union of Islamic Courts. The Djibouti agreement was the first step towards the accomplishment of the Djibouti Reconciliation Process. It was seen by the international community as “the basis for lasting peace, security and stability for the people of Somalia, including the ultimate withdrawal of foreign forces” (Statement by the President of the Security Council on 4 September 2008, S/PRST/2008/33).

On 13 January 2009 the Ethiopian troops left their dislocation positions in the North of

Mogadishu. Within the next two days Ethiopia withdrew all its troops from the Somali capital (Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia on 9 March 2009, S/2009/132). On 26 January, the Transitional Federal Parliament voted in favor of an expansion by 275 seats, with 200 seats allocated to ARS and the remaining 75 reserved for members of civil society, businessmen, women, the diaspora and other opposition groups. On 31 January 2009 Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, the chairman of ARS and the leader of the central wing of the UIC, was sworn in as a new president of the country (Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia on 9 March 2009, S/2009/132). By January 2009, all Ethiopian troops were withdrawn from the country.

3.1.3. The situation from 2010 to present and the current status of the conflict

Following the withdrawal of the Ethiopian troops from Somalia in January 2009, the number of clashes and fights between the governmental troops and the radical Islamist groups who opposed the Djibouti Reconciliation Process increased in the South and the central parts of the country. The insurgent group al-Shabaab with allegedly strong bounds to Al Qaeda organized a number of attacks at the AMISOM peacekeeping forces deployed in Somalia after the withdrawal of the Ethiopian troops. In February 2009 attacks were also launched against the governmental forces by the radical Islamist movement Hissb al-Islamiyya, whose members rejected the central government's proposal of ceasefire.

On 10 March 2009, the central-wing government under the Prime Minister Ali Sharmake concessionally introduced the Islamic law on the whole territory of the country, thus de-facto meeting one of the main conditions of the radical Islamists. Regardless of this concession, the attacks of the radical Islamists at the pro-governmental and peacekeeping forces continued. On 20 March 2009 the head of the Foreign Office in Somalia called upon the UN Security Council to uplift the embargo on the weapon deliveries to the country, which was introduced in 1992. The call was justified by the importance of providing the governmental troops with modern weapons in order to transform them into a real force capable of fighting back the radical Islamists (UN Security Council Report, April 2009 Monthly Forecast, Somalia).

The intensified fighting between the radical Islamists, various war groups, and the governmental troops caused an increase in the number of civilian casualties and the Somali refugee flows to the neighboring countries of the region. On 28 July 2009 the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR) warned about the sharp increase in the number of Somalis trying to leave the country per sea through the Gulf of Aden. According to the UNHCR, during the first six months of 2009 around 30,000 Somalis reached Yemen's shores (UNHCR Briefing Notes, 28 July 2009).

Following the UN Security Council's decision to renew the authorization of AMISOM for another 12 months until 31 January 2011 (UN SC Resolution 1910/2010), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) announced its decision to deploy the additional 2,000 troops to AMISOM and called on the Commission of the African Union (AU) “to mobilize the necessary resources, logistics and equipment for the deployment” (IGAD Communique, 5 July 2010). Less than a week later, on 11 July 2010, more than eighty people were killed in two separate, almost simultaneous bomb attacks in the Ugandan capital Kampala which targeted the locations where crowds had gathered to watch the televised football world cup final. The Islamist rebel group Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the bombings and said they had been carried out in retaliation for Uganda’s participation in AMISOM. The group also threatened similar attacks against AMISOM’s other main troop contributor, Burundi (UN Security Council Report, September 2010 Monthly Forecast, Somalia). The violence spread beyond the Somali borders and threatened stability in the region.

In the wake of political violence, the humanitarian situation in the country deteriorated dramatically. On 20 July 2011, in the wake of 11 months of escalating warnings, the United Nations declared famine in two regions of South Central Somalia (UN News Center, 20 July 2011). Further declarations followed in four more areas over the course of the next two months. Measles, cholera and other epidemic diseases, which often accompany situations of greatly deteriorated nutritional status of the population, were also reported from nearly all affected regions. As a result of this humanitarian crisis, during 2011 a large number of people were internally displaced within Somalia, while hundreds of thousands more fled across the border into Kenya and Ethiopia to already overcrowded refugee camp complexes in Dadaab (Kenya) and Dollo Ado (Ethiopia) (UNFPA, Horn of Africa Fact Sheet, updated on 1 September 2011). The consequences of the Somali humanitarian crisis thus reached and affected the neighboring states.

On 3 February, the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit and the Famine Early Warning Systems Network announced that the combination of the massive increase in humanitarian assistance and an exceptional harvest in December and January had lifted Somalia out of famine. It was estimated that the crisis had caused the lives of 258,000 people (UNICEF Report, 1 May 2013). As of May 2012, 2.51 million Somalis, over one third of the population, still needed life-saving assistance (Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia on 1 May 2012, S/2012/283).

In this regard, one of the key challenges for the international community remained the access of humanitarian assistance to the southern regions, home to nearly 72 per cent of the Somalis in crisis and the areas under control of Al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab maintains restrictions on humanitarian assistance and prohibits more than 16 humanitarian

organizations, including the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) and Action Contre la Faim (ACF), from working in areas under its control. On October 8, 2012, al-Shabaab banned one of the last remaining international aid organizations, Islamic Relief, from working in the areas under its control (Human Rights Watch, World Report 2013).

Even though the media focused on drought as the main cause of the 2011 Somali famine, some authors argue that the drastic escalation of the humanitarian situation in the country in 2011 was caused by multiple factors, including violent conflict, the use of anti-terrorism legislation by the US government to prevent aid reaching Southern Somalia, an increase in global food prices, and other long-standing, structural factors (Seal/Bailey, 2013: 1).

In the last quarter of 2012, the security situation in Mogadishu improved somewhat, with less open armed conflict to be observed in the capital. The mandate of the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia ended on August 20 with the inauguration of a new administration under a new president, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, prime minister, and speaker of parliament. Despite some improvements in Mogadishu, Al-Shabaab continued to launch asymmetrical attacks that often resulted in civilian casualties. Targeted killings of journalists, members of international aid convoys and foreign delegations increased significantly in 2013, infighting between government forces and militias also continued. Thus, on 14 April more than 30 people died in a complex attack launched by Al-Shabaab on a regional court house. On the same day, a vehicle hit a Turkish aid agency convoy. On 25 April, a Deputy State Attorney was murdered in Mogadishu, while on 5 May a suicide vehicle that targeted a Qatari delegation traveling in a ministerial convoy killed over 10 people. Armed attacks against the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the Somali National Army, who continue to fight against al-Shabaab in the Southern and Central parts of Somalia, took place almost on a weekly basis in the course of 2013 (Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia on 31 May 2013, S/2013/326).

The humanitarian situation, even though still hampered by insecurity and continuous fighting, improved slightly in 2013. Nevertheless, some 14,000 people were reported to be internally displaced in the first quarter of 2013, including 2,500 civilians who fled towards the Somalia-Ethiopia border. Within the same period, some 10,000 Somalis crossed the border into Ethiopia according to the UNHCR Office (Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia on 3 March 2014, S/2014/140).

Overall, according to the latest assessment by UNHCR of the refugee situation in the Horn of Africa as of 9 April 2014, there were over 956,000 Somali refugees in the region, hosted mainly in Kenya (more than 430,000), Yemen (over 230,000), Ethiopia (243,000), Eritrea (3,000), Egypt (8,000), Djibouti (19,000), Tanzania (2,000) and

Uganda (18,000). Over 5,200 Somalis have sought refuge in the neighboring countries since the start of 2014 (UNHCR Somalia Fact Sheet, April 2014).

3.2. Current developments in the context of security maintenance

3.2.1. Regional dimension of the problem

The sociopolitical developments in Somalia to a certain extent impact on all states in the Horn of Africa and contribute to the destabilization of the region. Directly involved in the conflict on the territory of Somalia are Ethiopia and AMISOM peacekeeping troops; hundreds of thousands Somali refugees have left their war-torn country and settled in Kenya, Yemen, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Uganda; finally, Eritrea is allegedly providing support to the anti-governmental forces by delivering weapons to the radical Islamists (Statement by the President of the UN Security Council, S/PRST/2009/15*).

Despite the withdrawal of the national troops from Somalia in the early 2009 as part of the Djibouti Reconciliation Process, Ethiopia is still actively involved in the internal Somali conflict. Since 2009, the country has been actively assisting AMISOM with its coordinated multinational operations against Al-Shabaab in Southern Somalia. On 22 January 2014, the Ethiopian troops officially joined the African Union peacekeeping mission in Somalia, as earlier approved by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2124 which authorized an additional force of over 4000 troops to bring the number of AMISOM peacekeepers to the over 22,126 strong force (AMISOM Press Release, January 2014).

The resumed military engagement of Ethiopia in Somalia and the continuous statements of the Ethiopian government in support of the Transitional Federal Government in its fight against the radical Islamists can be attributed to several factors. Ethiopia which controls the Ogaden province is not necessarily interested in the provision of stability in Somalia, the country which might challenge the affiliation of this territory. Moreover, the united Somali state can create a threat to Ethiopia by supporting the “Oromo Liberation Front”, one of the most influential political groups opposing the incumbent Ethiopian government. Oromo is one of the ethnic groups settled in Somalia that constitutes the major part of the population of modern Ethiopia.

The conflict in Somalia raises concern of almost all states in the Horn of Africa, including those of the neighboring regions. Many of these countries are militarily engaged in the Somali conflict. Thus, the military component of AMISOM, which is mandated to conduct Peace Support Operations in Somalia to stabilize the situation in the country, is currently comprised of troops drawn from Uganda, Burundi, Djibouti, Sierra Leone, Kenya and, most recently, Ethiopia. The Intergovernmental Authority on

Development (IGAD) is also one of the regional mediators and principal supporters of the Federal Government of Somalia. In September 2006, the AU Peace and Security Council approved an IGAD proposal to deploy an IGAD Peace Support Mission in Somalia (IGASOM), which was replaced by AMISOM as approved on 21 February 2007 by the United Nations Security Council (UN SC Resolution 1744/2007).

The role of Eritrea in the Somali intrastate conflict poses a serious challenge on both regional and international scale. The engagement of Eritrea in the Somali conflict was significantly enhanced in mid-2006, following the rise to power of the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) in southern Somalia, and continued to grow stronger through the Asmara-based Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia (ARS) and Al-Shabaab, following the Ethiopian military intervention in Somalia in late December 2006. On 15 May 2009, the United Nations Security Council expressed its concern over reports that Eritrea supplied arms to those opposing the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia in breach of the UN arms embargo which was imposed in 1992 on all deliveries of weapons and military equipment to Somalia (Statement by the President of the UN Security Council, S/PRST/2009/15*). Consequently, on December 23, 2009, the UN Security Council, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, adopted the Resolution 1907 determining that Eritrea's actions undermine peace and reconciliation in Somalia and thus constitute a threat to international peace and security (UN SC Resolution 1907/2009).

While the Eritrean Government acknowledges that it maintains contact to Somali armed opposition groups, including Al-Shabaab, it denies the provision of any military, material or financial support and claims that its links are of political and humanitarian nature. However, the 2011 report submitted by the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to the Security Council resolution 1916 (2010) during the course of the mandate not only confirmed many previous allegations of Eritrean military involvement, but also offered firm grounds to believe that Eritrea still retains active linkages to Somali armed groups, mainly by providing financial support weapon deliveries to members of Al-Shabaab. Moreover, Eritrean involvement in Somalia reflects a broader pattern of intelligence and special operations activity, including training, financial and logistical support to armed opposition groups in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Sudan and possibly Uganda in violation of the Security Council's embargoes (Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea on 18 July 2011, S/2011/433).

Following the report of the Monitoring Group, the Security Council reinforced the existing sanctions regime on Eritrea as established under resolution 1907 (2009) for Eritrea's role in undermining peace, security and stability in Somalia (UN SC Resolution 2023/2011). During the reporting period of mid-2011-mid-2012, a broad

range of actors, including the regional states, the Somalia and Eritrea Monitoring Group, the members of the Security Council and non-governmental organizations, alleged that Eritrea continued to violate the provisions contained in the Security Council resolutions (Report of the Secretary-General on Eritrea on 29 August 2012, S/2012/412).

The Eritrean engagement in the Somali conflict during the recent period has not only contributed to the worsening of the political crisis in the country, but has also sharpened the humanitarian situation in the region. According to the most recent assessment provided by UNHCR, the total number of Somali refugees in the Horn of Africa region as of January 2014 amounted to 991,591 (UNHCR Somalia Fact Sheet, January 2014). Throughout 2013, over 26,220 Somalis sought refuge in the neighboring countries, especially in Kenya and Ethiopia, where the biggest refugee camps in Africa are located (UNHCR Somalia Fact Sheet, February 2014).

The humanitarian situation in Kenya is particularly problematic. As of January 2014, the country hosted 439,639 Somali refugees, most of them from South-Central Somalia, who fled civil war, violence and famine between 1992 and 2013 and now stay mainly in the refugee camps Dadaab and Kakuma (UNHCR Somalia Fact Sheet, January 2014). The humanitarian situation in the Dabaab refugee camp in Kenya, which is considered to be one of the biggest in the world, is particularly alarming. The challenges which the Dabaab camp is currently facing, including those of water and food insecurity, poor unsanitary conditions of living and the increase in contagious diseases, present a matter of utmost concern to the international and non-governmental organizations.

No less worrying is the humanitarian situation in other regional states, where hundreds of thousands Somalis fled to seek political refuge, such as Ethiopia, Djibouti, Yemen, Tanzania, Uganda and Egypt. Ethiopia, after Kenya, is home to the second highest number of Somali refugees (243,718), most of them sheltered at the refugee camp Dollo Ado (UNHCR Somalia Fact Sheet, January 2014).

3.2.2. Global security dimension: international terrorism

The analysis of the situation development in Somalia confirms the thesis that sociopolitical processes taking place in the country have contributed to transforming the Somali state and the region as a whole into a new global terrorism center. When viewed from the security-related perspective, the international community is facing a threat of the global spread of radical Islamism in breach of international security.

Somalia, one of the most impoverished conflict-torn countries in the world, has seen a number of radical Islamist groups come and go in its decades-long political tumult. Since 1991, the radical group Al-Shabaab, which is often viewed upon as an Al-Qaeda

affiliate, has been in control of two-thirds of the country. In the report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council resolution 2060 (2012), the activities of Al-Shabaab were referred to as a “regional and international threat” (Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea on 12 July 2013, S/2013/413). Al-Shabaab’s operations have so far targeted AMISOM forces, United Nations staff and premises, members of the security sector institutions of the Government of Somalia and “Puntland” and, to a lesser extent, other regional entities, but also Somali journalists, elders, politicians, judges, businessmen and civil society activists. These operations have caused hundreds of civilian casualties, including women, children and foreigners. Al-Shabaab’s affiliates operate in Kenya, Uganda and other countries in East Africa, thus largely contributing to the disruption of peace and security in the region.

In this regard, the position of the United Nations on the security problem in Somalia is of utmost importance. In his letter to the President of the Security Council on 19 December 2008, the Secretary-General suggested that a three-step program should be implemented in order to put in place the necessary security arrangements to support the Djibouti peace process. The three steps included a) the reinforcement of AMISOM and provision of support in order to build up Somali security forces and institutions; b) the implementation of the principle of “minimal intervention” of the United Nations in Somalia through building capacities of the Somali state; and c) the contingency planning for the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation in Somalia (Letter from the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council on 19 December 2008, S/2008/804).

The steps towards the improvement of the security situation recommended by the Secretary-General were adopted by the Security Council in its resolution 1863 from 16 January 2009, which underlined the importance of AMISOM as authorized to take all necessary measures to provide security for key infrastructure and to contribute to the creation of the necessary security conditions for the provision of humanitarian assistance (UN SC Resolution 1863/2009). However, the volatility of the security situation in Somalia over the period of 2010-2012, with the recent deterioration in 2013, forced the international community to take further measures towards its improvement. Between 26 August and 6 September 2013, the United Nations and the African Union conducted a joint mission to Somalia to establish benchmarks for the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation and assess AMISOM performance in the country. As a result, a set of benchmarks was identified for the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation in the country. These included, above all, (a) a political agreement on the finalization of a federal vision and formation of administrations and states; (b) the extension of authority of the Somali state through local administrations in recovered areas, in line with the provisional constitution; (c) degrading Al-Shabaab to

the point that it is no longer an effective force through a comprehensive strategy that includes political, economic and military components; (d) the improved capability of the Somali National Army to hold the majority of major cities in south-central Somalia; (e) a broad agreement on the major security arrangements on the role and functions of the Somali police; and (f) the consent of the Federal Government and the support of important segments of the Somali population for the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation (Letter from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council on 14 October 2013, S/2013/606).

Nevertheless, the security situation in Somalia throughout 2013 remained largely unstable and raised serious concern in view of the increased number of attacks by Al-Shabaab in and outside Mogadishu. On 21 September 2013, the Al-Shabaab attack on the Westgate shopping mall in Nairobi showed that Al-Shabaab poses an increasing regional and international threat. In his report to the Security Council on the situation in Somalia as of 2 December 2013, the Secretary-General indicated that “the objective of Al-Shabaab may have shifted away from Somalia and its internal politics and moved closer to the global ideology and agenda of Al-Qaida” (Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia on 2 December 2013, S/2013/709).

The sharp worsening of the humanitarian situation in Somalia in view of the increase of radical Islamist attacks still remains a serious concern to the international community. Nearly 860,000 people as of March 2014 are reported food insecure and another 2 million people remain on the margins of food insecurity. Persistent insecurity in parts of the country, especially in Central and Southern Somalia which are largely controlled by Al-Shabaab, continues to limit humanitarian access and delivery of essential assistance to the population in need. Aid workers have increasingly been the targets of arrest and detention by armed groups (Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia on 3 March 2014, S/2014/140). Other challenges also include disease outbreaks, protracted displacement and increased refugee flow to the neighboring states due to the continuing violence. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), up to 30,000 people crossed over from Ethiopia and Kenya in 2013, with some 2,100 movements recorded in September 2013 (Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia on 2 December 2013, S/2013/709).

The United Nations are also alerted by the recent increase in the number of human rights violations and breaches of international humanitarian law. Targeted attacks continue on journalists and human rights defenders, in particular on those defending victims in cases involving gender-based violence. In November and December 2013, 386 incidents of grave violations affecting 367 children (359 boys and 19 girls) were reported to the United Nations Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting.

Overall, most of the violations were committed by Al-Shabaab (57 per cent). Al-Shabaab is also responsible for most cases of the recruitment and the use of children (196 cases in 2013) (Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia on 3 March 2014, S/2014/140).

At the same time, some notable progress has been achieved in the field of strengthening the capacities of AMISOM and the Somali national military forces. On 16 September 2013, the Somalia New Deal Conference, co-hosted by the European Union and Somalia, was held in Brussels where the international community and Somalia endorsed a Somali Compact, an overarching strategic document aimed at coordinating political, security and development efforts for peace and state-building activities over the period of 2014-2016. Within the framework of the Somali New Deal Compact, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), which was established on 3 June 2013 by the decision of the UN Security Council as of 2 May 2013 in support of the Federal Government's peace and reconciliation process, in close cooperation with UNODC, UNDP and the Federal Government of Somalia developed a number of rule of law activities to support the Somali police sector (Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the United Nations to help States and sub-regional and regional entities in Africa in fighting terrorism on 9 January 2014, S/2014/9).

Despite some notable improvements achieved in the course of the implementation of the Somali New Deal Compact, the overall situation in Somalia remains highly insecure for the United Nations to be more actively engaged in the resolution of the Somali conflict and deploy its peacekeeping operation in the country. To counter terrorism in Somalia, the joint efforts and the mobilization of resources of the international community and national states are required.

3.3. Piracy as a specific regional and international threat: case of Somalia

Piracy is currently seen as a relevant, though quite specific, threat to international security. It spread in the last decade of the twentieth century and reached the escalation point in 2008-2009. Since then, the acts of piracy have been reported in different parts of the world, most of them off the shores of East and West Africa. Thus, according to the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the number of acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships occurred or attempted in 2012 was 341. The majority of the reported incidents (99 incidents) occurred in the Gulf of Aden and was ascribed to Somali pirates (IMO Annual Report, 2012).

One of the most known pirate military groups that profit from armed robbery against ships in the Gulf of Aden are based in the state waters of Somalia. Their increased activity in the Horn of Africa, especially off the coasts of Somalia, can be attributed, in

the first place, to the unresolved political and social-economic problems of the country, which boost lawlessness in its state waters.

3.3.1. Somalia and the problem of piracy

Historically, the problem of piracy in the state waters of Somalia has existed since the early 1990s, that is, since the overthrow of President Siad Barre and the outburst of the political crisis in the country. The disruption of national economy and decentralization of the finance system pushed the population towards searching for new sources of income, and piracy has become one of the major ones. The absence of legitimate government, effective national security system (in the field of coastguard) and national legislation in the field of maritime security have created favorable conditions for the development of piracy in the state waters of Somalia (Osei-Tuti, 2011: <http://www.africaportal.org/dspace/articles/root-causes-somali-piracy>. Accessed on 17 February 2015).

Even though state collapse is not necessarily a precondition for the development of piracy, the failure of the Somali state has de-facto fostered the emergence of the problem in its state waters. Thus, the first incident of piracy which was recorded off the Somali coast in modern times, namely the seizure of the Jeddah-bound MV “Naviluck” and the killing of three Filipino crew members by Somali assailants off Rass Xaafuun, the most eastern point in Africa, occurred on 12 January 1991, just as the Siad Barre regime was on the edge of its collapse (Greenblatt, 2009: 19).

Poverty and poor socio-economic conditions are often considered as the basis for the development of piracy in the coast waters of the affected state. In case of Somalia, modern piracy is said to have emerged largely due to the efforts of local fishermen, who formed vigilante groups to protect their territorial waters from unauthorized fishing carried out by foreign vessels. After the fall of the Barre regime, foreign vessels from Europe, Asia and Africa moved into tuna-rich Somali waters en masse. Their unauthorized fishing reportedly resulted in the loss of nearly 30% of the annual catch. There have also been reports of toxic waste dumping in Somali waters. Initially, these vigilante groups attacked the vessels involved in illicit fishing and waste dumping for the goal of either extracting taxes or deterring future incursions. One of the means to secure reparations was to hold a vessel and its illicit cargo until the compensation was paid. However, over time seizing vessels became a common practice used to obtain ransom money (UNODC, Transnational Organized Crime Threat Assessment Report, 2010).

The geographic location is also one of the major conditions for the emergence of piracy off the coasts of Somalia. The Gulf of Aden is the main trade route between Europe, the

Middle East and Asia, with approximately 16,000 ships navigating this area each year. The intensity of trade contacts between Asian and European states, as well as the fact that shippers have few alternatives to avoid this route, encourages the pirates to attack these ships (Ross/Ben-David, 2009: 57).

The first serious act of piracy off the Somali coast was registered in 2003. On 4 March 2003 the oil tanker “Monneron” was attacked by pirates on its way from the port of Saudi Arabia to Kenya. In the following years more attacks on ships, which had to pass through the Gulf of Aden en route to their destination point, were reported by the International Maritime Bureau (IMB), with a dramatic increase in the number of piracy attacks in 2008-2009. The figures are shown in the table below (UNODC Report on Maritime Piracy, 2009):

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Somalia/Gulf of Aden	21	10	48	22	51	111	217
Rest of the world	424	319	231	219	219	182	189

Source: UNODC Report on Maritime Piracy 2009, http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/tocta/9.Maritime_piracy.pdf (accessed on 12 August 2014)

According to the United Nations report, the most prominent pirate militias have their roots in the fishing communities of the Somali coast, especially in north-eastern and central Somalia, and their organization reflects Somali clan-based social structures. There are two main piracy networks in Somalia: the one in Puntland and the other one based in the southern Mudug region. It is also reported that in Puntland the most important pirate group is located in the Eyl district, with other smaller groups operating from Bossaso, Qandala, Caluula, Bargaal and Garacad (Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 1846 (2008) on 16 March 2009, S/2009/146).

The amount of ransom demanded by the pirate groups over the past few years had risen from tens of thousands of dollars to hundreds of thousands and even millions. In 2008, the average ransom was estimated at between US \$ 500,000 to US \$2 million, and in 2009 it rose further. According to the Report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council in 2009, the “Eyl Group” alone held six vessels hostage and had allegedly gained approximately \$30 million in ransom payments by the end of 2008 (Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 1846 (2008) on 16 March 2009, S/2009/146).

The Somali pirates are reported to be in possession of modern weaponry and are well-organized. Their main sources of income are ransoms from hijacking ships and holding hostages. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC),

Somali pirates reportedly collected between \$36 million and \$40.5 million in ransom in 2012, with the average payment estimated at over \$4 million per ransom (Report of the Secretary-General on the situation with respect to piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia on 21 October 2013, S/2013/623).

In most cases, pirates cooperate actively with local clans and organized crime groups in and beyond Somalia. Many pirate groups are sponsored by influential political and other groups in exchange for a share in ransom. Many governmental officials are also reported to have been involved in illegal piracy activities. Thus, in December 2008, the former leader of Puntland, Adde Musa, informed the UN established Monitoring Group on Somalia that he had sacked several officials for their involvement in piracy (Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 1846 (2008) on 16 March 2009, S/2009/146).

3.3.2. The current situation around the Somali piracy

The number of reported incidents of piracy off the coast of Somalia has declined sharply in the course of 2013 by the first half of 2014. The latest reports from the International Maritime Organization (IMO) show a significant decrease in pirate attacks and hijackings in 2013 compared to the situation in 2011 and 2012. During the first nine months of 2012, 99 attacks took place, while during the first nine months of 2013, 17 attacks occurred against ships in the waters off the coast of Somalia (Report of the Secretary-General on the situation with respect to piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia on 21 October 2013, S/2013/623).

The decline in piratical activity off the east coast of the African continent can most likely be attributed to several factors. First, the Gulf of Aden and other waters of the Indian Ocean have been more heavily patrolled by joint maritime forces of several nations, including European Union and NATO-led fleets. The presence of naval forces in these waters has deterred some pirates from attempting attacks on merchant ships. Second, many merchant and passenger cruise ships sailing off the east coast of Africa have been staffed with armed security guards. Third, Somali pirates are said to have engaged in piracy crime because it represented a lucrative business opportunity, which poses minimal risk and promised tens of thousands of dollars in financial gains. Today, piracy is a more risky endeavor due to the presence of naval fleets in the Indian Ocean as well as armed guards aboard ships (Sterio, 2010: <http://piracy-law.com/2013/02/16/piracy-declining-in-the-gulf-of-aden-rising-in-the-gulf-of-guinea/>. Accessed on 10 February 2014).

Nevertheless, piracy in the state waters of Somalia represents a serious security challenge to the newly formed and unstable government of the country and the

international community. Ships still do not transit peacefully off the coast of Somalia, and piracy and armed robbery in the area continue to endanger the safety of seafarers, fishermen and passengers, as well as the delivery of humanitarian aid to the war-torn country. The fight against piracy in view of the continuing political instability and humanitarian crisis in Somalia is not effective enough and requires further measures to be taken to build up national coastguard and security mechanisms. External assistance is necessary in view of the possible impacts which Somali piracy might have on regional and international security.

3.3.3. The impact of piracy on the security in the region

The problem of piracy near the coast of Somalia has in recent years increasingly become the focus of attention for regional organizations and the international community due to two major factors. Firstly, Somali pirates operate in the strategically important region, off the coast of the Horn of Africa, which has an impact on the whole Arabian Peninsula and affects the interests of all countries of the region. Furthermore, the opportunities for pirates have increased and so has the scope of their activities. If earlier pirates were extremely active primarily off the Somali coast and in the nearby areas by attacking fishing ships, in recent years piracy has spread up to 500 miles beyond the Somali coast and currently endangers shipping in international waters. In this regard, the hijacking of the supertanker “Sirius Star” by Somali pirates in September 2008 some 400 miles out to sea, was alarming. The seizure of a supertanker was unprecedented, and the attack so far away from shore suggested the pirates were using the shipping industry’s open-access automatic identification system to intercept merchant ships (Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 1846 (2008) on 16 March 2009, S/2009/146).

The oil-exporting countries, such as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Liberia and other members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), are among those most interested in finding an effective solution to the Somali problem. At the core of their concern lies the increased number of attacks on oil tankers, which are a desirable catch for the Somali pirates. Thus, the seizure of the Saudi oil tanker “Sirius Star” in November 2008 created an alarming precedent in view of the efforts to maintain maritime security in the region. The tanker which had been heading towards the United States via the Cape of Good Hope at the southern tip of Africa, held as much as 2 million barrels of oil, more than a quarter of Saudi Arabia's daily exports (Reuters, 17 November 2008). Saudi Arabia, whose ships are often subject to attacks by Somali pirates, uses the Gulf of Aden to transport up to 7 million barrels of oil daily and is, therefore, concerned about the safe sea passage of ships in the Red Sea.

The increase in pirates' attacks is also a matter of concern for other countries of the region, in particular, Yemen. The majority of attacks by Somali pirates takes place in the Gulf of Aden, partly in the state waters of Yemen. The attacks on oil tankers owned by Yemen companies have severe economic implications for the state and endanger its trade relations with other countries in the region and worldwide. Moreover, the presence of foreign military vessels in the state waters of Yemen as part of the anti-piracy international efforts may pose a threat to the sovereignty of the state.

The increase in piracy in the late 2000s urged the countries of the region to take steps in order to avert the emerging security threat related to the increased scope of piratical activity. The International Maritime Organization held a high-level meeting from 26 to 29 January 2009 in Djibouti, where 17 regional States adopted the Djibouti Code of Conduct concerning measures to combat piracy and armed robbery against ships in the Western Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden. The Djibouti Code of Conduct, which came into force with the formal signatures of nine regional States, is a regional agreement which provides for cooperation and coordination mechanisms in the region in the suppression of piracy and armed robbery at sea, including shared operations. The Code of Conduct facilitated the establishment of a regional mechanism of cooperation for anti-piracy activities and the setting up of information sharing centers in the regional Maritime Rescue Coordination Center in Kenya, the Sub-Regional Coordination Center in the United Republic of Tanzania, and a regional maritime information center in Sana'a, in addition to a related training center in Djibouti (Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 1846 (2008) on 16 March 2009, S/2009/146).

The establishment of such regional mechanisms is all the more necessary in view of the increased attractiveness of piracy business as the source of financial gain for criminal groups in other weak states. In Africa, while piracy in Somalia's Gulf of Aden is currently on the decline, it has spread to West Africa. Particularly alarming is the current maritime security situation in the Gulf of Guinea, where attacks, mostly linked to Nigerian pirates, are launched against vessels carrying petroleum products. Although most attacks in the region take place in Nigeria's Niger Delta region, attacks have also been reported, among others, off the coast of Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea and Togo (UNODC Report on Maritime Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, 2013).

The case of Nigeria is symbolic for the effectiveness of piracy as a means of achieving concrete interests. One of the poorest countries in the world, Nigeria derives 95% of its foreign exchange earnings and up to 80% of its budgetary revenues from the oil industry, which for more than two decades has been threatened by transnational organized crime, piracy as one of the most recent forms of it. The government of the

country cannot allow for international maritime operations to be launched in its state waters for the fear of losing state sovereignty, which benefits local pirates. A similar problem is currently faced by some other countries of the region, such as Sudan, Kenya and Tanzania.

Furthermore, the activities of Somali pirates in the Gulf of Aden disrupt transportation and delivery of humanitarian aid to the crisis-torn country by regional and international organizations. Thus, the problem of piracy and armed robbery at sea endangers the implementation of measures to provide technical and material support to the Somali population carried out by AMISOM. The major part of this assistance should reach Somalia by sea (UN SC Resolution 1863/2009). Also, attacks of Somali pirates on trade vessels and ships carrying humanitarian goods create conditions for the further worsening of the humanitarian crisis in Somalia and a number of other African states and disrupt food security in the region.

On the whole, the evolution of piracy off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden has a destabilizing effect on the security situation in the region. Efforts of inter-governmental regional organizations aimed at combating piracy and averting the threat of its spread are often hindered by the politically unstable states which fear the loss of their sovereignty. In the absence of strong political governance and national security mechanisms in the countries of the region, international normative acts alone do not constitute a sufficient legal basis to successfully combat piracy and armed robbery off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden. On both regional and international levels, the enforcement and improvement of maritime law and international cooperation are needed to address the problem. To tackle the problem at its core, however, the root causes of piracy, namely, instability, lawlessness and the lack of effective governance in Somalia should be addressed (Report of the Secretary-General on the situation with respect to piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia on 21 October 2013, S/2013/623).

3.3.4. International aspects of the problem

Even though the number of attacks by Somali pirates off the coast of the country and in the Gulf of Aden has been in decline in recent years, Somali piracy continues to pose a threat to regional stability and has severe implications for international security. One of them are the far-reaching consequences of Somali piracy for the global economy. Pirate attacks on international cargo and merchant ships disrupt global trade and put the lives of sailors at risk. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Somali pirates collected between \$36 million and \$40.5 million in ransoms in 2012, with the average payment estimated at over \$4 million per ransom (Report of

the Secretary-General on the situation with respect to piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia on 21 October 2013, S/2013/623).

According to UNODC and World Bank estimates, Somali pirates received between \$339 million and \$413 million in ransoms between April 2005 and December 2012. The World Bank report "*The Pirates of Somalia: Ending the Threat, Rebuilding a Nation*", published in May 2012, stated that some 3,741 seafarers of 125 nationalities had been taken hostage by Somali pirates. By 2013, Somalia-based piracy has resulted in an estimated yearly loss to the world economy of \$18 billion (Report of the Secretary-General on the situation with respect to piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia on 21 October 2013, S/2013/623).

The international community is also concerned about the impact that Somali piracy and armed robbery at sea have on global food security. Piracy off the coast of Somalia has so far hindered many humanitarian aid deliveries to Somalia conducted by international organizations. Thus, vessels carrying World Food Program (WFP) food and humanitarian aid to Somalia have often been subject to attacks by Somali pirates in the past. Humanitarian and food assistance to Somali population is also provided by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), World Health Organization (WHO), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and some non-governmental organizations. According to the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) data, despite some improvements of the situation in Somalia since the crisis of 2011, when 4 million people experienced extreme food insecurity and famine which occurred in some regions of the south, more than 860,000 Somalis still remain food-insecure and in need of humanitarian assistance which is mostly delivered to the country by sea (WFP, Overview Somalia, 2014).

Somali piracy is a serious challenge in terms of ecological security in the region and worldwide. As oil tankers surpassing the Gulf of Aden remain one of the primarily targets of Somali pirates, the risk of water pollution with this harmful substance is extremely high and might lead to unpredictable ecological consequences. Thus, the Saudi oil tanker "Sirius Star" which was hijacked by Somali pirates in November 2008 was carrying 2 million barrels of oil. According to ecological organizations, if such amount of oil would have gotten into the Indian Ocean, the consequences of the environmental catastrophe would be irreversible (Statement by the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization at the 6020th Meeting of the United Nations Security Council on 20 November 2008).

Most alarming in view of international security is the growing interconnection between the problem of piracy, radical Islamism and illicit weapon trade and smuggling in Somalia. The activities of the radical islamist groups, especially Al-Shabaab, continue

to undermine political stability in the country and in the whole region. The absence of strong centralized government in Somalia and, consequently, effective national security mechanisms contribute to the flourish of piracy and other forms of organized crime groups who, driven by the quest of illicit profit, often cooperate with the Islamic extremists. Thus, in its report from 12 July 2013, the UN-established Monitoring Group on Somalia noted that, despite the general decline of pirate activity, a network of individuals, including known pirate leaders, was engaged in providing private security for unlicensed fishing vessels in Somali waters and was connected to weapons-smuggling and Al-Shabaab networks in north-eastern Somalia (Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2060 (2012) on 12 July 2013, S/2013/413).

Moreover, links persist between piracy and illicit small arms and light weapons trade and trafficking off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden. Thus, the Monitoring Group on Somalia in its report from 13 July 2012 expressed its concern about the recent unmonitored and largely unregulated activities of private maritime security companies off the coast of Somalia which offer armed protection to ships and crews surpassing the high-risk area. These activities might represent a potential new channel for the illegal flow of arms and ammunition into Somalia and the region. According to the report, this highly profitable business has expanded beyond the provision of armed escorts to the leasing of arms, ammunition and security equipment, and the establishment of the so-called “floating armories” that operate in international waters beyond the remit of any effective international regulatory authority. Currently, private maritime security companies are reported to be holding approximately 7,000 weapons in circulation, which are either owned or leased (Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2002 (2011) on 13 July 2012, S/2012/544).

3.3.5. Piracy: the main challenges

Piracy in Somalia is a symptom of state collapse and requires a comprehensive approach that should focus on root causes of the problem. Somalia currently provides a conducive environment for violent crime such as piracy. This phenomenon, in turn, poses a significant threat not only to Somalia itself, but has a destabilizing impact on regional and international security.

Piracy off the coast of Somalia clearly affects ship-owners who pay millions of dollars in ransom costs, while seafarers can be held captive for months awaiting ransom payment. On a global scale, piracy causes severe damage to international economy and endangers international trade. It is also of global security concern because of the vital

geostrategic importance of the sea lanes off the Somali coast which are frequently used by European, Asian and the Middle East countries, exporting their manufactured and energy goods through the Gulf of Aden.

A deeper and even more dangerous impact from piracy concerns humanitarian and food security. Hundreds of thousands of Somalis are reliant on food aid, most of which is delivered by sea. At times, activities of Somali pirates forced deliveries to stop, putting lives at risk, and the foreign naval operations in the region see one of their primary missions in ensuring that food aid and humanitarian assistance can safely reach Somalia (Middleton, 2010: 13).

The possible negative effects of piracy on environmental security cannot be overlooked. As foreign vessels transporting oil and oil-based substances are often the priority target for Somali pirates, the threat of water pollution in the cause of attacks is relevant and raises concerns by many international and non-governmental environmental organizations.

On the whole, piracy as a security challenge should not and cannot be seen in isolation. It is a problem arising from Somalia's internal crisis and as such it is closely connected to other security-related challenges, such as terrorism, spread of radical Islamism and illicit weapons trade and smuggling. Finding a long-term solution to the problem of Somali piracy appears to be of vital importance to the international community in view of the spread of the problem. Criminal activities of Somali pirates represent a highly acute challenge, as they create an international precedent which is capable of duplicating itself in almost any other region in the world. The absence of a unified legal framework for the regulation of piracy and the lack of comprehensive international law-based approaches to resolving the problem has already contributed to the spread of the phenomenon beyond the Gulf of Aden. Piracy has become a global problem, with the majority of pirate attacks currently occurring off the coast of West Africa and in Southern and South-East Asia, off the coast of Malaysia and Indonesia.

International maritime operations in the region, including those carried out off the coast of Somalia, have so far largely contributed to the decrease in successful pirate attacks on ships. However, maritime military presence is not always effective. It is important to consider that piracy as a form of transnational organized crime is most likely to emerge and flourish in the regions and states which are weak and unstable in view of the sociopolitical processes there and where piracy is barely countered by local governments. Governments of these countries are less inclined to allow for strengthening of international maritime military presence in their state waters, as they are struggling to protect their state sovereignty; this fact is often used by pirates.

3.4. Conclusion: challenges and solutions

The analysis of the security threats posed by a “failed” state of Somalia proves that the impact of piracy as a product of the sociopolitical situation in Somalia on regional and global security is becoming a more relevant problem on the international agenda. International challenges that arise from the development of this regional phenomenon become more acute in view of the deepening persistent instability in different regions of the world. Counter-piracy measures which are taken by regional and international organizations off the coast of Somalia are of limited effectiveness in the absence of a unified international legal strategy to deal with the phenomenon. To tackle the problem, it is essential to address the causes of piratical activity in the state waters of Somalia and the Gulf of Aden instead of focusing on dealing with the consequences. The analysis of the situation suggests that combating the problem of piracy is dependent on finding a solution to and normalizing the sociopolitical situation in the country, as well as eliminating the far-reaching implications of its political and economic crisis.

However, the current efforts of the international community to stabilize the sociopolitical situation in Somalia and minimize its impact on the international, as well as regional security largely focus on the provision of humanitarian aid and conducting of the maritime counter-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden. Little progress has been achieved in the field of state-building since 17 November 2014, when Hassan Sheikh Adan was elected president of the newly formed Interim South West Administration (ISWA) comprised of Bay, Bakol and Lower Shabelle regions.

The lack of progress with regard to strengthening the capacities of the state institutions can be attributed, inter alia, to the persisting political crisis, which has been caused by a recent protracted conflict between President Mohamud and Prime Minister Ahmed in November 2014. On 6 November, a motion expressing no confidence in the prime minister was submitted by the members of the parliament. The no-confidence motion passed on 6 December with 153 members in favor, 80 members against, and 2 members abstaining. Ahmed accepted the vote and resigned. On 17 December, President Mohamud nominated Omar Abdirashid Al Sharmarke, Somalia’s ambassador to the U.S., as the new prime minister (UN Security Council Report, January 2015 Monthly Forecast, Somalia).

One of the consequences of the political crisis in Somalia has been a further weakening of confidence among donors. Thus, on 10 November 2014 the U.S. State Department issued a press statement, saying that it would not send a delegation to the High Level Partnership Forum on Somalia. The event took place on 19-20 November 2014 in Copenhagen and served as a follow-up to the new Deal Conference on Somalia held in

Brussels in September 2013 (UN Security Council Report, January 2015 Monthly Forecast, Somalia). Further on, the U.S. threatened to make significant cuts in the financial assistance provided to Somalia, unless the country's president and prime minister start cooperating (The New York Times, 14 November 2014).

Peacebuilding and state-building measures carried out by AMISOM have also been of limited effectiveness, largely due to a persisting insecure operational environment, e.g. the increase in terrorist attacks carried out by al-Shabaab in response to the ongoing counter-insurgency operations in Somalia and the adjoining border regions of Kenya. Thus, on 22 November 2014, Al-Shabaab killed 28 non-Muslims in an attack on a bus in north-eastern Kenya. On 2 December, the group killed 36 workers at a quarry in the same border region. On 3 December, Al-Shabaab attacked a UN convoy in Mogadishu, which resulted in several deaths among the civilians nearby. On 5 December, more than 15 civilians were killed in another attack by the group in Baidoa (UN Security Council Report, January 2015 Monthly Forecast, Somalia).

4. The “failed state” of Afghanistan: regional and global security challenges

4.1. Sociopolitical processes and context in Afghanistan

Since the breakdown of the bipolar system, there has been a renewed interest in the so-called “failed states” problem. After the tragic events of 9/11, the focus of international attention has been shifted towards the “failed” states that could potentially harbor a new type of asymmetric security threat that has proliferated in the form of insurgencies and terrorism. Afghanistan is an example of such a “failed” state. More than a decade after the events of September 2011 and the start of the conflict on its territory, the security and political situation in Afghanistan remains unstable and the Islamist insurgency continues to represent a principle threat to peace and stability in the region and a global security challenge.

Observing the sociopolitical context and the current situation in Afghanistan, the obvious reasons for the country ranking seventh in the Fund for Peace's annual Failed State Index can be identified. Among those reasons are the Afghan central government's lack of legitimacy; pervasive corruption; weak national security institutions; the country's weak public institutions; illegal narcotics trafficking; long-standing and well-documented inter-ethnic tensions; a disputed third-party-imposed border (the Durand Line); the absence of public support for the central government; and the persistent threat of violence and terrorism posed by radical Islamists and various insurgent groups (Vázquez del Pino, 2011: 188).

4.1.1. The emergence of Afghanistan as a “failed state”: historical background

Afghanistan can be seen as a prototype of a weak state, as it has never been a fully formed national polity, with a political landscape formed and influenced by the interests of numerous population and ethnic groups, as well as by those of external actors. Even though statehood has always been an important issue in Afghanistan, each effort to form a central state in the history of the country has been violently resisted by various local subgroups which have been struggling to retain their independence by working against centralization and by attempting to cease control over the capital of the country as a means to strengthen their own position and influence in the political system (Brock et al., 2012: 76).

State building in Afghanistan began only in the late nineteenth century. The centralization-aimed reforms of King Abdur Rachman in the late 1880s and his nephew Amanullah's attempts to introduce gender equality and equal rights irrespective of tribal or religious association in the 1920s, however, provoked violent resistance within the

provinces, with Pashtun tribes and Tajik militia groups playing the crucial role in the uprising. During the unrest, the power was seized by Nadir Khan who annulled the majority of the reforms introduced by his predecessors. While the state still remained the focus of ambitions of many political actors in the country, a new wave of reforms was attempted under the favorable external conditions in the 1950s and 1960s when the political leadership in Kabul attempted to attain support from both sides of the Cold War rivalry to implement new projects. Among other innovations, a fairly liberal constitution was adopted. However, no political infrastructure was developed in order to achieve integration and representation of the various provincial and tribal interests at the national level. The modernization agenda was exclusively implemented by a small political group in Kabul comprised mainly of Communists and their major antagonists, political activists with a Muslim background (Brock et al., 2012: 72).

The political ambitions of the center provoked yet another violent protest which resulted in a new change of government. The new King aligned himself with the Communists, but was killed by his own associates after an attempt to adjust his political course by turning towards the West. His death was followed by increased fierce battles among the Communists and between the Communist and the Islamist groups. The growing political tensions raised concerns about the situation in the country on the part of the USSR which reacted by launching a military intervention in Afghanistan in 1979.

The Soviet intervention changed the dimension of the conflict in Afghanistan from internal struggles for power to an international crisis based on ideological differences and imperial ambitions (Brock et al., 2012: 79). The Soviet invasion triggered the resistance within the country which was comprised of various groups including Afghan militia, local warlords, nationalist and Islamist political groups. The latter were at times actively supported by Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the United States. After ten years of a disastrous war, in 1989 the Soviet Union withdrew its troops from Afghanistan. Its departure was followed by the increase in fighting between these groups, with struggles originating in the regional and local rivalries of the various warlords in the north and in the Pashtun region in the south.

Following the withdrawal of the Soviet troops in 1989, the Najibullah government managed for some time to successfully fight against the Afghan resistance forces due to massive aid that the central government continued to receive from the Soviet Union and, more importantly, because of the inability of the resistance groups to form a united front against the central government. However, the final defeat of the Najibullah government in 1992 and the failure of the resistance groups to agree on a political settlement led to a power struggle which resulted into an urban warfare and the split of Afghanistan into zones of influence of various resistance groups, with the Islamist groups becoming

predominant in this power struggle (Rahimi, 2008: 11).

4.1.2. Afghanistan as a “terrorist” state: the rise and role of the Taliban

The period of war for power which followed the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan destroyed the limited national cohesion that existed between the different ethnic groups in the country. The different factions involved in the fighting adopted an ethnic identity, which transformed the power struggle into a civil war. Another consequence of this phase of conflict in Afghanistan was the almost complete destruction of the government apparatus, as well as the infrastructure of the country (Brock et al., 2012: 82).

The absence of agreement among various ethnic and political factions and groups on political settlement coupled with continuing violence throughout the country, in particular in the province of Kandahar and Kabul, in many ways contributed and led to the emergence and rise of another group known as the Taliban, under the leadership of a local Mullah Mohammad Omar. The majority of the original Taliban were Pashtuns from Kandahar who had been educated in Islamic colleges in the border region between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Many of the Taliban were refugees from the civil war and veterans of the struggle against the Soviet troops. On ideological grounds, the Taliban sought the establishment of the united Afghanistan under a fundamentalist rule of Islamic law (Sharia) (Khan, 2011: 193).

The Taliban quickly won the public support through promises of peace and security and also by managing to put an end to some of the factional fighting in the country. The movement spread initially in the south of Afghanistan and then progressed towards the east, in the process defeating all the resistance groups. In 1996, after four years of war, Kabul was also taken by the Taliban. While making slow progress in the west and in the north of the country, the group eventually came to control between two-thirds and three-quarters of the territory of Afghanistan. However, the rule of the Taliban never extended over the entire country.

Thus, the inability of the various factions to form a government and the de facto absence of any state authority created favorable conditions for the rise of a movement that could bring stability to Afghanistan. However, the success of the Taliban cannot only be explained by the vacuum of power which existed in Afghanistan in the early 1990s. The rise of the radical Islamist movement in the country should also be seen as a product of geopolitical factors and external influence which have often exacerbated conflicts in Afghanistan by complementing the internal dynamics. For example, the rise of the Pashtun-dominated Taliban can at least partly be attributed to the support which the movement received from the Pakistani government (Rahimi, 2008: 21).

Among Afghanistan's neighbors, Pakistan has always had pronounced interests in the country and is said to have largely contributed to the rise of the Taliban and continuing instability in Afghanistan (Rahimi, 2008: 22). Pakistan's main interest in the country is premised on the disputable border between the two states. The demarcation of the border between Afghanistan and British India in 1893, also known as the Durand Line, was conducted without taking into consideration indigenous natural geographic and demographic boundaries. As a result, the Durand Line separates the Pashtun ethnic group equally between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Afghan governments always disputed the border imposed on the country by the British and since the 1970s the government under Prime Minister Daud Khan followed the policy of "Pashtunistan", which aimed at establishing an independent homeland for the Pashtun population of Pakistan, and actively supported the Pashtun nationalist movement in the country. Pakistan, on the other hand, pursued the goal of uniting the Pashtun population along the religious lines by promoting conservative Islam as an alternative social force. After the withdrawal of the Soviet troops and in view of the ambivalence of the U.S. towards Afghanistan, Pakistan was offered an opportunity to consolidate its gains with respect to the Pashtunistan issue (Johnson/Mason, 2008: 46).

After their rise to power, the Taliban established an Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, a state which was only recognized by Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. By 2001, the movement controlled over 90% of the country, with an exception of the north-eastern province of Badakhshan. Under Taliban-rule, the Islamic law was imposed over the whole territory of the Emirate. Despite the ability of the movement to maintain public order, the Taliban and its leaders almost entirely ignored the country's recovery and relied on non-governmental organizations and international relief agencies for meeting people's basic needs. During the Taliban era, the economic situation in the war-torn country worsened dramatically (Liebl, 2007: 502).

The Taliban era in Afghanistan was also shaped by the flourish of opium production. Cultivation of opium poppy in the country began to rise steadily after the 1979 Soviet intervention due to a combination of external regional factors and the worsened economic situation brought on by the war. A system swiftly developed in which large landowners and drug merchants hired mujahidin to protect their drug shipments. Rebel groups used drug earnings to support the resistance. The rise of the Taliban in the 1990s was also linked to opium trade, as the movement appeared to rely on the financial backing of drug smugglers, traders, and trucking groups. In the Taliban-era, cultivation and trafficking of opium increased dramatically. A year earlier, Afghanistan had produced 2,250 metric tons of opium, according to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). These figures reached 2,800 tons in 1997, dropped slightly the

next year due to widespread drought, and then climbed in 1999 to 4,580 metric tons. The Taliban controlled most of the country by 1999, including all of the Pashtun south, and by then Afghanistan's poppy crop represented about 75 percent of global production. 97% was grown in Taliban-held areas. Rather than combat the opium trade, the movement allowed local mullahs to collect a 10 percent agricultural tithe from farmers growing poppy and other producers. Opium trade had soon become one of the main sources of financing of radical groups in Afghanistan (United States Institute for Peace, *How Opium Profits the Taliban* Report, 2009: 12).

Continuous violations of human rights, centralized violence against non-Pashtuns, alarming figures of opium trade and trafficking, and deteriorating sociopolitical situation in the country under the Taliban-rule forced the international community to take measures. Two United Nations Security Council resolutions were passed in 1998 urging the Taliban to end its abusive treatment of women. However, the focus of international attention was soon shifted to the allegations of the Taliban's connections to Al Qaeda. Following the resolution 1267 (1999) adopted by the United Nations Security Council, which accused the Taliban of providing sanctuary and training to international terrorists on its territory, the Security Council imposed sanctions on the Taliban regime for harboring Al Qaeda and its leader Osama bin Laden (UN SC Resolution 1333/2000).

However, it was not until the events of September 2001 which alarmed the international community the most and drew its attention to the terrorism problem in Afghanistan. On Tuesday, September 2001 a series of four coordinated terrorist attacks was launched upon the United States in New York City and the Washington D.C. metropolitan area, killing almost 3,000 people. The Islamic terrorist group Al Qaeda and its leader Osama bin Laden which had been harbored by the Taliban were held responsible for the attacks. The United States responded by proclaiming a Global War against Terrorism and, a month later, launched a military operation "Enduring Freedom" against the Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. After a major air bombing campaign, on 13 November 2001 the US troops captured Kabul, forcing the Taliban forces to flee the capital. On 25 November Kunduz surrendered, in early December Kandahar fell. By the end of 2001, the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan and the Taliban-regime ceased to exist (Warnock, 2008: 19).

After the completion of the US-led military operation in Afghanistan, another problem emerged which required immediate international attention. The second foreign intervention in Afghanistan created, once again, a power vacuum which had to be filled. The statehood crisis developed along national and ethnic lines. After the defeat of the Pashtun-dominated Taliban, the leaders of the opposition anti-Pashtun group "The Northern Alliance" were given the upper hand. The movement united the national

minorities – the Tajik, Hazara and Uzbek ethnic groups in Afghanistan. The growing political influence of the Northern Alliance in view of the predominant positions of Pashtuns in the ethnic composition of the Afghan population was seen as a serious challenge in terms of national stability (Giustozzi, 2005: <http://www.lse.ac.uk/internationalDevelopment/research/crisisStates/download/wp/wpSeries1/WP67.pdf>. Accessed on 22 January 2014).

An attempt to build a state in Afghanistan under international supervision, with the United States playing a dominant role, was made soon after the military defeat of the Taliban in December 2001. On 5 December 2001, the Bonn Agreements were signed at the conference held in Bonn, Germany, between different political and ethnic groups of Afghanistan. The agreement outlined the following major objectives: the establishment of an interim Afghan government to fill the post-invasion power vacuum; transformation of Afghanistan into a democracy by crafting the rules of engagement, such as a new constitution and holding elections to parliament and the office of the President; legitimizing the UN central role in state-building activities, and, most importantly, the creation of a security stabilization force, known as International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), to maintain security in Kabul and its surrounding areas to allow the interim government to successfully undertake and implement state-building initiatives (Nuruzzaman, 2009: 284).

The political outcome of the Bonn agreements was the establishment of the Afghan Interim Administration (AIA) under the Pashtun leader Hamid Karzai. A new government started its work on 22 December 2001. Following the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1386 (2002), the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) comprised of 4000 people from 17 countries was established and deployed in Kabul to maintain stability and security in the capital. It was politically assisted by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), which was established in March 2003 by the Security Council Resolution 1401 (2002) to carry out humanitarian and development assistance in Afghanistan (Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security on 18 March 2002, S/2002/278).

However, such an important issue as ethnic fragmentation remained barely addressed by the Bonn agreements. Whereas the Taliban and their supporters were largely excluded from the Bonn process, the Northern Alliance was politically prioritized. The Tajiks, the second largest ethnic group in Afghanistan, was not only granted key positions at the powerful ministries of defense, interior and foreign affairs under the Interim government, but also strengthened its voice in the post-interim Afghan government. One elite was de-facto replaced by the other one (Warnock, 2008: 115).

In June 2002, the Emergency Loya Jirga passed a decision about the formation of the Islamic Interim Government of Afghanistan. Hamid Karzai was elected president, whereas the key ministerial positions were kept by the Tajiks. The Taliban supporters were excluded from the government. However, the newly elected government under Karzai failed to build a “democratic regime” in Afghanistan and put an end to the Taliban heritage in the years that followed. Thus, religious leaders, mullahs, still maintained high influence on the politics of the country; the Ihtisab, the institution of religious police, or inspection, was re-established to punish non-compliance with the norms of Sharia (even though not as severe as it did under the Taliban rule). Afghan women had to wear the hijab in public (Warnock, 2008: 117).

The Karzai administration, however, did not control the whole territory of the country. Even though the main forces of the Taliban were defeated, most of the radical Islamist groups and factions still operated in the south and south-west of the country and continued to fight against the central government using their military, ideological and psychological potentials (e.g. occasional addresses of the Islamist leaders on television, printing of leaflets calling for “the holy war” (jihad) against the pro-Western Karzai government and the US forces). Some radical groups launched their attacks from the territory of the neighboring Pakistan whose government officially supported the Karzai regime. The US and NATO image was also damaged by the fact that the “terrorist number one” Osama bin Laden was not captured and continued to inspire radical Islamists throughout the country.

The Karzai government also faced difficulties in its relations with governors and local leaders who often opposed the attempts of Kabul to extend its authority to the provinces. The overall security situation in the country began to deteriorate in 2003, as the number of clashes between various factions in the northern provinces increased dramatically, impacting also the UN agencies deployed in the region. Along the southern and eastern borders of Afghanistan, terrorist groups, allegedly aligned with the Taliban, stepped in their activities by launching attacks against US and Afghan military forces (Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security on 23 July 2003, S/2003/754).

The worsening of the security situation in Afghanistan from 2003 onwards can at least partly be attributed to the US military engagement in Iraq in 2003. On 11 August 2003, NATO formally assumed a leadership role in ISAF. In the period of 2001-2007 the United States and NATO kept on increasing the military presence in Afghanistan. That is, by the end of 2001 the ISAF military contingent was comprised of maximum 4,500 soldiers deployed in Kabul in order to support the government, whereas only few ISAF military operations were conducted in the south-eastern regions and along the Pakistani

border to capture bin Laden and his supporters. By 2007, however, the number of ISAF military had reached 50,000 men and large-scale military operations were conducted in the southern and eastern provinces. Thus, ISAF had practically undergone a transition from a stabilizing mission to the full-scale military operation force (Suhrke, 2008: 214).

In the atmosphere of continuous inter-factional fighting, on 4 January 2004 the Loya Jirga, held under the UN patronage, for the first time in the history of Afghanistan successfully adopted a new constitution of the country. As a result of the compromise reached between the supporters of presidential and parliamentary forms of government, a system was established that was presidential in nature, but with a large degree of parliamentary oversight. The constitution provided a framework for the establishment of the rule of law, which, however, should remain consistent with the “beliefs and prescriptions” of Islam, a concession made to meet the demands of the conservative part of the ruling elite (Warnock, 2008: 119).

Following the adoption of the constitution, the overall Afghan presidential elections under the patronage of the US administration under President Bush and several international agencies were held in autumn 2004. The elections were preceded and accompanied by political violence, with the Taliban Islamists attempting to disrupt the process. Karzai was elected president of the country. However, the central government still did not exercise control over the vast territory of the country torn by inter-factional fighting and violence.

In 2005, the security environment in Afghanistan deteriorated even further. The level of insurgency in the country rose, as did the sophistication of the insurgents’ weaponry. The situation in the southern and eastern regions of the country was characterized by an upsurge of violence and increase in attacks by extremists (including groups claiming allegiance to the Taliban and Al Qaeda) on the international community which resulted in significant reduction of, and in some cases, complete suspension of activities of some international agencies and organizations. In the North, north-eastern and central highlands, in central and most of the western region minor factional clashes and criminal activity continued to be reported. Overall, the increased insecurity had a destabilizing impact on reconstruction, economic development and the expansion of the central government's authority over an estimated one third of the country. It also contributed to the worsening of the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan (Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security on 12 August 2005, S/2005/525).

Years of war and fighting and persistent insecurity had fueled the socioeconomic crisis in the country. The Karzai government relied heavily on foreign aid to provide its very limited services to the population. Thus, over the 2004-2005 period, foreign assistance

provided to Afghanistan amounted to 40 percent of the licit gross domestic product, revealing the weakness of the national economy. The increasing problem of security and the continued existence of poor infrastructure resulted in increased food insecurity due to very limited access to food in many Afghan provinces, particularly in the southern regions of the country. Part of the problem of economic development was also the persistence of corruption both at central and local levels, where assistance was often controlled by provincial governors, militia commanders and village elders (Warnock, 2008: 28).

The informal sector of the Afghan economy, on the contrary, flourished, with poppy production constituting the most important source of livelihood for as many as 1,7 million Afghans. The growing of poppies for international trade in opium and heroin constituted the major part of the national economy. In 2004, the illegal trade was equivalent to an estimated 60 per cent of the country's gross domestic product (Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security on 12 August 2005, S/2005/525).

Overall, the production of opium and heroin increased dramatically under the administration of President Hamid Karzai. By 2006, Afghanistan remained the largest opium producer in the world, providing nearly 92 per cent of the world's total supply. Between 2005 and 2006, the opium production figures had almost doubled. The increase in the number of provinces where the opium poppy is cultivated is also of concern. While in the late 1990s about 15 to 20 provinces cultivated the poppy, a steady expansion had occurred since 2002, with poppy being cultivated in 25 to 30 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces (Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security on 11 September 2006, S/2006/727).

The illicit use and spread of light and heavy weapons all across the country presented another serious concern in terms of national and international security. Despite the launch of a set of the disbandment operations by the United Nations agencies in five provinces between 1 May and 7 June 2006, very limited progress was made with respect to the disbandment of illegal armed groups that continued to multiply in Afghanistan. The pace of weapons submission and overall disbandment compliance, particularly in the north, was thought to have suffered from the overall deterioration in the security situation and diminished confidence in the country's stability (Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security on 15 March 2007, S/2007/152).

Some reports also suggested that the ongoing viability of the Taliban as a military movement was one of the major causes for the increased militarization of local

commanders who feared the renewed rise of the extremist group to power. A conference on the disbandment of illegal armed groups held in Tokyo on 21 June 2007, co-chaired by Japan, Afghanistan and UNAMA, also stressed the existing inter-connection between illegal armed groups, drug trafficking and corruption at state level (Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security on 21 September 2007, S/2007/555).

In view of the growing violence and persistent insecurity in the country following from 2007-2008, a NATO summit was held in Bucharest on 2-4 April 2008, where the Heads of State and Governments stressed their commitment to combating terrorism and building a stable and secure state in Afghanistan based on 4 main guiding principles: a firm and shared long-term commitment; support for enhanced Afghan leadership and responsibility; a comprehensive approach by the international community, bringing together civilian and military efforts; and increased cooperation and engagement with Afghanistan's neighbors, especially Pakistan. The participants outlined the growing international focus on and importance of building the capacity of the Afghan police as a vital element for ensuring stability and security in the country and the role of regional partners such as Pakistan in dealing with the common threats of violent extremism and narcotics (ISAF's Strategic Vision – Declaration by the Heads of State and Government of the Nations participating in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) on 3 April 2008).

In autumn 2009 presidential elections were held, which were partly disrupted by the Taliban who launched a series of attacks resulting in the postponement of the second tour. Karzai was elected president for the second time. The renewed deterioration of the security situation in Afghanistan urged the international community to review their policy in the country. At the ministerial meetings in October and December 2009 the Governments of the ISAF participating countries stressed that the future of Afghanistan and the stability of the region are directly linked to the security of their own countries and the international community and expressed their commitment to preventing Afghanistan from becoming “a safe haven for terrorism” again (Statement on Afghanistan by Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Nations participating in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) on 4 December 2009).

4.1.3. The situation in Afghanistan from 2010 to present: the current status of the conflict

The NATO meetings in October and December 2009 demonstrated a distinctive shift towards the “afghanization” of the NATO mission in the country, that is, the transition of responsibility for maintaining stability, peace and security to the Afghan national

security forces (police, national army and special operation forces). The first document which emphasized the importance of transition of responsibility in the security sphere was the Strategic Concept for Transition to Afghan lead approved at the meeting of NATO Defense Ministers in Bratislava in October 2009. However, the decision of the US president Barack Obama in December 2009 to send another 30,000 troops in view of the worsened security situation in the country was proof of the lasting commitment of the United States to the military engagement in Afghanistan despite the earlier presidential statement concerning the intended start of the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan in July 2011 (The Telegraph, 2 December 2009).

The worsening of the security situation in the country urged the international community to conduct a conference on Afghanistan on 28 January 2010 in London in order to decide about the future development of the country and the NATO military presence on its territory. Special attention was given to three priority spheres – security, governance and development, and assistance provided by regional actors. The conference succeeded in laying out a plan for what was hoped to be a “new phase” in the Afghan conflict, in which the government in Kabul would take over, province by province, responsibility for providing and maintaining security in the country over the next five years; it was also agreed that the transition would run in parallel with a two-tier peace process in which the Taliban followers would be lured out of the insurgency with jobs and rural development, and the Taliban leaders would be invited to take part in peace negotiations. However, little progress was achieved with respect to conducting a peaceful dialogue with the Taliban, as soon after the London summit the United States launched a military operation against the Taliban insurgents in the province of Gilmend aimed at stabilizing the situation in the region (Khan, 2011: 257).

The assassination of the head of the High Peace Council, Chair of the party Jamiat-i-Islami and former President of Afghanistan Burhanuddin Rabbani on 20 September 2011 by a suicide bomber posing as a Taliban peace envoy, had significant implications for the security and political situation in the country. Rabbani's death resulted in the increase of internal political fighting and maneuvering and further weakened trust between different factions and ethnic groups. The continued attacks by insurgents and criminal groups on the international agencies operating in the country disrupted the environment for humanitarian and development work in Afghanistan. In view of the prevailing instability in the country, the problem of drug trafficking also sharpened. The Afghan Opium Survey 2011, conducted by the Afghan Ministry of Counter-Narcotics and UNODC and released on 11 October 2011, showed that due to insecurity and high prices poppy cultivation in Afghanistan reached 131,000 hectares, 7 per cent higher than in 2010. Even though the insurgency continued to be one of the drivers of the poppy cultivation in the country, most of the profits from opium were reported to be

made by other segments of the society, including corrupt officials, landowners and criminals (Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications on international peace and security on 13 December 2011, S/2011/772*).

On 5 December 2011, an International Conference on Afghanistan was held in Bonn, Germany, which addressed such issues as civil aspects of the transition process, the role of international community in Afghanistan after the handover of security responsibility to the Afghan government, and long-term political stabilization of the country. Terrorism and production, trafficking and consumption of narcotics were identified as the main threats to Afghanistan's regional and international security and stability. The international community committed itself to providing support to the country in the areas of state capacity building, governance, economic and social development in the course and after the transition and set 2014 as a deadline for the complete withdrawal of the international military forces from Afghanistan. The importance of finding a political solution to the Afghanistan crisis through peaceful negotiation and reconciliation between all parties to the conflict was also emphasized (The International Afghanistan Conference in Bonn: Conference Conclusions, 5 December 2011).

Throughout the period following the Bonn Conference of 5 December 2011, the political debate in Afghanistan was dominated by the attempts made by different parties to the conflict to approach a potential peace process. More specifically, the discourse focused on the possible establishment of a Taliban office in Qatar in order to facilitate dialogue. The idea was supported and endorsed in February 2012 by President Karzai who affirmed that the peace process was his government's first priority (Report of the Secretary General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security on 5 March 2012, S/2012/133*).

However, negotiations for a political settlement with the Taliban made little progress in 2012. Preliminary discussions between the Taliban and the US, ongoing since 2011, were widely reported to have broken down in March over failure to agree on a US transfer of the key Taliban prisoners from the US military facility at Guantanamo Bay to Qatar. Efforts made by the Afghan government and some international experts to portray the Taliban as significantly reformed since 2001 were undermined by the Taliban's continued attacks. These included the Taliban's March attack on a Kabul restaurant and its announcement in May of a spring offensive specifically aimed at killing key civilian figures, such as senior government officials and members of parliament. The Taliban also continued to attack schools and recruit children, including as suicide bombers. The UN reported 34 attacks against schools in the first six months of 2012 (Human Rights Watch, World Report 2013: Afghanistan).

On 8 July 2012 an international conference on Afghanistan took place in Tokyo, Japan.

Its main outcome was the establishment of the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework, which provided a framework for cooperation and partnership between the Afghan government and the international community throughout the Transformation Decade 2015-2024 to support Afghanistan's development. The international donor community also pledged US\$ 16 billion aid assistance under the condition that Afghanistan is required to hold credible and transparent elections in 2014 and 2015 (Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan, The Tokyo Declaration on 8 July 2012).

Following the Tokyo conference, measures were taken by the Afghan government to facilitate the formal peace process with the armed opposition in the country, but without much progress. The Taliban's continued rejection of any peace talks with the central government led to the further escalation of violence throughout 2013 in the southern and south-eastern provinces of Afghanistan and to increases in attacks launched by the movement's supporters at the UN staff personnel in Kabul. Tensions with Pakistan with regard to the Durand Line and occasional inter-factional killings and clashes between non-Pashtuns and Pashtuns, the Hazara and the Tajiks across the country had a destabilizing effect on the security situation in the country.

In November 2013, the Loya Jirga endorsed a Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) with the United States, which would keep 15,000 foreign troops stationed in Afghanistan after the withdrawal of most NATO forces by the end of 2014. However, in his speech at the Loya Jirga on 24 November 2013, Afghan President Hamid Karzai expressed his frustration over the increased number of civilian casualties caused by the NATO-led operations against the Taliban and refused to sign the BSA, unless the U.S. stops causing harm to Afghan civilians and helps initiate a peace negotiation process with the Taliban (The Guardian, 26 November 2013).

The overall uncertainty of 2014, Afghanistan's final year of transition, and the inability of the Afghan government to successfully launch a peace process with the armed opposition groups, the Taliban and other parties to the conflict, has severe implications not only for political and security situation in the country, but also impacted its socioeconomic and humanitarian development. The country continues to be highly dependent on international assistance aid, as its licit economy remains weak. Persistent violations of human rights, especially of women and children, the increase of importance of drug trafficking as the main source of funding for insurgent groups, as well as increased rates of displaced persons in 2013 compared to those in 2012, have raised concerns about the sustainability of Afghanistan's political, security, economic and social development in the years following the transition process (Report of the Secretary General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security on 7 March 2014, S/2014/163).

4.2. The Afghanistan conflict in the context of regional and international security maintenance

4.2.1. Regional dimension of the problem

Sociopolitical processes and the state crisis in Afghanistan have a direct impact on stability and security in the region of Central Asia and the Middle East. Afghanistan is situated in a region marked by a range of conflicts and interests of different nations, religious and military groups that both hinder the process of peace- and state building and are affected by the sociopolitical development of the country. Historically seen, Afghanistan has always been a buffer state “used” by regional and extra regional actors for strategic interests. A number of neighboring countries, such as Pakistan, Iran and Tajikistan have been directly or indirectly involved in and affected by the Afghanistan conflict in the course of its history.

The relationship between Afghanistan and its eastern neighbor Pakistan has always been a complex one in terms of security challenges, beset by border disputes, refugee flows, trade issues and internal challenges. Both countries are strategically, politically and economically interconnected, and the deteriorating political and security situation in Afghanistan has so far had a destabilizing effect on Pakistan, especially with regard to the situation in the border region of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). Also, the inability of both governments to control the Durand Line and the resulting lack of security on the Afghan-Pakistan border have made Pakistan vulnerable for the Taliban and Al Qaeda to cross it and operate in the border region. The situation in the Pakistan’s volatile border region known as FATA is particularly alarming. The region has long been outside state control, and serves as an attractive shelter and operation base for extremists and militant groups. This fact is exemplified given the flight of Al Qaeda and the Taliban to the FATA following the US-launched operation against the Taliban in October 2001 in Afghanistan (Quinlan, 2012: 3).

The lack of control on the Afghan-Pakistan border also contributes to the deterioration of the humanitarian situation in the region. Pakistan currently hosts some 1.6 million registered Afghan refugees and an estimated 1.5 million unregistered Afghans (UNHCR Global Report on Afghanistan, 2013). The long-lasting Afghan refugee crisis is the matter of utmost regional and international concern, with many Afghans born but unable to gain citizenship in the neighboring countries. Despite a “Solution Strategy” document prepared by UNHCR in cooperation with the three governments largely concerned (Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran) in May 2012, the resolution of many issues, such as alternative stay arrangements, assistance for strictly voluntary repatriation,

humanitarian assistance and medical care, is not yet in sight (European Commission, Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department (ECHO), Fact Sheet Afghanistan, March 2014).

Opium trade and trafficking in Central Asia represents another serious challenge in terms of regional security. Given the region's proximity to Afghanistan and Pakistan and the closure of the traditional route via the Balkans to Western markets, Central Asia has become the main transit point for heroin bound for markets in Russia and Europe. The vast increase in heroin trafficking from Afghanistan in recent years has a destabilizing effect on the economic and political situation in the Central Asian states. Drug money fuels corruption and lawlessness in these countries and contributes to the weakening of local political and legal institutions, whereas increased drug consumption and intravenous drug use contribute to transmission of HIV/AIDS among the countries' population (Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN) Report on the Threat of Opium to Afghanistan and the Region, July 2004).

Drug-related problems are an acute security challenge for all Central Asian states, with Tajikistan most exposed to the threat because of its proximity to Afghanistan, a weak government, overall instability and extreme poverty. Illegal drugs, almost entirely produced in Afghanistan, flow principally along two routes: through the mountainous Gorno-Badakhshan region in eastern Tajikistan, or into southern Tajikistan and from there to the capital Dushanbe.

A strong link exists between the drug business, arms purchases for conflicts and the activities of terrorists and Islamic fundamentalist groups in the region. Illicit drug money flows, the existence of powerful drug networks supporting the insurgency and the popular support for the Taliban-controlled drug trade and trafficking in Afghanistan are the main regional security challenges. Drug-related profits earned by the Taliban and other extremist groups operating along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border constitute the major source of their "income" and, added together, could amount to as much as a half a billion dollar per year. This money is used to finance terrorist operations and activities of insurgents and purchase arms. There is also evidence that Al Qaeda has been heavily involved in Afghan opium trafficking (*How Opium Profits the Taliban*, United States Institute of Peace Report, 2009).

The worsening of the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan that is currently facing security and political transition in the context of continuing violence has implications for the regional security. On 12 February 2014, the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) launched a Common Humanitarian Action Plan for Afghanistan which estimates that 5.4 million people will require access to health services this year. The Plan also prioritizes the provision of assistance to 2.2

million people assessed as very severely food insecure. The third group, identified as the one with acute unmet needs, are internally displaced persons. In 2013, 124,000 persons were recorded as newly displaced as a result of the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan, reflecting a 25 per cent increase compared to 2012. The number of Afghan refugees in the neighbor countries such as Pakistan, Tajikistan and Iran has also increased, whereas the return of refugees to Afghanistan declined by 59 per cent in 2013 compared to 2012 (Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security on 7 March 2014, S/2014/163). Afghan refugees, especially in Pakistan, are reported to be facing precarious living conditions due to limited infrastructure, shortages of clear drinking water supplies and food insecurity (IRIN News, 12 February 2014).

4.2.2. Global security dimension

The analysis of the situation development in Afghanistan and the region from the security-related perspective reveals a number of threats to international peace and stability resulting from sociopolitical processes in the country. One of them is global drug trade and drug trafficking. Today, Afghanistan is by far the world's main opium and heroin producer. According to the data published by the United Nations Organization on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), over the period from 2005 to 2010 Afghanistan accounted for 88% of the global opium production. The weakness of Afghan law-enforcement agencies in combating poppy cultivation, drug production and the lack of border security control are the most significant obstacles to international efforts in the field and enable smuggling and illicit drug trafficking from Afghanistan to drug consumer markets all over the world. There are three main export routes for smuggling opiates, including heroin. The southern one goes through Pakistan, the drugs are then shipped by sea through various trans-shipment destinations in Africa, the Middle East and the Gulf. The western, or Balkan route, running through Iran and Turkey and then the countries of south-eastern and western Europe, accounts for about 35% of drug exports from Afghanistan and is the major route for opiates and heroin to western Europe. Finally, the northern route, also known as the Silk route, passes across the countries of Central Asia, namely Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, to the Russian Federation, its main target, and also to the countries of northern and eastern Europe (UNODC Drug Report, 2013).

The increased use of the northern route by drug smugglers in the recent years represents an alarming security threat to the region and the world. Criminal groups composed of ethnic Tajiks are believed to be the main actors in the heroin trafficking, whereas the authorities of the Central Asian countries often lack the necessary capacities to control the flow of drugs through their territories, and are said to be sometimes involved in it.

Moreover, according to experts, heroin trafficking through Central Asia is likely to increase in the coming years and thus fuel the already existing health, economic and security problems in the region (*Drug Traffic from Afghanistan as a Threat to European Security*, Report of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, 24 September 2013).

The unregulated use of and trafficking in small arms and light weapons (SALW) across the country presents another serious concern in terms of international security. Illicit small arms and light weapons in Afghanistan is a legacy of international and regional conflict. With thousands of SALW left over from the Soviet invasion and the ongoing conflict, civilians and insurgent groups in the country have easy access to unregulated arms. However, weapons left over from previous conflicts are not the only illicit arms used on the territory of Afghanistan. The increase of weapon flows across Afghanistan's uncontrolled borders, particularly across the borders with Iran, Pakistan and Tajikistan, is one of the major security-related challenges to the international community. For example, in 2005 the Afghan Defense Ministry reported 475 seizures of weapons, including more than 2,000 rockets, 4,000 land mines and 5 million cartridges on the border with Pakistan, some of which reportedly belonged to former Taliban and Al Qaeda-related militants currently based in and operating from Pakistan. Similarly, in January 2007 Afghan forces found 40 truckloads of machine guns, explosives, and rockets belonging to the Taliban, which were hidden in mountain caves near the border with Pakistan. Arms are also trafficked across the border with Tajikistan, to the north, which is one of the prime smuggling routes. There is evidence that Russian arms dealers and Taliban drug lords often utilize this border to exchange Russian arms for Afghan opium (*Surveying the Battlefield*, Small Arms Survey on Illicit arms in Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia, 2012).

Despite the launch of a set of the disbandment operations by the United Nations agencies in five provinces between 1 May and 7 June 2006, very limited progress was made with respect to the disbandment of illegal armed groups that continue to multiply in Afghanistan. The pace of weapons submission and overall disbandment compliance, particularly in the north, is thought to have suffered from the overall deterioration of the security situation and diminished confidence in the country's stability (Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security on 15 March 2007, S/2007/152). Some reports also suggest that the ongoing viability of the Taliban as a military movement is one of the major causes for the increased militarization of local commanders who fear the renewed rise of the extremist group to power. A conference on the disbandment of illegal armed groups held in Tokyo on 21 June 2007, co-chaired by Japan, Afghanistan and UNAMA, also stressed the existing inter-connection between illegal armed groups, drug trafficking and

corruption at state level (Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security on 21 September 2007, S/2007/555).

Increased attention has been given lately to the possible arms trafficking across the border with Iran, the problem which raises significant concern of the international community in view of the widespread belief shared by many US and Afghan officials that the Iranian government is at least turning a blind eye to activities of certain armed groups. Part of this allegation is grounded on the data that in March 2011 the Iranian-produced rockets were seized by the British troops in the Nimruz province of Afghanistan. Similar incidents include the reported capture of Iranian arms traffickers in October 2009 and the seizure of a large shipment of anti-tank mines and mortars crossing from Iran into Afghanistan in June 2009. However, there is no proof that the Iranian government is involved in these incidents or that the groups responsible for the arms trafficking are directly affiliated with the Iranian authorities (*Surveying the Battlefield*, Small Arms Survey on Illicit arms in Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia, 2012).

Human rights violations in Afghanistan are further regarded as one of the major international security concerns. According to a report released by the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), the number of civilians killed or injured in the first half of 2013 rose by 23 per cent compared to the same period last year, owing mainly to the increased use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) by insurgents. The report documented 1,319 civilian deaths and 2,533 injuries – a total of 3,852 civilian casualties – in the first half of the year (*A Way to Go: An Update on Implementation of the Law on Elimination of Violence against Women in Afghanistan*, UNAMA Report, December 2013).

A very acute problem is also the situation of children and armed conflict in Afghanistan. According to the report of the United Nations Secretary-General on 3 February 2011, grave violations were committed by both the Afghan state and non-state actors within the reporting period of 2008-2010. In particular, children were reportedly used by anti-government elements, including for suicide bombing or for planting explosives, or recruited by the Afghan National Security Forces, despite the official government policy. The report also shed light on the detention of children for alleged association with armed groups by Afghan authorities. In addition, there continued to be serious concerns about the increasing number of attacks on schools and on students that jeopardized the right of Afghan children to safely access education. Children also continued to be killed or aimed at in suicide attacks or during engagements by Afghan and international forces. Finally, the report also underlined the need for greater attention to the issue of sexual violence committed against boys and girls in Afghanistan by

armed parties to the conflict (Report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in Afghanistan on 3 February 2011, S/2011/55).

Recently, Afghan children have continued to suffer the impact of the armed conflict. Between 1 August and 31 October 2013, UNAMA documented 444 incidents of children being killed and otherwise affected by conflict-related violence. On 20-22 October 2013 the Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund Anthony Lake visited Kabul. In meetings with Government officials, civil society, the private sector and United Nations partners, Lake emphasized the need for increased funding for human and social development aid for the most vulnerable parts of the Afghan population (Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implication for international peace and stability on 6 December 2013, S/2013/721).

Violence and discrimination against women and girls is another issue that needs to be addressed by the international community in Afghanistan. The Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) recorded a total of 6,823 incidents between October 2012 and September 2013 in Afghanistan's 34 provinces. The UNAMA report on women's rights in 2013 highlights that most incidents of violence against women still remain largely underreported, especially in rural areas, due to social norms and cultural restraints, discrimination against women (leading to wider acceptance of violence against them), fear of social stigma or exclusion and, at times, fear of reprisals and threat to life. The report also underlined the fact that those incidents that reach law enforcement and judicial authorities or receive public attention represent only a small percentage of thousands of incidents of violence against women throughout the country (*A Way to Go: An Update on Implementation of the Law on Elimination of Violence against Women in Afghanistan*, UNAMA Report, December 2013).

4.3. Terrorism as a regional and global security threat: case of Afghanistan

After the tragic events of September 2001, the international community started addressing the issue of terrorism and Islamic extremism as preeminent global security threats, with Western and non-Western nations alike committing themselves to bringing an end to the strategic targeting of innocent life. But it was the United States, supported by the allies, which launched the "war on terror" and brought the spotlight on Afghanistan, the country which in the course of its history has always lacked strong centralized government and where state fragility has been accompanied and re-enforced by violence.

The absence of a central state and the history of foreign military interventions have in many ways contributed to Afghanistan becoming the hotbed for Islamic terror activities in the mid-1990s. The Soviet invasion and foreign military presence on the territory of

Afghanistan created favorable conditions for the consolidation and rise of fundamentalist movements who sought to liberate the country from the Soviet occupants. With the radical Taliban government establishing control, several radical Islamic (mostly Sunni) terror organizations used Afghanistan as their training and operational base. Al Qaeda was the broad umbrella organization that recruited terrorists from Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia and around the world, training them in Afghanistan and the neighboring Pakistan. Its leader, Osama bin Laden, reportedly found shelter in the Taliban-controlled part of Afghanistan and claimed responsibility for the September 2001 attacks.

Even though the US-led military operation in Afghanistan in 2001 resulted in the fall of the Taliban regime, the fundamentalist movement and other terrorist and extremist groups largely associated with and linked to the Taliban and Al Qaeda, such as the powerful Islamist insurgent group The Haqqani network, continue to operate in the south and east parts of the country uncontrolled by the central government, as well as on the Afghanistan-Pakistani border and from the territory of the latter. Such groups and movements pose an imminent security threat not only to national, but exceedingly to regional and international security and stability.

4.3.1. The impact of Afghan terrorism on security in the region

One of the major unconventional security concerns for South-Central Asian states is extremism which leads to militancy and terrorism. As a reaction against the foreign military presence in the country during the US-led war, terrorist activities at the local level in and outside Afghanistan increased dramatically, affecting the country's Central Asian neighbors which have been confronted with an upsurge in extremist activities since their independence.

The terror activities in Afghanistan have increasingly contributed to the rise of radical islamism and extremism in Central Asia. Some of the terrorist groups largely operating in the region include Al Qaeda, Al-Jihad, Lashkar-i-Jhangvi, Islamic Group, Armed Islamic Group, Harkat-ul-Mujahideen and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. The absence of clear ethnic, cultural and religious border lines between Afghanistan and its Central Asian neighbors and the lack of security on its borders with Pakistan, Tajikistan and Iran open ways for these terrorist groups to operate in the region. The increased production and trafficking of Afghan-produced opiates, especially heroin, have strengthened the material and military base of these movements, allowing them to purchase arms and build up military infrastructure (Cooley, 2002: 58).

If the Taliban re-establish their influence in Afghanistan, the state may provide a safe haven and a base of operations for other terrorist groups. One of them is the Islamic

Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), a coalition of Islamic militants from Uzbekistan and other Central Asian states. The group is closely affiliated with Al Qaeda and has embraced its anti-Western, in particular anti-U.S. agenda. The IMU operates in the Central Asian states and has participated in the attacks launched by the Taliban against the U.S. military forces in Afghanistan (Gul, 2006: 50).

Of further concern are the regional activities of the two Kashmir-focused militant groups, the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Harakat-ul-Mujahideen. The Lashkar-e-Taiba (LT) is one of the largest and most proficient Pakistan-based terrorist organizations in South Asia, which is allied with the Taliban and Al Qaeda. The LT is held responsible for numerous complex attacks against the U.S. and Afghan forces in the eastern Afghan provinces and Kabul and currently operates two training camps in Afghanistan. The other terrorist group, the Harakat-ul-Mujahideen (HUM), which has forged alliances with the Taliban and Al Qaeda, supports the Pakistani claim to the Kashmir territory. The HUM conducts insurgent and terrorist operations predominantly in Kashmir, but has also plotted several attacks in Afghanistan, where the group trains its militants (Country Reports on Terrorism 2013: South and Central Asia, Release of the U.S. Department of State).

Some experts also claim that a potential threat to the security in the region can be posed by the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), which represents Uyghur separatists from China's western Xinjiang province that shares borders with eight countries, including Afghanistan and Pakistan. The group is said to be allied with the Taliban and serves as an umbrella organization for other militant groups in Central Asia, such as the Turkestan Islamic Party (Gul, 2006: 52).

4.3.2. Afghanistan and the problem of global terrorism

Afghanistan is often seen as both a potential haven for and a prime victim of international terrorism. In the immediate aftermath of the events of 11 September 2001, the US administration identified the "failed" state of Afghanistan as a safe haven for Al Qaeda terrorists, responsible for the World Trade Center attacks. The subsequently launched "Global War on Terror" and the military intervention have left the state even more weakened and conflict-ridden than it was prior to the US-led military operation. Weak pro-western governance and state institutions have triggered the uncontrolled rise of the Afghan insurgency, which has led to a continual increase in the acts of terrorism and violence committed by Al Qaeda and the Taliban not only in the country itself, but also in the neighboring states and beyond the regional borders.

Essentially, state failure in Afghanistan is directly linked to international terrorism. Since the events of 9/11, terrorist organizations have been operating from the territory

of the “failed” state, their activities having severe implications for domestic security, as well as the security in the region and worldwide. As the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) is scheduled to leave Afghanistan by the end of 2014, many political experts fear that multiple militant and terrorist groups, such as the Taliban and the Haqqani Network, might take over more rural areas, particularly in the south and east of the country, as the international forces leave. The activities of these groups are likely to extend beyond the state boundaries and will thus disrupt regional and, on a larger scale, international stability.

Another serious threat to global security remain the existing and potential links between the drug trade and terrorism in Afghanistan. The strong connection between the narcotics trade and the anti-government insurgency led by the Taliban presents the matter of concern to the international community. The highly profitable opium business provides funds to the terrorist groups and organizations for arms purchases and sustains their insurgency against Karzai regime and international forces. The trans-border drug trade is linked to organized crime groups operating throughout the Indian Ocean periphery, Russia and Europe. Militant and terrorist groups have increasingly exploited narcotics trade to finance their operations, posing serious threats to regional and global security (Gul, 2006: 54).

4.4. Conclusion: challenges and solutions

The ongoing political and socioeconomic crises in Afghanistan, weak state and security institutions and the de facto absence of a centralized state governance have created a favorable environment for the spread of terrorism, the increase in illicit opium cultivation and trade, and have contributed to the worsening of the overall humanitarian situation in the country. These challenges remain acute and continue to impact domestic, as well as regional and international security and stability, despite the attempts of the international community to find a solution to the Afghan crisis. During the UN Security Council debate on Afghanistan on 18 September 2014, the Special Representative for Afghanistan Jan Kubiš pointed out that there was a 15 percent increase in civilian casualties in the first eight months of 2014 as compared to the same period in 2013. Kubiš also emphasized the need for a sustained support for Afghanistan’s security institutions to ensure their ability to move forward (Record of the UN Security Council Meeting on the Situation in Afghanistan on 18 September 2014, S/ PV.7267).

The security situation in the country continues to present a matter of serious concern to the international community, especially with regard to the recent increase in violence. As the NATO-led combat mission in Afghanistan (ISAF) withdrew most of its forces in 2014, insurgents were able to conduct large scale conventional attacks that heightened

the death toll of Afghan security forces and civilians caught in the cross-fire. More than 5,000 Afghan security personnel were killed in 2014, the highest number since the conflict began in 2001, while the nearly 3,700 civilians who died as a result of the fighting last year represented a 25 percent rise from 2013 (UN Security Council Report, March 2015 Monthly Forecast: Afghanistan).

Another acute security challenge presents the expanding illicit economy, in particular one powered by opium cultivation and trade. According to the Afghan Opium survey released in November 2014, the total estimated area under cultivation of poppy seed rose to 224,000 hectares in 2014, which represented an increase of 7 per cent as compared to the record levels of 2013. As a result, the opium production has increased as much as 17 per cent to 6,400 tons in 2014 (UNODC, Statement of the Director General to the United Nations Security Council on the Situation in Afghanistan on 18 December 2014)

One of the priorities for the international community with regard to addressing the Afghan state crisis remains the provision of financial support to the conflict-torn country. On 4 December 2014, Afghanistan and the UK co-hosted the London Conference on Afghanistan, which included the participation of 59 states, international organizations and members of Afghan civil society. At the conference, Afghanistan and its international partners re-confirmed their commitment to the Tokyo mutual accountability framework of 2012. Through this framework, Afghanistan's international partners promised to maintain significant financial support for Afghanistan through 2017 in exchange for Afghanistan's ongoing efforts to fulfil commitments to good governance, the rule of law, human rights and effective financial management (UN Security Council Report, March 2015 Monthly Forecast: Afghanistan).

Some progress has also been achieved with regard to state-building. The electoral crisis which followed the presidential elections in April 2014 was resolved, after two presidential candidates, Abdullah Abdullah and Ashraf Ghani, signed an agreement forming a government of national unity on 21 September 2014. According to the power-sharing arrangement, Ghani became the president-elect, while Abdullah agreed to serve as his chief executive officer responsible for management of day-to-day government operations. On 30 September, the newly elected president signed the security agreements with the U.S. and NATO, thus establishing the post-2014 security arrangements. According to the agreements set to last through 2024, 9,800 U.S. troops and at least 2,000 NATO soldiers were permitted to remain in the country for the purpose of training and advising Afghan security forces and conducting counter-insurgency operations (UN Security Council Report, December 2014 Monthly Forecast: Afghanistan).

5. Afghanistan versus Somalia: the outlook for international security

The analysis of the two conflicts in Somalia and Afghanistan, their sociopolitical context and implications for regional and international stability suggests that both cases share some common key characteristics, when viewed in terms of challenges to international security. However, within the past decade the conflict in Afghanistan has experienced a significant rise in international attention, resulting into a long-lasting military intervention by the U.S. and NATO troops, whereas the civil war in Somalia, though still ongoing, has not been redressed to the same extent, the international efforts largely aimed at conducting the maritime operations against piracy and the provision of humanitarian aid.

Why does the Afghan conflict present a more dangerous case to the international community with regard to global security? To understand and explain the increased interest in the Afghan “failed state” conflict in the recent years, it is essential to enhance the role of Afghanistan in the context of global security maintenance.

5.1. “Failed state” conflicts in Somalia and Afghanistan and international security:

similarities

The conflict cases of Somalia and Afghanistan, when analyzed from a security-related perspective, are in many ways similar. Both countries have been mired by weak political governance and have suffered under poor socioeconomic conditions for decades. Each, at its own time, has experienced communist rule and Soviet influence, civil war, Islamic extremism and the threat of terrorism. Somalia continues to be torn apart by its civil war and fundamentalism, with limited support being provided by the international community with regard to state building, except for the provision of humanitarian aid. In Afghanistan, however, international forces are still actively engaged in combating the Islamic insurgents and terrorist networks operating on the territory of the state.

Historically seen, in the course of the 1980s, both the Soviet Union and the United States exercised their influence in Somalia, as they did in Afghanistan. However, both Soviets and Americans left the state after the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Somalia and refrained from any active involvement in the peaceful resolution of the civil conflict that followed. Somalia was similarly neglected after the end of the Cold War, whereas its own civil war – which is still ongoing – has transformed into an international challenge. The United Nations and the United States have avoided any military engagement in the resolution of the Somali political conflict after the operation

“Restore Hope” failed and the Black Hawk Down incident affected the intention of the United States to further take part in the Somali violence. Instead, the focus of international efforts was shifted to the anti-piracy measures and the provision of humanitarian support to the conflict-torn state (Clarke/Herbst, 1996: 73).

In the 1990s, both Somalia and Afghanistan were subject to the strong influence of their neighbors. Pakistan played an active role in supporting the Taliban in the 1990s and currently continues to serve as a safe haven for many Afghan Taliban militants, as well as a training base for other radical Islamic organizations. Even though the recent Pakistani governments have aligned themselves with the United States, the relationship between Pakistan and its neighbor Afghanistan remains constrained, largely due to the persisting tensions around the disputed border, as well as the ongoing attacks launched by Islamists from the territory of both states. Similarly, Ethiopia's military engagement in Somalia and its attempts to influence the emergence of a government in the country has led to protests on the part of the Somali population and helped Al-Shabaab recruit youth to oppose the invasion forces. On the whole, the military presence of other states has increasingly triggered the resistance within Somalia and Afghanistan alike, which was spearheaded by Islamic fundamentalists for the purpose of expelling all foreign influence exercised by the neighboring states and the major powers in the countries (Iqbal/Starr, 2008: 321).

From the security-related perspective, both Somalia and Afghanistan have faced similar challenges in the course of the past years. Islamic extremism, political instability, socioeconomic crises and critical humanitarian situation followed by increased refugee flows have plagued the two “failed” states domestically and have largely contributed to and fostered the emergence of threats posed by Somalia and Afghanistan to regional and global security, such as the rise of radical Islamism, destabilizing accumulation and uncontrolled spread of arms and weapons, illegal drug trade and trafficking, human rights violations, and massive migration flows as a result of a severe deterioration of the socioeconomic and humanitarian situation in both countries. The terrorist threat has also been regarded as an international, and even global, security challenge in both cases, especially in view of the increased activities and influence of Al-Shabaab in Somalia and the Taliban in Afghanistan.

5.2. The role of Afghanistan in the context of global security maintenance

However, the perception of security threats emanating from the Somali and Afghan conflicts - especially the prioritization of the terrorist threat in case of Afghanistan - and the ways the international community has approached them constitute the major difference between the two cases, in particular with regard to international efforts to

redress the situation. It can also be seen as a reason why international forces launched a military operation in Afghanistan, but made no further attempts to engage in Somalia after a failed internationally-backed intervention in the early 1990s. Even though Al Qaeda's presence in Somalia and Al-Shabaab's explicit allegiance to this most powerful terrorist organization presents a matter of serious concern to the international community, no large-scale military-political engagement has taken place in the country, with international efforts to redress the situation concentrating on providing humanitarian assistance and combating piracy.

The obvious priority which is being given to Afghanistan by the international community, particularly by the United States, with regard to countering global terrorism has its groundings in the perception of the role of the “failed state” in the context of global security maintenance. Afghanistan is often seen as one of the most problematic states in the world. It has a long history of foreign intervention and, for more than 20 years, has been torn apart by war. The country has always presented a source of interest to big powers, mostly due to its significant geostrategic position in the heart of three important regions – Central Asia, South Asia and West Asia. The peculiar location of Afghanistan has also attracted the major international actors to exercise their influence in the resource-rich region through the country (Gul, 2006: 46).

In the course of its history, Afghanistan has served as a “great game” spot for major powers, such as the British Empire, the Soviet Union and, recently, the United States. After the demise of the Soviet Union, the emergence of the Taliban and their gradual seizure of 90 per cent of the territory of the Afghan state alarmed the United States. For several reasons, the superpower aspired to overthrow the Taliban. One of these was the fear of the “Islamization” of the country which could be considered a provocative factor for other radical Islamic factions within the Central and South Asian region. Long before the events of September 2011, the United States suspected the Taliban of providing shelter to Osama bin Laden, the leader of Al Qaeda, who was wanted in the United States for organizing a series of terrorist acts. The attacks of 9/11 prompted the United States to declare the “war on terror”, which was launched in Afghanistan in order to eliminate the Taliban (Gul, 2006: 48).

In the context of regional and global cooperative security arrangements, the trends of the US foreign policy based on “unilateralism” should be considered. Advocates of unilateralism argue that an assertive approach to foreign policy can be justified on both pragmatic and ideological grounds. In practical terms, the unilateralist approach of the US foreign policy implies that no compromise is possible if the country pursues its national security interests. Thus, the 2002 National Security Strategy states that, as the only great power, “the United States must defend liberty and justice because these

principles are right and true for all people everywhere” and “America must stand firmly for the nonnegotiable demands of human dignity” (The National Security Strategy of the United States, September 2002: 3). Since the unilateralist approach is based on an ideological grounding that American values and ideas are universal, the US security doctrine also enhances the right to interfere in the internal affairs of developing states to uphold their weak democratic norms and protect human rights. In other words, the unilateralist approach of its foreign policy entitles the United States to use its resources, above all its military force, to assist the political structures of “weak” and “failed” states with promoting democracy in accordance with the US-centric notion of the concept and uphold peace and stability in these countries (Karnad, 2002: 329).

The US military engagement in Afghanistan can be seen as a relevant example of how the unilateralist approach has been exercised. The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 strengthened the belief that the United States was vulnerable to threats such as international terrorism and needed to take measures to defeat them, irrespective of the possible impact of such measures on the global stage. “Weak” and “failed” states were seen as emanating transnational security threats and, therefore, a challenge to the US national security interests that had to be protected (*Weak and Failing States: Evolving Security Threats and U.S. Policy*, Congressional Research Service Report, 2008). In essence, unilateralism of American foreign policy has facilitated the pursuit of war against terrorism and the US long-term military engagement in Afghanistan in the name of security maintenance. It has also led to the prioritization of the terrorist threat posed to international security by Al Qaeda, the Taliban and other radical organizations which operate from the territory of Afghanistan and other similar “failed” states (Mazari, 2003: 15).

The importance attached to the Afghan case on the ideological grounds provided by American unilateralism is reflected in the measures taken to redress the conflict. On operational level, the unilateralist approach of the U.S. foreign policy with regard to redressing the acute security challenges posed by the “failed state” conflict in Afghanistan focuses on strengthening the weak state by conducting nation-building activities. The United States is actively involved in the process of state-building by strengthening the capacities of the country’s legislative, security and police institutions and restoring the rule of law (*Weak and Failing States: Evolving Security Threats and U.S. Policy*, Congressional Research Service Report, 2008).

5.3. Somalia: a regional, rather than international, security concern?

This is not to say that Somalia is less important in the context of maintaining international security, than Afghanistan. Within the past more than two decades, the

Somali “failed state” conflict and protracted crisis has received international attention, including foreign diplomatic, military and state building interventions. However, the internationally sponsored peace processes have not succeeded in creating a stable central government capable of delivering security, law and services to the Somali population, while international engagement since 2001 has contributed to the further deepening of the humanitarian and political crises in southern Somalia. After the failure of the humanitarian and peacekeeping intervention mounted by UNOSOM in the early 1990s, the international community - and the United States in particular - seems to have largely lost its interest in Somalia, leaving the country’s neighbors, such as Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti, to lead the search for solutions to the state crisis (Bradbury/Healy, 2010: 6).

The United States’ limited involvement in the Somali conflict can be attributed to the change in the U.S. foreign policy after the failed intervention in 1992-1994. The loss of American lives in Mogadishu in October 1993 urged the Clinton administration to reconsider its vision of the global security environment. As a result, a new foreign policy orientation, the so-called “Somalia syndrome”, was embraced that emphasized a more traditional state-centric approach to global security. The United States was not willing to risk or take casualties, unless its national priority interests - above all those of national security - were directly threatened. In the eyes of the Clinton administration, the Black Hawk episode was proof that “failing” and “failed” states like Somalia were not vital to the national security interests of the United States. The shift in the U.S. foreign policy and the lessons learned in Somalia were reflected in Bill Clinton’s Presidential Directive (PDD) 25 of May 1994, which stated that the United States would only participate in UN peacekeeping operations if they were considered to be in the American national interest (Rajae/Miller, 2012: 31).

The Somalia syndrome was further reinforced by the administration of President George W. Bush, who rejected the U.S. involvement in “nation building”, insisting that global security was still fundamentally determined by the military capabilities of sovereign states (Commission on Presidential Debates, 11 October 2000, Debate Transcript). Even though in the post-9/11 period the Bush administration changed its attitude towards nation building in view of the increased importance of “failing” and “failed” states for the American national security, the scope of measures aimed at building the state in Somalia remained limited, with the focus of the U.S. efforts lying predominantly on the provision of humanitarian aid, as well as the provision of financial, logistical and material support to AMISOM (Vuong, 2003: 10).

In the aftermath of 11 September 2001, Somalia newly captured the international attention, mostly due to the perceived link between “failed states” and global terrorism.

However, unlike in the case of Afghanistan, the terrorist threat posed by Al-Shabaab and radical Islamism in Somalia was not deemed vital to American national security interests; hence the United States continued to refrain from any direct, above all military, engagement in the Somali conflict. Instead, the problem was primarily addressed on the regional level. Thus, the brief emergence of an Islamic administration in Mogadishu led to a military intervention by Ethiopia in 2006, which was followed by the deployment of African peacekeeping troops for the purpose of protecting the transitional government. Regional involvement by the Inter-Governmental Authority for Development (IGAD) has also become a permanent effort to restore peace in Somalia (Bradbury/Healy, 2010: 7).

It was not until the emergence and the alarming spread of piracy off the coast of Somalia in 2007-2008 that the international community intensified its efforts to redress the Somali problem, largely by conducting naval operations to combat piracy. However, the success of these measures and the subsequent decrease in piratical activities in the Gulf of Aden in 2013-2014 also caused the decline of international attention to the Somali conflict. Even though Al-Shabaab still poses a threat to Somali national security and continues to launch attacks within Somalia, as well as in the neighboring states, the activities of the group – unlike the Taliban in Afghanistan - are not considered to constitute a global security challenge (Vuong, 2003: 11).

5.4. Conclusion: Afghanistan as a “securitization” example?

One of the most dramatic demonstrations of the relationship between “failed states” and international insecurity is provided by the threat of terrorism. “Terrorist” organizations operate and have their training camps in weak states or regions of states that are poorly governed and are affected by socioeconomic and political crises; the examples of Somalia and Afghanistan are significant, as they prove that the security implications of a “failed state” conflict can clearly be international and even global. Thus, the sociopolitical and economic situation and context in these “failed” states have facilitated threats to international security and created, above all, a favorable operational environment for radical Islamist groups and terrorist organizations.

It was not, however, until after the attacks of September 2001 that the international community - but above all the United States - started to view terrorism as the prime source of global insecurity and threat. Whilst seen as potential “harbors” for terrorist organizations, failing and failed states became the focus of international efforts to combat terrorism. The strategies applied to counter the terrorism challenge drastically changed the global security dynamics. The United States, supported by its allies, waged a war against terrorism, which started with Afghanistan, the “failed” state that harbored

a terrorist organization and was deemed to pose a threat to American vital national security interests. The US/NATO-led military intervention followed which has lasted for more than 13 years. In the course of these years the conflict-driven state has turned into a hotspot of international instability and has been subject to various measures taken by the international community to redress the situation (Gul, 2006: 51).

However, not all failed states received the same amount of international attention after the events of September 2001, as Afghanistan did. Somalia, which for the major part of its history has been seen as one of the worst examples of a non-functional state and whose protracted political and socioeconomic intrastate situation has produced numerous security threats - such as political and religious extremism, piracy and, most notably, terrorism - was not regarded as the prime security concern by either the United States, whose Somali policy was largely influenced by the “Somalia syndrome”, or the international community. Even though the dangerous spread of piracy off the coast of Somalia as a result of the intrastate crisis and the linkages between piracy and the activities of the radical Islamist groups such as Al-Shabaab have been seen as a notable security challenge, the Somali terrorist threat has not been perceived as the global one or vital to the national security interests of the major powers (Bradbury/Healy, 2010: 8).

The difference in perception of the security threats emanating from both “failed” states might be explained by applying the concept of “securitization” used in the security studies. The original theory proposed by the security theorists such as Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde, understands security problems as a product of discourse, whereas the process of labeling something as a security issue is referred to as securitization (Buzan et al., 1998: 31). According to Wæver, securitization does not necessarily happen for the sole purpose of constituting a security act, but can also take the form of “politics of existential threats”, so that the security issue is presented as a supreme priority threat and enables the employment of extraordinary measures to combat it (Buzan et al., 1998: 33).

Wæver’s concept of “securitization” served as a theoretical basis for the later studies on security and was integrated in the academic debate over the “failed state” problematic. Thus, Newman (2009) argues that the idea of “failed states” can be seen as a reflection of Western concerns over the new security threats since September 2001 and represents a political construction. According to Newman, weak and failed states are granted security threat status through political labeling, some of them being “securitized” to the extent that they are presented as the primary security threat to Western countries. Such securitization often leads to the mobilization of exceptional resources and political means which might not always be proportionate to the security challenge and are sometimes used for political purposes (Newman, 2009: 425). The securitization

approach suggests, therefore, that the threats associated with such “weak” or “failed” states are also securitized and exaggerated to the extent that the attention they attract is not in proportion to the threat they represent. This leads to an explanation of the political significance of certain “failed states”, namely that the interests of certain actors who have access to resources and political influence are served by the threat of such “failed states”, hence this threat is prioritized and reiterated (Newman, 2009: 426).

If placed in this theoretical context, Afghanistan and the terrorist threat which is intrinsically linked to this “failed state” conflict can be seen as a vivid example of securitization in international politics. The “failed” state was labeled a prime security threat after the terrorist attacks of September 2001, as it was suspected of harboring Al Qaeda. The United States, who regarded Afghanistan as a vital threat to its national security interests, launched an internationally-backed military operation in the country to overthrow the Taliban, Al Qaeda’s ally, and has since been investing its military as well as other resources into combating the Afghan terrorism challenge. The United States also secured international support for its military engagement in Afghanistan by granting the Afghan problem a global security threat status. The international acknowledgement of the political significance of Afghanistan as a result of the securitization process has led to the intensified efforts to find a complex solution to the Afghan problem.

The securitization theory thus offers a plausible explanation why the “failed” state of Afghanistan has received and still continues to attract considerable international attention and why the terrorist threat associated with it has been prioritized and reiterated by the international community. In comparison, Somalia has not been granted the same amount of international attention due to the lesser political significance attached to the state by the international community and, most notably, by the United States. This is not to say that the Somali case was not securitized at all or the threats emanating from this “failed state” conflict were perceived as unimportant in terms of international security. On the contrary, some authors speak of the rapid “securitization” of the Gulf of Aden (Tarrósy et al., 2011) and the piracy problem in Somalia (Leonard/Ramsay, 2013). However, it is doubtful whether the Somali threat has ever been granted a global security status. Even though the Somali piracy is perceived as a global threat and as such has mobilized international resources to redress the problem, other aspects of the Somali conflict have not been securitized and reiterated to the same extent. In view of the relative disengagement of the United States with regard to the Somali conflict and the terrorist threat posed by this “failed” state, the case of Somalia has not been labelled a security priority and has subsequently received less international attention.

6. Conclusion

The thorough analysis of the two conflict cases, Somalia and Afghanistan, confirms that political and socioeconomic processes that have taken place in these two countries in the course of their history have created precarious political and socioeconomic conditions, resulting into their transformation into classic “failed states”. As such, both Afghanistan and Somalia currently pose a variety of security threats which significantly contribute to the destabilization of the regional and global security situation.

Further on, the historical overview and the history-based analysis show that the intrastate conflicts in Somalia and Afghanistan have indeed produced security problems which are unanimously seen as common “failed state” threats, derived from the political and socioeconomic processes and context in these countries. These challenges include piracy, excessive and destabilizing accumulation and uncontrolled spread of small arms and light weapons, illegal drug trade and trafficking, severe violations of human rights, deterioration of socioeconomic and humanitarian situation, and uncontrolled refugee flows. Many of these threats have to a large extent been fostered by political and socioeconomic developments in the failed states. Also, both in Somalia and Afghanistan state failure has created favorable conditions for the flourish of another, even more dangerous phenomenon – transnational terrorism, which has dominated the global security agenda ever since the terrorist attacks of September 2001.

Even though the implications of political and security situation in Somalia and Afghanistan for global security are in many ways similar, the decisive difference is rooted within the perception and assessment of these threats – the terrorist threat in particular - by external actors and their approach to the problem of a “failed state”, which is often based on geostrategic factors and national interests. Thus, the recent relative improvement of the situation around the Somali piracy and the increased geostrategic importance of Afghanistan in the context of the U.S. national interests and policy, especially with regard to the U.S. national security, have caused a significant shift of international attention towards the Afghan crisis after the events of September 2001.

This is to say that the global perception of threats posed by Afghanistan is shaped not so much by its significant political and socioeconomic situation of state failure, which is almost as alarming in terms of security challenges as the one in Somalia, but rather by political interests and foreign policy approaches of an actor external to the intrastate Afghan conflict, namely the United States. This “securitization” of the Afghan case and the terrorist threat that is posed by the “failed” state provides ideological and political grounds for the mobilization of resources and international attention drawn to the

conflict. More specifically, it has justified the military engagement of the United States in the country and continuous efforts of the international community to resolve the Afghan crisis.

However, even though the concept of “securitization” offers a plausible theoretical explanation for the increase in international attention to the Afghan conflict in the period following 9/11, it is doubtful whether the securitization of threats posed by a “failed” state of Afghanistan can be regarded as a substantial change in global perception of these, or even a change at all. In fact, the analysis of the conflicts in Somalia and Afghanistan has demonstrated that the security threats derived from the situational context in these “failed states” are perceived in a similar way. Indeed, the problem of piracy off the shores of Somalia was regarded and approached by the international community with no lesser concern than the problem of terrorism and narcotrafficking in Afghanistan. However, the prioritization of the terrorist threat emanating from the “failed state” conflict in Afghanistan in accordance with the national security interests of the United States has legitimized the use of exceptional resources, including military ones, to combat this threat.

Accordingly, the international efforts to redress the situation in both cases are also different. Thus the international approaches towards the resolution of the crises in both countries can be predominantly found within the framework of 1) counter-piracy naval operations and humanitarian assistance in the case of Somalia that have formed the major focus of international attention to this “failed” state; and 2) nation-building in the case of Afghanistan which includes measures aimed at state building. The scope and intensity of the latter measures are “shaped” by the political significance attached to the conflict in Afghanistan and the problem of international terrorism which is intrinsically linked to it.

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8. Annex

8.1. Abstract (English)

This research paper presents the “failed state” problem in international politics with regard to the security challenges which emanate from such states. Subject to analysis are the political and socioeconomic processes in the internationally recognized “failed states” of Somalia and Afghanistan and their impact on regional and global security. Even though the “failed state” conflicts in both states bear certain similarities in terms of the security threats they pose, Afghanistan has experienced a significant rise of global attention after the events of 9/11, which has been reflected in the intensified international measures to redress the problem. Somalia, on the contrary, seems to have largely lost its political significance to the international community, especially after the relative improvement of the situation around maritime piracy. In order to stipulate the possible reasons for the prioritization of the Afghan “failed state” crisis over the Somali conflict, a parallel case study analysis of the two conflicts with focus on the security challenges is conducted. The “failed state” theories, such as the theory of “securitization”, serve as a theoretical ground for this research paper.

8.2. Abstract (Deutsch)

Die vorliegende Arbeit widmet sich der „Failed-States“-Problematik in der internationalen Politik mit Blick auf die Herausforderungen, die solche Staaten für die globale Sicherheit darstellen. Der Gegenstand der Analyse sind die politischen und sozioökonomischen Prozesse, die sich in den weltweit anerkannten „gescheiterten Staaten“ Somalia und Afghanistan abspielen, und die Auswirkung dieser Prozesse auf die regionale und internationale Sicherheitslage. Trotz gewisser Übereinstimmungen zwischen den beiden „Failed-State“-Konflikten in Bezug auf die von ihnen dargestellten Sicherheitsbedrohungen hat Afghanistan nach den Terroranschlägen am 11. September 2001 einen deutlichen Aufschwung der internationalen Aufmerksamkeit erlebt, der sich in den verstärkten Konfliktlösungsversuchen seitens der internationalen Gemeinschaft widerspiegelt. Ganz im Gegenteil scheint inzwischen Somalia - vor allem nach der relativen Verbesserung der Lage in Bezug auf die Piraterie - seine politische Bedeutung für die internationale Gemeinschaft im Wesentlichen verloren zu haben. Um die möglichen Gründe für die Priorisierung der afghanischen Staatskrise im Vergleich zum Somalia-Konflikt festlegen zu können wird eine parallele „Case-Study“-Analyse von zwei Konflikten mit Fokus auf die Sicherheitsbedrohungen durchgeführt. Als theoretische Bezugspunkte der Arbeit gelten dabei die „Failed-States“-Theorien, insbesondere die „Securitization“-Theorie, die in der Arbeit dargestellt werden.

8.3. Curriculum Vitae

Education

2006-2010: *Bachelor degree (with honours) in International Relations with command of foreign languages* at the Moscow State Institute for International Relations (University) of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Russia (field of studies: International Politics)

2010-2014: *Bachelor degree in Transcultural Communication and Translation* at the University of Vienna, Austria (fields of studies: translation, media work, foreign languages)

2011-2015: *Master degree in Political Science* at the University of Vienna, Austria (fields of specialization: International Politics, East European studies)

2014 to present: *Master studies in Interpretation* at the University of Vienna, Austria (fields of studies: consecutive and simultaneous interpreting)

Additional courses and certificates

2010: Certificate in Advanced German, Goethe-Institut (Zertifikat C2)

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Employment history

10/2012 - present: Interpreter at Nussold OG (field: network marketing)

10/2013 – 12/2013: Internship at the International Organization for Migration, Regional Office for Eastern, South-Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Vienna, Austria

07/2012 – 01/2013: Internship at the United Nations Industrial Development Organization's Technical Cooperation Division for Asia and the Pacific, Vienna, Austria

07/2009 - 12/2009: Internship at the International Organizations' Department of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Moscow, Russia

09/2007 - 06/2009: Communication assistant to the Director of Studies, School of Political Affairs, Student Admission and Support Office, the Moscow State Institute for International Relations (University) of the Russian Federation, Moscow, Russia

8.4. Lebenslauf

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2006-2010: *BA-Abschluss (mit Auszeichnung) Internationale Politik mit Fremdsprachkenntnissen*, Moskauer Staatliches Institut für Internationale Beziehungen (Moskau, Russland) (Spezialisierung: Internationale Politik)

2010-2014: *BA-Abschluss Transkulturelle Kommunikation*, Universität Wien (Spezialisierung: Translation, Medienarbeit, Fremdsprachen)

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07/2012 – 01/2013: Praktikum in UNIDO (United Nations Industrial Development Organization), Regionale Abteilung für Technische Kooperation und Zusammenarbeit in Asien und der Pazifischen Region in Wien, Österreich

07/2009 - 12/2009: Praktikum im Außenministerium der Russischen Föderation, Büro der Internationalen Organisationen in Moskau, Russland

09/2007 - 06/2009: Kommunikationsassistentin, Studienzulassung und Studien Service Center am Institut für Politikwissenschaft, Moskauer Staatliches Institut für Internationale Beziehungen in Moskau, Russland

