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Africa Summary

IGAD's Role in Stability and Diplomacy in the Horn of Africa

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INTRODUCTION

This document provides a summary of a meeting held at Chatham House on 9 May 2013. The meeting looked the role of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in stability and diplomacy in the Horn of Africa.

As the Horn of Africa's regional body, IGAD faces the daunting task of helping to resolve unrest in a region that has seen many decades of warfare. Current conflicts in the region include an Islamic insurgency in Somalia, long-lasting hostility between Ethiopia and Eritrea, a fragile peace agreement between Sudan and South Sudan, as well as continued fighting in the Sudanese states of Darfur, South Kordofan and Blue Nile.

In this challenging context, IGAD's executive secretary, HE Eng. Maalim, outlined its efforts to improve stability and security in the Horn of Africa, and discussed the current capacity and future potential of the organization.

The meeting consisted of a presentation followed by a discussion, which were held on the record. This summary is intended to serve as an *aide-mémoire* for those who took part and to provide a general summary of discussions for those who did not.

HE ENG. MAHBOUB MAALIM

HE Eng. Mahboub Maalim spoke on the strengths of IGAD and the areas the institution works in supporting stability and diplomacy in the Horn of Africa.

One strength that has evolved over the years is that IGAD has become proficient at being able to convene at very short notice. In 2011 the institution held 12 heads-of-state meetings, and 28 executive council meetings.

IGAD policy decisions are reached by consensus. Many of the issues that are discussed in IGAD are sensitive, relating to the sovereignty of member states or the bilateral and multilateral relationships within the institution. Reaching decisions through consensus reduces the risk of any possible disappointment involved in a win-or-lose voting system.

There are strong regional similarities throughout the IGAD region that make it easier to conduct business and sustain links between member states. Many ethnic groups cut across country borders. These ties enhance regional stability and the harmonization of IGAD policies.

IGAD's approach to peace and security issues is unique, due to the nature of dealing with complex issues on a daily basis. The institution has developed a peace and security role that works on a local basis at the ground level.

There are a number of specific areas in which IGAD plays an important role in contributing to stability in the Horn of Africa. Capabilities range from mediation to conflict-prevention and capacity-building between member states.

IGAD has played a mediation role in many regional developments. It was heavily involved in the Sudan peace process that culminated in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). In the run-up to South Sudan's independence, IGAD facilitated talks that eventually helped deliver the South Sudanese referendum.

IGAD has held a long-standing role in the re-establishment of sovereign government in Somalia. After 13 failed attempts to get Somalia back on track, the 14th attempt headed by IGAD installed the transitional government of President Yusuf, and has been involved in the process of governance in Somalia ever since.

One significant capability of IGAD is its work in Conflict Prevention Management and Resolution (CPMR) through the Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN). CEWARN is an IGAD institution dedicated to securing peace and stability in the region by influencing policy through a CPMR approach, producing and providing information to policy-

makers. This is differentiated from IGAD's mediation role, as CEWARN's CPMR mechanism investigates peace and security at a lower level in member states as opposed to higher level multi-country negotiations.

Military intervention, when needed, is arranged by IGAD through consensus and is to be deployed internally in the region, with the aim to reduce reliance on foreign intervention. IGAD forces intervened during the 2006 Islamic Courts insurgency in Somalia and the IGAD Peace and Support Mission in Somalia (IGASOM) was the precursor to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). IGAD member states are the chief contributors to IGAD security forces.

IGAD holds a role investigating emerging crimes. It approaches issues including money laundering, terrorism, cyber-crime, organized crime and piracy on a case-by-case basis. IGAD is concerned with tackling the inland component of piracy as well as the maritime component. The work IGAD does in the area of emerging crimes contributes to regional and international stability.

Capacity-building in the Horn of Africa is a priority for IGAD. It works to facilitate multi-country approaches to regional concerns, particularly in cross-border issues such as transnational ethnic groups. IGAD encourages the harmonization of policies across countries, which contributes to stability-building throughout the region. Its capacity-building functions include a focus on migration, trade harmonization and the movement of goods and people.

IGAD works on a number of programmes, many of which are designed to enhance regional integration. This includes, but is not limited to, developing and regulating a free trade area in the region. IGAD's regional integration agenda is enshrined in the Minimum Integration Plan, which is based on the fundamentals member states must adhere to as part of their membership. This is also an important contributing factor regarding security issues.

Controlling drought in the Horn region is another focus for IGAD. IGAD heads of state and the East African Community recently made a political commitment that drought must never turn into famine in the Horn of Africa again, following the 2011 East Africa drought. IGAD has formulated the Drought Resilience Initiative to operationalize policies aimed to support people between droughts.

IGAD is involved in infrastructure development across the region: building roads, improving energy interconnectivity and trade links. IGAD facilitated the provision of electricity from Ethiopia to Djibouti, reducing Djibouti's dependence on generators.

Responsibility for regional IGAD programmes is delegated to individual member states. The Executive Council assigns the lead role of various programmes to member states: infrastructure projects are led by Ethiopia, drought resilience and resources management is led by Kenya, Uganda leads on peace and security issues, Djibouti leads on maritime security and Sudan leads the trade homogenization agenda. Civil servants from member states are seconded to IGAD, and work for a period of time receiving their usual salaries alongside allowances depending on the city they are seconded to. Employing civil servants from IGAD member states and assigning key roles to different countries is important to install a sense of ownership of IGAD, which translates into the security and diplomatic well-being of the IGAD region.

IGAD holds a political role as well as a stabilization role. IGAD encourages its member states to live according to their constitutional rules, to adhere to the process of democratization and to maintain acceptable levels of governance. IGAD is involved with NGOs and civil society in the region, and works on issues of good governance, parliamentary systems and female representation in politics, heading the IGAD Women Parliamentary Conference in 2009. IGAD recently held a conference on federalism in Ethiopia, and works to expand dialogue on how federalism can benefit the region by allowing people to become more involved in local affairs, and how government resources can be mobilized to enhance development in this area.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Questions

Are IGAD's resources provided by member states only, or does the institution receive contributions from outside bodies? Does IGAD have the sufficient resources needed to implement its policies?

What links does IGAD have with other bodies operating in the region, such as the African Union, the UN and the Tana Forum which looks at issues of peace and security?

HE Eng. Mahboub Maalim

HE Eng. Maalim stated that IGAD receives assessed contributions from member states, which pay for operation costs including salaries, communications and transport costs. For all the other programmes IGAD undertakes, the secretary general has to mobilize resources and ensure costs are met through various resourcing partnerships.

IGAD is a building block of the African Union; a pillar of the AU Commission. Many IGAD policies originate through AU heads-of-state decisions, which IGAD implements into its regional development mechanisms. It works on issues that are a priority for the Horn of Africa region, whereas other regional blocs such as ECOWAS will implement other AU policies in their regions.

Questions

What is IGAD's role in the capacity-building and education of the Somali government on the issue of federalism?

What plans does IGAD have to tackle corruption and improve accountability and transparency in the Horn of Africa?

HE Eng. Mahboub Maalim

HE Eng. Maalim replied that Somalia is a member state of IGAD, and the institution must respect the sovereignty of the Somali government. This is why IGAD has been at the forefront of capacity-building in Somali governance for 20 years, keeping the issue of Somalia on the international agenda.

When it comes to the issue of federalism, there are a number of principles IGAD member states agree must be observed. One principle is respect for the constitution of individual countries, and IGAD will always support member states' constitutions. Another principle is that any process regarding high-level political issues must demonstrate inclusivity among member states. The central role of IGAD is another requirement for whatever policies are being formulated or implemented in the Horn of Africa. Lastly, the continued fight against al Shabaab and the loss of focus in this fight is something that IGAD member states have observed. As long as these principles are all addressed, then IGAD's committee can work on the issue of federalism without there being any misunderstanding between member states.

HE Eng. Maalim noted that IGAD's role in the democratization process is related to IGAD's role in good governance processes, its role in building capacity of its member states on the issue of federalism and its involvement with NGOs and civil society. The continued devolution of power and resources enables civil societies, NGOs and the parliamentary system to become more aware of political processes giving them scope to get involved. This is the regional mechanism through which IGAD addresses these issues. There is indication that as a result of these developments, there has been an improvement in transparency and a reduction of corruption.

Questions

Does the stalemate between Ethiopia and Eritrea affect peace and security in the region? What can IGAD do politically or diplomatically to unlock the situation?

The Somali government is very reluctant to implement federalism, specifically when it comes to areas such as Jubaland state. What is IGAD's view on the government's failure to follow the constitution?

What is IGAD's role in the development of trade in the region?

How could IGAD be involved in conflict resolution between Somalia and Somaliland, and within Somalia?

HE Eng. Mahboub Maalim

HE Eng. Maalim stated that Eritrea is still a member state of IGAD, but on a self-imposed suspension. Although Eritrea has attempted to return to full IGAD membership, there are formal processes that have to be undertaken.

IGAD has not been able to engage Eritrea in a dialogue on membership, so this is still a pending issue. As long as there are disgruntled members of IGAD, then there will be regional instability. There are pending issues between Eritrea and Ethiopia, between Eritrea and Djibouti, and allegations between Eritrea and Kenya. This situation can only be resolved through dialogue, and only when Eritrea is ready for dialogue.

IGAD respects the constitutionality of each of its member states, and is able to convene quickly if there is any evidence that an IGAD member state has been accused by its citizens of not respecting the constitution. This is something that IGAD leaders would be willing to address, but there is no evidence of this anywhere at present in the region.

HE Eng. Maalim added that there are basic principles specific to Somalia that IGAD has agreed upon, which should be acceptable to the Somali government. As long as the government and IGAD are in agreement on these principles there should not be any problems regarding the establishment of a federal structure in Somalia. The new government is less than one year old; it needs time to implement these principles. The Somali government must be in the lead, with support from their membership of IGAD.

HE Eng. Maalim noted that there is a lot of trade taking place in the IGAD region. There is official, international trade that is recorded and comes under the realm of IGAD's regional integration agenda, occurring across the region's many soft borders. There is also a lot of informal trade that IGAD hopes to recognize as part of the region's macroeconomic trade area. It wants to give this trade an official stamp so as to upscale it and administer taxes on it.

The president of Somalia has recently reached out to Somaliland and to Puntland; he visited Puntland and has had several meetings with Somaliland groups. This is very welcome activity and a significant step by the Somali government and IGAD encourages this dialogue. Eventually, it will be the Somali people who will decide how they want to form their own government, and what type of government it will be.

Questions

IGAD has played a lead role in Somali affairs for the last 20 years. In light of the Somalia Conference where all IGAD member states agreed to play a supportive role to the new government, will IGAD allow the Somali government the space to progress and develop, in terms of the provisional constitution?

You mentioned that IGAD respects the constitution of every member state. However, some Somalis believe that although this constitution is transitional, it has already been adopted. What is IGAD's view on this?

Somalia has several states in the region: is IGAD focusing too much on Jubaland?

HE Eng. Mahboub Maalim

HE Eng. Maalim replied that IGAD must respect the Somali constitution. The current constitution in Somalia is a provisional constitution. As is the case with any country, Somalia must abide to its existing constitution, whether provisional or not. It is up to the country to change its constitution, which can take a long time: it took Kenya 50 years to change its constitution. For now, IGAD must respect Somalia's current constitution. If the Somali people want to change it, then IGAD will be the first to mobilize resources to support them and facilitate this process.

Questions

Jubaland state has announced that it will not send delegates to the IGAD conference that will take place in Kismayo. What is IGAD's view on Jubaland?

Is IGAD concerned about issues relating to states in northern Somalia, particularly Khatumo state and the Sool, Sanaag and Cayn areas? These areas have been left out of recent talks taking place in Somalia.

HE Eng. Mahboub Maalim

HE Eng. Maalim stated that IGAD is not only concerned about Jubaland. When IGAD member states decided to send military intervention to Somalia in order to oust al Shabaab, the issue soon arose of implementing a follow-up political strategy to the successful military strategy. Once al Shabaab was driven away, the issue of service provision arose, and villages realized that life under al Shabaab was perhaps better than under perceived liberation. IGAD began to formulate a stabilization policy across the entire region of Somalia.

Recently there was an IGAD heads-of-state summit that decided to send a delegation to Somalia to assess what is happening in the country and to formulate a report. This delegation will be comprised of the committee of the IGAD ambassadors including the Somalia ambassador. This report will form

the basis of what the IGAD heads of state will do next regarding Somalia. It is not just the Somali government's affair: this is an issue about stability, development principles and peace and security in the IGAD region.

HE Eng. Maalim noted that on the issues surrounding Khatumo, Somaliland has operated as an entity for a while. There is a lot of governance and diplomatic progress that Somaliland has been making. What constitutes Somaliland as it is presently conceived comprises the area of Khatumo. This is part of the discussions that must take place in Somalia: who will join what state and who will separate from whom. This answer lies with the Somali people; however IGAD will stand by to facilitate some of these discussions and hold a heads of state summit on this, based upon which the AU Peace and Security Council will make a delegation.