

Somalia

Ethnicity in Somalia

The Somalis "form an ethnic group because they share a common history, language, and religion" (³¹⁶⁴, p. 140). They are divided among six major "clans" which has resulted in almost permanent civil violence. According to EPR coding rules, clans are not coded as ethnic groups because they conceive of ancestry in genealogical terms.

³¹⁶⁴ [Forrest, 2004]

Up to state collapse in the early 1990s political factions in Somalia did not make relevant claims in the name of an ethnic group or experience state discrimination due to their ethnicity. The subsequent struggles and war between "clan-based armed factions" were also not rooted in ethnicity. Compagnon (³¹⁶⁵, pp. 83) has argued that "political entrepreneurship" of intensely competing clan leaders was an important structural driver of state collapse that became more acute after the toppling of Barre's regime in 1991.

³¹⁶⁵ [Compagnon, 2004]

If Somalia had a functioning state it could be one of the few African nation states. As pointed out by Forrest, there is the notion of a "Somali nation" on which such a state could have been based. However, Somali nationalism failed to transform into a sufficiently powerful movement during the 1950s and 1960s. It has been described as being rather instrumental and "superficial" since it was mainly designed by Somali elites to "oust foreigners from the south" (³¹⁶⁶, p. 147). The degeneration of the movement due to personal and political rivalries in the 1970s and the civil war in the 1980s prevented Somalia from becoming a potentially successful nation-state in Africa.

³¹⁶⁶ [Forrest, 2004]

Overall, ethnicity is judged to be politically irrelevant according to the EPR definition.

Bibliography

- [Compagnon, 2004] Compagnon, Daniel. (1998). Somali Armed Movements: The Interplay of Political Entrepreneurship and Clan-Based Factions. In Christopher Clapham (ed.), *African Guerillas* (pp.73-90). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- [Forrest, 2004] Forrest, Joshua B. (2004). *Subnationalism in Africa: Ethnicity, Alliances, and Politics*. London: Lynne Rienner.

Political status of ethnic groups in Somalia

From 1960 until 2013

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Somali	1.0	IRRELEVANT



Figure 678: Political status of ethnic groups in Somalia during 1960-2013.

Conflicts in Somalia

Starting on 1964-02-10

Side A	Side B	Group name	Start	Claim	Recruitment	Support
Government of Ethiopia	Government of Somalia		1964-02-10			

Starting on 1982-01-18

Side A	Side B	Group name	Start	Claim	Recruitment	Support
Government of Somalia	SSDF	Somali	1982-01-18		Yes, from EGIP	
Government of Somalia	SNM	Somali	1982-04-30		Yes, from EGIP	
Government of Somalia	SPM	Somali	1989-04-14		Yes, from EGIP	
Government of Somalia	USC/SSA	Somali	1990-07-28		Yes, from EGIP	
Government of Somalia	USC/SNA	Somali	1991-09-07		Yes, from EGIP	
Government of Somalia	SRRC	Somali	2001-05-12		Yes, from EGIP	
Government of Somalia	ARS/UIC	Somali	2006-09-18		Yes, from EGIP	
Government of Somalia	Al-Shabaab	Somali	2008-01-02		Yes, from EGIP	
Government of Somalia	Hizbul Islam	Somali	2009-03-17		Yes, from EGIP	

Starting on 2001-09-11

Side A	Side B	Group name	Start	Claim	Recruitment	Support
Government of United States of America	al-Qaida		2001-09-11			