



The Issue in Somalia is Ethiopia's Invasion The UN and the West should stop Looking for Scapegoats

The latest ploy designed to cover up Ethiopia's invasion of Somalia can be called "Everyone is Doing it." [Translation: So, don't blame Ethiopia for invading it]

There seems to be a serious effort being made to show that many countries are "guilty" of militarizing Somalia. A new UN report plays the blame game, which many see as an attempt to provide cover for Ethiopia's invasion of this poor Horn of Africa nation. It accuses seven nations—Egypt, Iran, Eritrea, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Libya and Djibouti, of providing the Islamic Courts with weapons. Most, if not all, of these nations, have strenuously denied the charges. Egypt, which was accused of training members of the Islamic Courts, described the UN report as "fallacious and untenable." Eritrea said the report was just a "fairytale."

The most amazing thing about the UN report is that it speaks of these nations, which some of them may have peripheral interest or involvement, in the same breath as Ethiopia which the regime admits being "technically at war" in Somalia and the UN report says it has thousands of troops.

However, no matter what figleaf one uses to try to cover up the Ethiopian minority regime's misdeeds, the real problem is the invasion of this fragile nation, which has been trying to get back on its feet after 15 years of struggle to reunify the Somali people. Of all the nations cited in the UN report, Ethiopia is the main one that feels unjustifiably threatened by a reunited Somalia. It is the only one that has been working hard and investing a great deal to perpetuate warlordism and clan politics in order to keep this poor nation fragmented and weak. That is why it has now thousands of troops inside Somalia and is at war with the group that is trying to change the status quo and restore Somalia's sovereignty.

This is not a new game. Especially for the Eritrean people, this looks and sounds very familiar because it fits a pattern they have been witnessing the last eight years. Statements from the UN Security Council and the outgoing UN Secretary General and the United States administration have been predictable in how they frame allegations of

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violations by Ethiopia and Eritrea in relation to their boundary case. When the target of the charges is Eritrea, they don't think twice about singling it out for blame. However, when Ethiopia is the targeted nation, the blame is spread across the borders and it tends to be milder with the operative words like "both nations" and "both parties." As we stated in previous editions of the *OEA Spotlight*, though Ethiopia is yet to accept the 2002 international boundary ruling, the UN Security Council, the UN Secretary General or the US administration are yet to issue any statement with a focus on Ethiopia's lawlessness.

Now, we see this one-sided and wrong-headed policy extended to Somalia. We also see many unlearned lessons from the mishandling of the Eritrean-Ethiopian boundary conflict.

Instead, of looking for a sensible, fair and comprehensive solution to this growing crisis, which may spark a regional war, the enablers of the minority regime are all over the region trying to round up other nations to spread the blame. However, this is a very risky strategy, not only to the region, but also to the very nation the West is falling

over each other to protect. Ethiopia is a fragile nation and any major regional instability may jeopardize its unity. A war in Somalia might have a religious spillover in Ethiopia adding to the many problems this troubled empire faces.

This is not the way to stabilize the Horn subregion. To stabilize the region, you have to start from the basic truth of what is causing the turmoil. The internally and externally embattled Ethiopian regime does not seem to see beyond its own immediate survival games. Its divide and rule policies has led to the Rwandazition of the Ethiopian people. It has been spending tons of resources to destabilize neighboring nations. Its wrong-headed policy in Somalia is an extension of this survival strategy and shows the extent it is willing to go to keep its Western enablers happy to ensure the resources it needs to stay in power.

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So, the West should stop encouraging this regime from continuing its invasion of Somalia which Meles Zenawi has been selling to the West as a terrorist haven. Well, if he is not stopped, he may see his wish turned into reality—an Iraq next door, attracting jihadists from across the globe!

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