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Why Kenya and Ethiopia ought to annex and divide Somalia



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- **In Summary**

Since 1960, the country has been a lawless state that is a haven for terrorists and pirates. Annexing Somalia is thus in our strategic interest and we must do it now as the financial meltdown continues.

Last month, Lehman Brothers and Merrill Lynch, the world's foremost investment banks, went bankrupt and we witnessed the financial chaos in the western capitals.

In the fog of international headlines on finding a financial bail-out in Washington, a rag-tag army of 50 semi-naked men on rickety boats captured a ship carrying 33 T-72 tanks, rocket-propelled grenades and anti-aircraft guns off the coast of Somalia.

The capture of mv Faina and the stalemated talks amid the surrounding American and Russian warships made me think that maybe this is the time to find a final solution to the Somali problem.

Since 1960, the country has been a lawless state that is a haven for terrorists and pirates. The pirates have told us the destination of the captured weaponry causing tension and panic in Washington, Nairobi and Khartoum.

If it is true that the final consignee was the government of Southern Sudan, as they allege, I will be on the same page with the Kibaki government for the first time.

I am a fervent supporter of a strategic foreign policy even if it attracts us enemies of such malevolent and despotic regimes as that of Khartoum.

Supporting the Southern Sudan government is in our long-term strategic interest and we should not shy from it. The truth of the matter is that as a Western ally, Kenya is an existential enemy of Arab countries, Sudan included.

Annexing Somalia is thus in our strategic interest and we must do it now as the financial meltdown continues to take away the attention of the world.

Somalia as a state exists only in world maps. It is a classic case of a failed state. It is a state dismembered into as many independent units as there are sub-clans. Its 90-strong cabinet is emblematic of the actual number of units.

The Horn of Africa country has no functioning government. The so-called transitional federal government, led by Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, is confined to a shell-shocked presidential compound.

There is no standing or even sitting army or judicial systems. By all accounts, Somalia is a black hole in international law. Together with Afghanistan and Pakistan they are known as the training grounds and refuge for international terrorism.

Kenya has been a victim of such terrorism, leading to near-destruction of its tourism industry. We cannot afford another such attack. We have the potential to develop our tourism to compete with, if not outpace, Egypt and South Africa. But we cannot do so if Somalia continues to be a non-state.

Somalia neighbours Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti. Of these, it is only Ethiopia and Kenya that have strategic interest in Somalia. Djibouti is a primitive entrepot that can't even supply water to its 600,000 people, who are forced to drink that imported from France or Coca Cola. Therefore, Djibouti is out in the quest for the final solution to the Somali puzzle.

Kenya and Ethiopia must and ought to dismember Somalia and divide it between themselves along the 4 degrees latitude, each taking all the land below and above the line.

The division will make both countries extend their territories by roughly 300,000sq km and additional populations of about five million.

Once Kenya and Ethiopia have sent their combined army to Somalia and declared the annexation, we will present to the world a fait accompli.

In 1845, America annexed Texas from Mexico and forced the Texan legislature to pass a specific legislation stating that it accepted the annexation. The annexation has stood to date and, for good measure, President George W. Bush is a proud American Texan.

For Kenya and Ethiopia, having the Somali legislature to endorse the annexation will be cake-walk. At any given time, most, if not all, Somali legislators are in Nairobi.

We will have them convene in one of our hotels and to pass the appropriate statutes dividing their country.

When the allied forces liberated Germany from Fuhrer Adolf Hitler, they sent the bill to Berlin.

Our cost of annexing Somalia will be settled by Mogadishu. Somalia is known to have huge deposits of oil, natural gas, uranium and iron ore. Immediately after the annexation, we will invite our strategic foreign friends (not China please) to come and exploit the resources for us.

Kenyans ought to know that although Somalia is a failed state, its positive statistics are impressive. Without a structured economy, its gross national income per capita is US\$600 (Sh40,000), when ours is \$550 (Sh36,800). Of its universities that operate without budgets and with armed militia guarding them, three are in Africa's top 100.

International law forbids the use of force by states against the territorial integrity and political independence of others. Somalia doesn't have either.

But the law also recognises irreversible processes like the extinction of states such as in the USSR, emergence of new states from former USSR and Yugoslavia, and annexations like that of Texas. International order hates reversing completed processes, more so if the world is a better place.

If we do not annex Somalia and now, we will be a victim of its failed status and pulled down by it. We will not be able to achieve our strategic foreign policy in the region, or attain the Vision 2030 goal.

The time to annex and dismember Somalia is now; Washington and Moscow will be grateful.

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