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CDRC is a non-profit, independent Ethiopia-based policy institute engaged in research and analysis. The Centre looks at opportunities and key challenges in the Horn of Africa, and focuses on policy ideas on development, sustainable peace and security.

The CDRC Digest is the Centre's monthly publication, endeavoring to provide an African perspective on political, economic and social developments as well as mechanisms of sustaining peace and security in the Horn of Africa, the African continent and beyond. The publication is based on dialogue, rigorous research and analysis.

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The new leadership of the African Union Commission and challenges ahead

The new Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC), Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat, assumed office in mid-March 2017, and is already engaged in addressing critical issues of peace and security pertaining to the continent. In its previous editions CDRC Digest extensively covered the process, dynamics and outcome of the election for this position. Hence, this piece devotes itself to assessing the challenges that the new leadership may face and draws attention to some priority areas.

The changing continental and global context

Over the last decade Africa has made meaningful progress in a range of areas. Despite the global economic uncertainties, its economy has managed to grow at a rate of more than 5% annually over the last decade, and African countries feature heavily on the list of the ten fastest growing economies around the world. Though this has yet to make a significant impact on the lives of Africans, due to the fact that this economic growth starts from a very low base, commendable social gains have been made in areas such as reducing child and maternal mortality, increasing the primary education enrolment rate,

and access to health facilities. Africa will continue to attract more foreign investment because of its plethora of natural resources and huge supply of cheap labor.

However, according to the UNDP Human Development Report of 2016, of the 42 least developed countries, two-thirds are in Africa. Issues relating to the transparency of large infrastructure projects, fairness in wealth and power distribution, and youth employment are ongoing challenges for the continent's future. Climate change and drought continue to negatively impact the lives and livelihoods of millions, as sadly observed in the recent drought affecting the Horn and East African region. The Chairperson will be expected to support the effort to mobilize international aid to address the current humanitarian crises, including famine, that are impacting millions in Somalia, South Sudan, and the Lake Chad Basin region.

In the area of peace and security, Africa has made concrete progress in establishing its continental architecture and has been able to partly respond to the avalanche of crisis across the continent. Conflicts that caused immeasurable pain to the tens of millions of people in Angola, Mozambique, Rwanda, Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, and Liberia are solidly behind us. Despite the periodic hiccups generally associated with post-conflict

polities, countries with complex histories of conflict such as the Sudan, Burundi and Guinea are in a better condition than they were in the early 2000s, although there are still uncertainties regarding political developments in Burundi.

However, Africa still has to resolve a number of tragic conflicts with significant humanitarian consequences. The continent must address challenges such as the horrendous conflict in South Sudan; the decades-long crises and persistent fragility of the Democratic Republic of Congo and Central Africa Republic; weak state institutions and terrorist threats in Somalia; political paralysis and asymmetric cross-border warfare in Mali, Libya, the Lake Chad Basin and the wider Sahel region; as well as frozen inter- and intra-state conflicts and the adverse effects of extra-regional geopolitical competition that complicate an already complex problem in the Horn of Africa.

Most of these countries and regions, and of course a number of others, struggle with weak state institutions—the failure to make a clear distinction between state institutions and the government of the day. This continues to be a major challenge.

Africa is also a region that will see the greatest population growth in the world in the coming decades. Moderate

estimates of fertility predict growth from 1.1 billion in 2015 to 2.2 billion in 2045, a 91% increase; “high fertility” estimates suggest that Africa’s population will grow to more than 2.4 billion by 2045, an impressive 106% increase. Therefore Africa’s success will largely depend on its capacity to turn the youth bulge into a demographic dividend. To address the challenges of this population explosion and the resultant youth unemployment, of course, requires a comprehensive policy framework at national, regional and continental levels.

Major trends and priority areas for the new leadership

1. Ongoing peace and security challenges

Africa continues to suffer acutely from conflicts, and it is currently hosting more than 80% of UN peacekeepers. Next to the Middle East, the continent still has the highest number of conflict-related deaths, IDPs and refugees. The new leadership should work with the relevant regional and global actors for early resolution of conflicts. Doing this is particularly important because it ultimately enables the continent to focus on addressing other pressing problems, like poverty and underdevelopment. In this regard, priority should be given to:

- **South Sudan:-** This is the worst humanitarian tragedy facing the

continent at this time. The current situation, one many argue, is unsustainable, but more challenges are going to emerge in the country. The region needs to wake up and consider the challenges the people of South Sudan face, with an open mind and realistically. According to OCHA, more than 1.9 million people are displaced internally and 1.6 million people are refugees in neighboring countries. One hundred thousand people are enduring famine, 1 million are on the verge, and 5.5 million may be severely food insecure by this summer. Despite numerous agreements calling for a ceasefire, humanitarian access, inclusive dialogue, accountability and healing, the war and the suffering of the South Sudanese people continue unabated. If not expediently handled, this humanitarian crisis will have far greater implications for the credibility of the region as well as the AU at large.

This is why the new AUC leadership should urgently find a mechanism to address the crisis, in consultation and close coordination with the IGAD leaders, for an immediate and unconditional cessation of hostilities and full humanitarian access. As has been stated by President Mogae, the Chairperson of JMEC, and President Konare, the AUC high-level representative, the AU should also work closely with IGAD to ensure an inclusive national dialogue that must be

authentic, autonomous, and led impartially by a credible facilitator accepted by the people of South Sudan. This facilitator must support the parties to implement, rather than replace, the 2015 Agreement.

The Agreement provides legitimacy to the government, such that it can govern the country. If the government and the international community treat the Agreement as non-existent, this denies the government the grounds for legitimacy. But achieving this requires elite bargaining with full intent to integrate the opposition into the political settlement. Observing further division within the opposition might appear to relieve the government of the pressure to pursue the peace options, but will further deepen divisions within the South Sudanese society, pushing it towards collapse. This is dangerous for South Sudan and the entire region.

The Commission should also speed up the ongoing efforts towards establishing the Hybrid Court of South Sudan (HCSS) and support the establishment of the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing (CTRH), as well as the Compensation and Reparations Authority (CRA). Some indicate that the Parties and some IGAD countries whose roles in the crisis are perceived to be non-neutral consider the HCSS, the CTRH and the CRA as mechanisms to keep the International Criminal Court

(ICC) at bay. Hence, the AUC should be clear in setting up these judicial mechanisms so that the people involved in crimes face justice. But equally importantly, there is a need to contextualize the crisis in the country within the security complexes of the Horn and look for a comprehensive solution to the tribulations that the entire region faces.

- **Central Africa Republic:-** The situation in CAR remains unstable. Despite the election held last year, reports indicate that the government's presence outside of the capital, Bangui, is limited. Several efforts to persuade various armed groups to disarm have not been successful. The Muslim-dominated ex-Séléka and Christian anti-Balaka rebel groups continue to wreak havoc in large swaths of the territory. In spite of efforts by the UN Mission in Central African Republic (MINUSCA), the situation has continued to deteriorate.

The negative regional implications of the CAR crisis and the insurgent groups' and former leaders' connections with other countries in the region forced these countries to launch negotiation processes. Specifically, the December 2016 Angolan-led talks with four key groups yielded a set of demands, including amnesty. These initiatives have now been formally incorporated into the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation, led by the African Union

in collaboration with the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Angola, the Republic of the Congo, and Chad. Chairperson Mousa Faki should encourage the new leadership of CAR, in coordination with the countries of the region, to work towards a consensual framework to ensure reconciliation and healing, combat impunity and build the country's institutions in a sustainable manner.

- **Somalia:-** Somalia completed its electoral process on 8 February with the election of President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed "Farmajo." Subsequently, the new Parliament also endorsed a Prime Minister and cabinet. This and the emerging federal arrangements that enlarged the peaceful constituencies in the country have created a solid opportunity for progress. But challenges yet remain, and Somalia's politics is not out of the woods. Actual negotiated settlements in relation to the dispensation of power and resources still require intensive discussions between the Federal Government and regional administrations. In the meantime, Somalia is on the verge of a catastrophic drought and possibly famine, and 5 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance.

Regarding the security situation, whilst AMISOM with the support of the Somali

National Army (SNA) has liberated significant parts of the Somali territory, and some progress has been made in enhancing command and control in AMISOM, the coordination between the Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) requires serious political engagement at various levels. Al-Shabaab will be tactically concentrating on Mogadishu in the coming months, due to the recent political developments. In addition to the task of wiping out al-Shabaab in the capital, there remains a critical need to consolidate the security situation in all of the regional states. This includes planning for the Juba corridor to facilitate military measures against extremist groups. Coordinated movements of TCCs between key towns will ensure that al-Shabaab will not be in a position to fill vacuums created during those movements, and will also deny al-Shabaab the possibility of manipulating any gaps caused by lack of coordination. For all of these reasons, efforts should be made to find voluntary contributions to fill the gap left by the EU's decision to reduce its payment of troop stipends by 20%.

On the other hand, the SNA has yet to build the capacity to take over the security of the country from AMISOM. Furthermore, in many instances trained Somali forces have retreated to their clan bases. The vital link between security and clan alliances and rivalries, and harmony between the federal state

and the regional states, are critical to understand how the security arrangements in Somalia should be envisaged to have long-term impact.

For now, cohesion within the SNA in a fight against Al-Shabaab and coordination between AMISOM and the SNA continue to be major challenges. On 16 April, Somalia's Federal Government and the Federal Member States reached an agreement to form a National Security Council, as well as on priorities such as fighting corruption and drought response. But there is no guarantee that the Parliament is in full agreement with the executive on this matter. This is a manifestation of growing gaps among the institutions of the SFG.

Somalia is one place where the UN and the AU are working complementarily. But this needs to be supported through collaborative rules for predictable funding and a political framework to reinforce what AMISOM is doing on the ground. The UN Peacekeeping mechanism cannot accommodate what AMISOM is doing unless a particular resolution is adopted, which is unlikely given the circumstances. Hence, there is a need for clarity and a political objective to be achieved in Somalia. The narrative that there is a resource competition between Somalia's institutions and AMISOM is not the right narrative, and it must change. AMISOM

is not in Somalia to compete for resources. AMISOM's withdrawal does not mean that the resources that AMISOM uses would automatically be transferred to Somalia's security institutions. Resources that Somalia's security institutions get depend on the merit of their organization and their capacity to fend off threats. Everybody recognizes that AMISOM is the only organized force that is keeping the SFG in Mogadishu. Hence, the way forward requires an assessment of how Somalia's forces should best be organized in a realistic way to fend off al-Shabaab's threats and how AMISOM could create a situation whereby it hands over security responsibility, with civility, to a strong Somalia force ready to take charge. Thinking of AMISOM's exit without having the necessary framework to maintain peace and stability is a recipe for disaster.

It is in this context that the upcoming assessment mission of the UN and the AU will have a critical role. The assessment should be realistic and show that AMISOM's exit is not an end in itself, but a benchmark to test the capacity of the SFG forces to take over the responsibility of securing Somalia. Having the Federal Member States as pillars of this endeavor is critical.

In light of the upcoming London Conference, therefore, the new AU leadership is expected to support

Somalia in mobilizing humanitarian assistance for the needy, leading the effort to find predictable funding for AMISOM and strengthening the SNA's capacity, as well as encouraging a coordinated approach, rather than competition, between the Federal Government and the Regional States, the pillars for sustainable peace and security in Somalia.

- **Democratic Republic of Congo:-**

The situation in the DRC is expected to be a major flashpoint in the months and years ahead. After months of unrest, wrangling, several failed agreements and a difficult mediation process between the ruling coalition and the Rassemblement, led by the Congolese National Episcopal Conference (CENCO), agreement was reached on 31 December 2016.

The agreement stipulates that by the end of 2017 elections must be held, and gives the main opposition the mandate to form a transitional government, with President Kabila staying in office until the presidential election. More than three months since the signing of the Agreement, the new Government has not been formed and a Prime Minister has not been named. Fragmentations within the opposition are increasing and there are accusations that the government is furthering these divisions. The death of Etienne Tshisekedi, the opposition's uncontested leader, on 1

February, has further complicated the situation.

Last month, CENCO withdrew from its role as mediator after the implementation of a deal stalled. In light of these developments, the Chairperson, together with other players, is expected to take measures to prevent the situation from deteriorating further.

2. Sustainable and predictable funding for the Union

In January 2016, the Chairperson of the Commission appointed Dr. Donald Kaberuka as High Representative for the Peace Fund. Dr. Kaberuka was tasked, among other things, with developing a credible roadmap to reach the goal of 25% funding from African sources for AU-led peace support operations by the year 2010, as outlined in the relevant decisions of the Assembly. Dr. Kaberuka submitted a Progress Report to the 27th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government Retreat on the Financing of the Union in July 2016 in Kigali, with proposals on how to finance the AU as a whole and reinvigorate the Peace Fund.

Based on this report, the AU Assembly decided to institute a universal levy of 0.2% on eligible imports (Assembly/AU/Dec.605 (XXVII)) to finance the AU. The 0.2% levy will provide the Peace Fund with \$325m in

2017, rising to a total of \$400m by 2020 against an estimated overall Peace Fund budget of \$302m in 2020. A Committee of ten Finance Ministers was established to oversee the implementation of the Kigali Financing Decision. The Committee agreed that 2017 will serve as a 'transitional' year during which countries can take forward the various national measures required to implement the Kigali Decision. As part of this transition period, the 2017 (Year 1) target for the Peace Fund is \$65m.

Similarly, on 18 November 2016 the UN Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2320 welcoming the July 2016 Assembly Decision and expressing the Security Council's readiness to consider the AU's proposals for support to AU peace support operations authorized by the Security Council under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. Through this resolution, the Security Council invited the AU to update the Council in May 2017 on various aspects of the implementation of the decision. The Security Council also requested that the Secretary-General of the UN continue working closely with the AU to refine options for further cooperation on the relevant AU proposals, including joint planning and the process for mandating AU peace support operations, subject to authorization by the Security Council, and to provide the Security Council with a detailed report within six months of the adoption of Resolution 2320. The

new leadership is expected to follow up and ensure implementation of this decision.

3. Institutional reform

Perhaps this is going to be the major task of the new AUC leadership. The January 2017 AU Assembly Decision (Assembly/AU/Dec.635 (XXVIII)) on the Institutional Reform of the African Union sets out a comprehensive AU reform agenda. It is aimed at fundamentally re-positioning the organization to meet the evolving needs of its Member States and the continent, and identifies the following core reform priorities:

- Focus on key priorities with continental scope;
- Realign the AU institutions, in order to deliver consistently in accordance with those priorities;
- Connect the AU to its citizens;
- Manage the business of the AU efficiently and effectively at both the political and operational levels; and
- Finance the AU sustainably and with the full ownership of the Member States.

The Decision on AU Reform envisages robust coordination, supervision and monitoring arrangements, at both the Assembly and the Commission levels, to oversee the implementation.

Accordingly, the AU Assembly mandated President Kagame to:

- Continue to act as the lead on the institutional reform of the Union and to supervise the implementation process;
- Undertake his role in collaboration with President Idriss Deby Itno, the outgoing Chairperson of the AU, and President Alpha Conde, the current Chairperson of the AU; and
- Report at each Ordinary Session of the Assembly on progress made with the implementation of this decision, starting with the June/July 2017 Summit.

In the same vein, the new AU Commission leadership has been given the responsibility of putting in place a Reform Implementation Unit at the AU Commission, within the Bureau of the Chairperson, responsible for the day-to-day coordination and implementation of the AU Assembly Reform decision; and making recommendations on a mechanism to ensure that legally binding decisions and commitments are implemented by Member States.

4. Speeding up regional integration

Recently efforts have been made to speed up African integration in various sectors. These include promotion of free movement of people, enhancement of inter-African trade and development of a

common African position on various global issues, thus creating a shared vision. Infrastructure development across the continent is the most visible sign of integration, and the continent's regional economic communities are excellent indicators of progress in this regard. These regional economic communities are the building blocks of the African Economic Community, which provides the overarching framework for continental economic integration, and they create the capacity for each region to engage constructively with other bigger actors to obtain a better deal.

In January 2012 the AU Summit decided to establish a Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) by an indicative date of 2017. According to analysts, if successfully negotiated and implemented, the CFTA will constitute the world's largest free trade area in terms of number of participants, encompassing 54 African countries, which accounts for a combined GDP of more than US\$3.4 trillion and with a total population of more than one billion. The AU Summit in July 2016 requested that the Chairperson of the Commission establish a High Level Panel of Five (5) eminent persons (one from each region) to champion the fast-tracking of the CFTA. The operationalization of the CFTA is expected to be the Chairperson's top priority.

5. Building a people-centered Union

Pan-Africanism is a people's movement—a movement that was born out of struggle against oppression and for self-determination: a demand for recognition as fellow human beings with dignity. The shared continental history of slave trade, subjugation, colonialism and racism; the ideals of African sister/brotherhood and solidarity as well as the potential for African unity still maintain their immense potential to mobilize and inspire millions across the continent and in the diaspora. Many, however, have considered the AU, and its predecessor the OAU, as an exclusive club of the few governing elites. Attempts have been made to bridge this age-old gap between the ideals of Pan-Africanism and its institutional embodiment. No doubt, the narrower this gap, the more supportive the African public will be of the AU. With the growth of connectivity—such as social media—the AU is expected to face heightened demands.

The new AUC leadership should set up a strong communication strategy to reach out to the African public. It should also launch youth-centered programs to create a sense of unity and common destiny. In this regard initiatives such as student exchange programs, African volunteers programs, and the institutionalization of a system that nurtures young leaders would go a long

way in ensuring youth empowerment and engagement.

The London Conference on Somalia: Expectations and challenges

Four months in for the new leadership following the election in Somalia, the political and security underpinnings of the country are challenging the new administration. The euphoric anticipation of the first few days following President Mohammed's election seems to have subsided, gradually giving way to real politics in the country. The more prominent challenges facing the new administration are related to guaranteeing durable security and political stability domestically. In the aftermath of al-Shabaab's intensified attacks in Mogadishu, President Mohamed announced an all-out offensive against the terrorist group, declared the entire country a war zone and replaced the military and intelligence chiefs.

Irrespective of the commendable intention to improve the security situation in light of the deadly attacks al-Shabaab has recently undertaken, no immediate results will be forthcoming. The military posture President Mohamed has assumed—wearing a general's uniform and grandiosely announcing a “new offensive against terrorist groups”

if they fail to observe the 60-day amnesty period—comes a week after the US declaration of intent to militarily engage al-Shabaab with aggressive air strikes. If realized, one cannot be sure if America's greater military engagement in southern Somalia will make the security situation in that country better; it will certainly turn it into an area of active hostilities. Any activity will succeed if the region only if the Somali security forces are engaged in a coordinated manner.

Al-Shabaab has been upping the ante in order to exploit the existing uncertainties in Somalia and will continue to manipulate the public perceptions of the government in Mogadishu. It has denounced the new leadership as “apostate” and warned Somalis against supporting their government. President Mohamed, for his part, has tried to re-engineer the security architecture, replacing the country's police chief and Mogadishu's mayor, as well as firing former police, intelligence and military commanders. Former Somali Ambassador to the UK Abdullahi Sanbalolshe has been re-appointed as the new Chief of the National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA), a position he had occupied during the previous government of Sheikh Sharif. Gen. Abdihakim Dahir Sa'id will lead the Somali Police Force, while Gen. Ahmed Mohamed Jimale Irfid is named as the

Commander of the armed forces. Somalia's Deputy Ambassador to the US, Thabit Mohamed Abdi, will serve as the new Mogadishu Mayor and Governor of Banadir, replacing Yusuf Hussein Jimale. This restructuring of the National Security Architecture (NSA) is meant to bring about the desired result in defeating terrorist groups and restoring peace and security in Somalia. But some are expressing concerns about the new appointments, indicating the officers' shortcomings in terms of breadth of clan representation. Most experts agree that informal cooperation through clan lineages from communities that are larger in size (the Somalis identify and give meaning to this through the terms Langaab and Landhere) is critical for security.

Nonetheless, irrespective of the ousting of al-Shabaab from the capital and other major urban areas through the combined actions of the Somali National Army (SNA) and AMISOM, the terrorist group continues to carry out deadly bombings and attacks in Mogadishu and the surrounding areas. Targets have included hotels, military checkpoints and the Presidential Palace.

Given the scale of attacks on government affiliated personnel and institutions, it is likely that the extremist group will continue posing security challenges to the new government. And despite hundreds of millions of dollars of

support from the international community, delivered to the SFG with the expectation that the Federal Government will expand its authority beyond the capital and other selected areas, expecting the new administration to handle the challenge unilaterally and at this early stage of its formation is asking too much, too soon.

Probably the best policy in this regard would be to ensure coordination and closer cooperation between the regional administrations and the SFG. Security and stability in Somalia predominantly rely on the imperative to strengthen close cooperation and coordination between the Federal Government and regional administrations. In this regard, ascertaining a carefully thought-out and detailed hierarchy of authority, with concurrent provisions in terms of finance and security across government institutions, both federal and regional, remains a priority. This must be intertwined with the informal institutions that Somalis depend on to ensure security and networking. The complementarity of the formal and informal institutions is critical. This, of course, requires patience, commitment and courage from all involved political actors in Somalia. It remains their prerogative to sort out their differences, more so for the good of the people and the state.

In addition to security related challenges, environmental calamity in the form of drought continues to pose serious difficulties for the people and government of Somalia. The current drought threatens about half of Somalia's population—some 12 million people. Further complicating matters, recent weeks have seen the revival of acts of piracy in the Indian Ocean. Apart from endangering one of the world's most critical shipping routes, these recent efforts at hijacking cargo ships off the coast of Somalia contribute negatively to the already fragile security situation in the country.

In addition to the increasing internal political bickering, shifts in the new government's handling of some Gulf States testify to the changing realities and adjustments being made on the ground. Particularly, the UAE's unilateral engagement with Somaliland provoked something of a confrontation between Mogadishu and the UAE, which appears to have been resolved during President Mohammed's recent trip to the UAE, whereby unity and territorial integrity were given priority.

Likewise, the issue of appropriation and distribution of resources, which remain scarce and slow in coming, is expected to create tensions within the tiers of the federal government. Understandably, dispensation of scarce resources along the intricate bureaucratic channels of

the Federal Government and the Federal Member States (FMS) is likely to involve the ever-present clan-based arrangements that have dominated Somalia's political arena for quite some time. While expectations are soaring on the one hand, disappointment among those who lost the contest will also lead to local bickering over power among Somali political elites. Displacement of those supporting the new leadership due to reconfigurations of alliances will put pressure on the functioning of the new coalition. Cracks are already developing within the administration, mainly due to the desire to make sure of the grip on government power. In this regard, those sub-clans who felt marginalized have begun to openly express their reservations as well. This coupled with clan-based tensions is expected to intensify the already tense atmosphere in the country. Further complicating the situation, complex geo-political factors have led to the involvement of extra-regional actors in Somalia, including neighboring countries, the Gulf States and others from afar, with significant repercussions for the much anticipated political transformation in the country.

The upcoming London Conference

In preparation for the upcoming London Conference scheduled for 11 May, Somali political leaders appear to have undergone an important elite bargain

and have shown a united face to the international community. This is a very positive signal and should be welcomed. But this understanding should be concretized on the ground to be relevant and to have meaning. One of the demands of the London Conference, therefore, should be to call for stronger coordination and collaboration between the federal state and the regional states, and this should be reinforced with associated incentives. The actual importance of the London Conference lies more in the opportunity it provides to Somali political actors to forge a united front and appear with an all-inclusive action plan designed to take their country out of the current situation.

The progress in Somalia, insofar as there is any, is what has been achieved in the regional states and their growing capacity to fight al-Shabaab. This should be further strengthened and enhanced, through proper resource allocation and capacity building. It is time to present a positive challenge to all stakeholders to really commit to engage constructively in the transformation process in Somalia.

Nonetheless, a number of overlying issues impede the realization of this eagerly awaited transformation. Some of these include: lack of a coordinated effort to create harmony between formal and informal institutions of

governance at various levels; visible disparities between political elites with regard to the mandates of their respective institutions, demonstrated by the ongoing tensions about the extent of power enjoyed by the Upper House and the friction between the House and the concerned Minister in the executive on matters pertaining to constitutional review; the initiative by the Federal Government to strengthen and expand the political base of the Galmudug regional administration by accommodating the Islamist group Ahlu Sunna Waljama; the thorny issue revolving around the contested mandate of Somaliland and Puntland States to unilaterally grant concessions for the ports of Berbera and Bossaso, respectively, to the Dubai Ports Authority; the immediate task of addressing the problems revolving around security and finance, particularly endorsing and implementing the new National Security Architecture; and the very nature of the Federal Government itself, which is dominated by centralist-populist-Diaspora-driven groups, as opposed to the relatively longstanding, realistic federal arrangements consolidating on the ground.

Bridging the visible gap between the FMS as well as changing the nature of their interaction with the Federal Government remains at the very heart of the matter as Somalia moves forward to consolidate peace and stability.

Somaliland has long continued to impress upon the Somalis and the international community its wish to be left alone, and it considers itself capable of exercising the mandates of a *de facto* state. Puntland, though relatively weak, continues to administer itself and engage actively in the national discourse. The recent concession of port rights to the UAE and the resultant financial remunerations, however, may introduce new dynamics into its interactions with the Federal Government in Mogadishu. What is critical to understand here is local level administrations' drive to look for similar alternative sources of resources, which will distress the cohesion at the center, and between the regions and the federal state. The leadership of the Federal Government should readjust its approach to the regional states and recognize their role in consolidating peace in Somalia: they need to be viewed as the key.

Mogadishu's dilemma also emanates from the delicate balancing act the new administration has to maintain with the local actors and foreign powers—the Gulf States in particular—as they will continue to be the main sponsors of President Mohamed's government because of the way resources are channeled. The UAE is a major contributor here. In tens of millions of dollars, the recent contribution to address the drought could save a lot of

lives, if properly utilized. Therefore, given the loose power relations between the Federal Government and the regional states in Somalia, the extent to which the new administration is ready to enforce its wishes remains a point of contention.

Tensions within the Federal Government, particularly between the President and the Prime Minister, should be avoided at all costs since any friction would constitute a challenge to the smooth functioning of the new administration. It appears that there is a division of labor between the President and the Prime Minister. The former seems to be encouraged to act externally through international engagement to mobilize much-needed financial assistance; while the latter takes care of the business of running the day-to-day affairs of the government. Such an arrangement appears to have given the PM the mandate to assign his cabinet and progressively implement government policies independently, albeit within the broader priorities of the new administration that has stated its decision to concentrate on addressing the impending catastrophe of drought and the country's rampant corruption.

In line with what was perceived to be the immediate challenge to the Federal Government—security and finance—three committees were established,

each chaired by the PM and his deputy. Accordingly, the PM chairs the security committee, and issues related to public finance management and social services are assigned to the Deputy Prime Minister.

Yet within this arrangement, the activities of the government are not without challenges. This could be understood from the recent initiative by the Hir-shebelle Regional State Administration to reactivate the now defunct natural harbor of Elma'an. Located just 28 kilometers north of Mogadishu, if realized, Elma'an would effectively reduce the flow of goods and services through the port of Mogadishu, thereby reducing the main revenue source for the Federal Government. It is rumored that Hawiye clan leaders in the Hir-shebelle Regional State Administration floated the idea with a view to possessing an 'autonomous' seaport, independent of interference, and to emulating other major Regional States with their own seaports, like Kismayu and Bosasso.

Constitutionally speaking, Federal Member States have every right to engage in such activities. An outcry by the Federal Government simply attests to the fact that the whole arrangement is complicated, and how the matter will evolve in due course remains to be seen. But all these local dynamics indicate concentric centers of

unresolved issues yet to affect the smooth functioning of politics in Somalia. Relationships between the FMS and the Federal Government, between and among political elites and clan leaders unfortunately remain murky, always with the possibility of internal power struggles and conflict.

These matters cast doubt on whether Somali politicians have really forged a united front well in advance of the May 11 London Conference, as they have recently claimed. Relations between President Mohamud and the Presidents of Regional States have yet to stabilize in concrete terms; factors impeding smooth relations have to be sorted out and addressed. Among other issues, as cited above, addressing the matter of National Security Architecture remains of the utmost importance. Cognizant of this, the political and security advisers of the Federal Government of Somalia and the leadership of the FMS conducted a meeting on 15-16 April 2017. Recommendations forwarded afterwards outline the task of reconstituting the Somali National Army (consisting of the Somali Ground Forces, Somali Air Force and Somali Maritime Forces/Navy) and the Somali Police Force. The leadership shake-up in the security apparatus is linked to this. But some are now expressing concerns about whether the new appointments will assist the leadership to mobilize a majority of the communities against al-Shabaab.

The recommendations outline that the Somali National Army (SNA) constitutes 18,000 soldiers, excluding the Special Forces (Danab), Air Force and Navy; while the Somali Police Force should number 32,000, divided into Federal Police and State Police as per the New Policing Model (including the Coast Guard as well as the local militia, the Darwish). This effectively addresses the disparity in the total number of Somali armed forces and their payroll, which drastically varies in the accounts of the Somali Federal Government, UNAMIS and donor countries. An attempt was also made to align the configuration and distribution of the SNA and police forces, taking into consideration the 'military and geographic needs' of both the Federal Government and the Federal Member States.

Therefore, the 18,000 SNA forces would be distributed across the existing eight sectors (12th, 21st, 43rd, 49th, 48th, 54th, 26th and 60th); 500 Danab Special Forces would be established in each SNA sector, with input from the Federal Member States, and reporting to the Danab Brigade Headquarters in Balidogle; the 32,000-strong police force would be fairly and equitably distributed across the Federal and Regional State levels, with the quota of the police force allocated to the Darwish elements to be determined later, and with the possibility of relegating the local militia to just a reserve force; the existing

regional forces would be integrated into the SNA or the State Police; and there would be a comprehensive demobilization and reintegration program for armed personnel failing to meet the requirement for inclusion in any of the security forces, as of course there is a high risk of them being recruited by extremist groups.

The delicacy of the arrangements in the National Security Architecture was apparent in the painstakingly developed provisions detailing the command and control of the SNA, the National Security Council and the Federal Police. Obviously, the President of the Federal Government was made Commander in Chief of the SNA and Chair of the National Security Council (NSC), with presidents of the Federal Member States (through direct or virtual participation), the Prime Minister and Federal Ministers for Internal Security, Foreign Affairs, Interior, Justice, Defense and Finance as well as the Governor of Banadir Region as members of the Council. In addition, the Heads/Directors of Somali National Forces and National Security Advisors will be technical advisors to the SNC.

The crux in this arrangement appears in the provision that tasks the Regional Security Councils with the mandate to enforce the implementation of policies and strategies outlined by the NSC. Ensuring security within the FMS, therefore, remains the sole task of the

state-level security forces, with optional support from the SNA. Similarly, the Regional Security Council would handle operational command responsibilities in the face of major internal threats involving the SNA, and the National Security Council would simply be relegated to the task of authorizing the scope and methods of the operation. In relation to resource mobilization, the Federal Government bears the responsibility to cover the salaries and other logistical requirements of the SNA and the Federal Police. FMS only handle the salaries and support requirements of the state-level police. The Federal Government internationally mobilized resources, however, have to be equally distributed across the federal and state levels. How this will be considered and supported by the legislative body will be seen in the process.

But all of this internal bickering attests to internal power machinations within Somalia, with possible indications as to which group wields the most power—the President/Federal Government or the FMS. It remains to be seen whether Somali politicians will put together a semblance of unity based on half-baked understandings, or really bring their differences to the negotiating table and craft common ground in order to save the new administration from the potential peril it is obviously heading into.

The international community has been engaging the SFG for quite some time. Previous conferences held in Brussels and London were parts of this greater initiative by the international community. But the realization of those commitments has been insignificant. Meetings of that level have to be realistic and frank in order to further developments in Somalia. Diplomatic niceties and forum shopping do not help Somalia address its challenges. First and foremost, the Somalis should be reminded that they should appreciate each other for their achievements.

The SFG should consider the progress at the local level and what has been achieved at the center should equally be appreciated. Somalis know each other and how to engage realistically. The international community should carefully navigate through that relationship rather than tilt to one side. Somalia's leaders have rightly identified the three challenges of the people of Somalia: poverty, corruption and al-Shabaab with its terrorists. The question, therefore, is how the various stakeholders will coordinate and cooperate to address these three big challenges. How should the international community support Somalia's efforts?

Of course, it would be stretching the whole situation out of context to suggest that Somalia's problems will be resolved solely by initiatives forwarded

by external elements. In this regard, an array of 'agreements' with the international community and regional powers, issued with the false promise of being panaceas for whatever is ailing Somalia, cannot possibly fulfill such expectations. Political rhetoric aside, the value of the initiatives by IGAD, the AU, the UN and other members of the international community can be measured only in terms of the desired results: lasting peace and political stability in Somalia, and this will transpire only if augmented by all-inclusive bargaining and consensus-building among political parties in Somalia. The London Conference will only have meaning if it is conducted with this understanding.

Many such international conferences have been held already, and almost all have failed, primarily due to the fact that they have resulted in no more than judicious flailing of ready-made prescriptions for perceived ailments afflicting Somalia. All observers hope that the upcoming London Conference will avoid this, instead providing a forum where Somali political actors can sort out their problems for themselves. But there should be no illusion that only the local dynamics in Somalia make or break the situation in the country.

The upcoming London Conference cannot be a magic wand, or a panacea for Somalia's woes. It will not reset the

button with regard to Somalia's fundamental benchmarks. Although there are a number of fortuitous happenings in the security sector, such as the recent Parliament approval of the National Security Architecture with minor amendments increasing the number of the troops from 18,000 to 22,000 and a slight narrowing of the Federal Member States Presidents' powers and authority in having a say on the composition and distribution of the would-be SNA forces. This is one issue that should be carefully handled, since it will have implications for the way the FMS and their leaders are viewed. If the center undermines them, their legitimacy will be weakened, encouraging dissent. The question is, apart from focusing on any drawdown of AMISOM forces in the near future, will the London Conference yield to any possible result that will levy predictable and sustainable salaries and stipends to the SNA and other Somali Security Sectors in the foreseeable future? Will they advocate on any other practical move like lifting the arms embargo so that the SNA and other Somali security structures will predictably prevail over al-Shabaab? And along the same lines, will the conference upgrade the equipment and badly needed logistics of the SNA and others?

On the National Development Architecture, will the London Conference pressure major donors to relieve debts

from the fragile Federal Government to allow it or give it space for a comfortable start? On what other common grounds could the Federal Government of Somalia partner with the members of the international community, or fairly to say, with the traditional donors? Or is the conference, another platform where the UK stages its comeback in Somalia's affairs, asserting that its penholder role for Somalia in the UNSC should be further enhanced on these grounds, to counter the speedy engagements of the Gulf countries and Turkey, on one side, and the sub-regional countries determined to help Somalia reverse its downward spiral?

There is elation about the conference nevertheless, because it gives new impetus and fresh momentum to the new Somali government in engaging with its day-to-day government affairs. A few practical points, to act as departure points, are expected to emerge from the conference that will partner the FGS with members of the international community for the coming two to three years. This will give purpose to the Somali government and hope to the international community as well.

What Somalia needs most at this crucial juncture is gentle encouragement and calls for its political leaders to sort out their differences in the best interest of

the people and the nation. We all hope that London will do just that, and that Somali politicians will rise to the challenge!

The IGAD Extraordinary Summit on South Sudan

IGAD Heads of State and Government conducted the 30th Extraordinary Summit on South Sudan in Nairobi on 25 March 2017. The event took place on the sidelines of the Special IGAD Summit under the theme 'Durable Solutions for Somalia Refugees and Sustainable Reintegration of Returnees in Somalia.' In attendance at the Extraordinary Summit were H.E. Hailemariam Dessalegn (Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and Chairman of the IGAD Assembly), H.E. Ismail Omar Guelleh (President of the Republic of Djibouti), H.E. Uhuru Muigai Kenyatta (President of the Republic of Kenya), H.E. Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed (President of the Federal Republic of Somalia), H.E. Salva Kiir Mayardit (President of the Republic of South Sudan), H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni (President of the Republic of Uganda), and H.E. Hasabo Mohamed Abdul Rahman (Vice-President of the Republic of the Sudan).

In tune with the agenda of the Special Summit on Somalia Refugees, the Extraordinary Summit likewise focused

its deliberations on the worsening humanitarian crisis in South Sudan and on expeditiously and urgently facilitating the delivery of a much needed relief aid. The Extraordinary Summit also addressed the deteriorating security situation in that country. Commendably, the Summit issued a strongly worded condemnation of the proliferation of armed groups in South Sudan, and pressured the Government in Juba to announce a unilateral ceasefire and to grant amnesty to all willing to renounce violence. Conscious of the ever-present security-related tensions between Sudan and South Sudan, particularly along their common border, and with a view to building the much anticipated security sector reforms in South Sudan, the Extraordinary Summit urged the two countries "to fully commit to the implementation of the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (ARCSS)."

More striking, though, was the call to conduct all-encompassing and "credible" elections in South Sudan, whereby the people would have the "opportunity to determine their leaders and hold them to account." This clearly represents a departure from the previous positions that endeavored to resolve the political impasse in the country through a negotiated settlement between the major conflicting groups. Indicative of the seriousness of the new proposal is the call on IGAD Member States for

"continued and collective engagement" as well as revitalization of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (JMEC) in order to realize lasting peace, security and stability in South Sudan. But expecting support from the international community for this call may be unrealistic.

Nevertheless, if realized, with a comprehensive commitment and pressure from IGAD States as well as the international community, this new resolve to address the crisis in South Sudan in broad terms might yield new results. Of course, optimism aside, the task requires a full-fledged commitment from all actors, including the warring parties in South Sudan, with a view to upholding the overall interests of the people and the country. South Sudan has long remained an enigma, derailing the collective peace and developmental efforts of the entire region. The major causalities in this fiasco, of course, are the people of South Sudan, who have aspired in vain to a peaceful and prosperous existence since their independence in 2011.

This aspiration remains unrealized, the primary culprits being the political leaders of the new country themselves. IGAD States, along with the international community, must bring more pressure to bear in a manner that corresponds to the exigencies of human solidarity and collective security. Now is

the time to clean the slates, judiciously address the impasse and exert sufficient pressure to set the record straight in matters pertaining to the crisis in South Sudan.

In the meantime President Kiir has reconstituted the membership of the National Dialogue Steering committee through Republican Order no. 8/2017. This follows the resignation of Retired Bishop Paride Taban as Co-Chair in early March. The newly reconstituted Steering Committee will be Co-Chaired by Hon. Abel Alier and Hon. Angelo Beda. The Vice Chair is Hon. Gabriel Yol Dok. Hon. Bona Malual Madut and Amb. Francis Mading Deng will be acting as the Rapporteur and Deputy Rapporteur respectively. Dr. William Othon will also be a Deputy Rapporteur.

Several prominent members from each community across South Sudan were appointed to the Steering Committee, including General James Hoth Mai, General Pieng Deng Kuol, Sheikh Juma Musa Said, Hon. Joseph Ukel Obango, Hon. Clement Wani Konga, and several religious leaders. Most notably, the newly appointed Steering Committee includes Mrs. Rebecca Nyandeng De-Mabior, a vocal critic of the National Dialogue, and Mr. Kosti Manibe.

What is interesting is the addition of foreign external members to the National Dialogue Steering Committee,

including Bethwel Kiplagat, General Lazaro Sumbeiywo and Reverend Samuel Kobia, representing Kenya. President Uhuru Kenyatta appointed General Sumbeiywo in December 2013 as a peace mediator for South Sudan.

It is indicated that all the neighbouring countries will have a representative in the Steering Committee. The Secretariat will be composed of two members from the Centre for Peace and Development Studies, two members from the Ebony Centre, three members from the South Sudan Council of Churches, and one member from the Islamic Council. Kosti Manibe, member of the SPLM Leaders (Former Detainees) and Mrs. Rebecca Nyandeng De-Mabior have declined the offer.

More crucial amidst the efforts to address the political crisis in South Sudan, however, is the imperative to question the sustainability of all the initiatives. Apparently, the recent IGAD Extraordinary Summit on South Sudan appreciated the scale of the turmoil in that country, and underscored the importance of conducting elections whereby the people choose their leaders. Taking into account the elite-driven political crisis in that country, what IGAD states propose, if realized, amounts to seeking a mid- to long-term solution to the current problem in South Sudan. Short-term plans, however, need to rely on the principle of all-inclusive

elite bargaining, with a carefully drafted plan accommodating the interests and security of opposition parties as well as those in power. Attempts to fragment the opposition, as witnessed in recent times, with the sole intention of preserving immediate political interests, do not help South Sudan.

The opposition has an equal responsibility to forge a united front, with the sole objective of advancing the interests of the people and the state of South Sudan. Elite bargaining remains the primary way out of the country's quagmire in the short run. All stakeholders, political parties and personalities in South Sudan, as well as regional and international actors, must realize the imperative of a negotiated settlement in order to speedily alleviate the humanitarian and political crisis the current impasse has produced. IGAD, in particular, needs to highlight the urgency of elite bargaining, and pressure the government in Juba to refrain from further attempts to fragment the opposition: it will further entrench the suffering of the people rather than solve the crisis in the long run.

Contextualizing the recent diplomatic activities in Ethiopia

Ethiopia witnessed intensive diplomatic activities in recent weeks, following visits by an array of foreign heads of

state and government. The frequency and intensity of the visits has left observers wondering, offering diverse interpretations of the meaning of these bilateral engagements. Most notable were the state visits by the Presidents of Liberia and South Sudan (23-25 February), Djibouti (16-18 March), Sudan (4-6 April), and the Emir of Qatar (10-11 April). At the beginning of May the new Somalia President Abdillahi Farmajo also visited Addis, although his visit was cut short due to the unfortunate incident that took the life of the youngest Minister in the SFG.

Similarly, Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn made official visits to Uganda (2-4 March), Zambia (29-31 March), Tanzania (31 March-1 April) and Rwanda (end of April), and attended the inaugural ceremony of the newly elected President of the Federal Republic of Somalia. Obviously, bilateral affairs were prioritized in the associated discussions, and a wide range of security, economy and politics related agreements were signed. But equally pressing regional issues also featured in the deliberations.

The thorny issue of utilization of the Nile waters was one of the principal topics of discussion. This topic has far-reaching effects on regional integration and security, and in this regard, some promising progress was made. South Sudan finally declared itself ready to endorse the Comprehensive Framework

Agreement (CFA); Tanzania likewise reiterated its rejection of the 1929/59 colonial agreements on the Nile waters and expressed its readiness to conclude the existing stalemate on the utilization of the Nile through the framework outlined in the CFA. And President Al-Bashir's Sudan went a step further. During his recent visit to Ethiopia a set of agreements within the framework of strengthening bilateral relations and bolstering regional integration were signed. Now Khartoum openly acknowledges the fact that its security and development are intertwined with of Ethiopia's national security interests! Clearly the sub-regional consensus on security and development matters is developing, with the Nile factor emerging at the very center of the deliberations.

In the same vein, there appears to be a readiness to revitalize IGAD, to redouble efforts in rebuilding Somalia, to stabilize the political crisis in South Sudan and to collectively address the humanitarian crisis in drought-affected areas in the sub-region. Ethiopia's centrality in realizing these objectives is evidenced by these recent state visits and the agreements signed therein. Trade relations, joint infrastructure development, extradition agreements, regional integration initiatives, and collective peace and security were among the issues considered during the bilateral discussions. Ethiopia's

economic success, coupled with its strong track record on maintaining peace and stability in this crisis-prone region, obviously contributed to the increased interest in close association with the country. Of course this reputation for being a beacon stability and progress comes with an assortment of obligations. In the best interests of the nation, as well as the interests of the sub-region, Ethiopia needs to meet the challenge in taking on positions of leadership with much vigor and commitment.

The significance of these visits by the Presidents of Djibouti, South Sudan and Sudan and the Emir of Qatar lies in the fact that they came at a time of uncertainty about regional geo-political alignments. Djibouti's new-found prominence as a global maritime hub, South Sudan's apparent attempt to collaborate with Egypt, Sudan's closer association with the Saudi Arabia-led Gulf coalition in which Qatar is a leading member—all have been worrisome to Ethiopia. For quite some time there has been a sense that Ethiopia is being surrounded, with various degrees of concern about the extent of domestic repercussions. Visible tensions were in the air with most of these stakeholders. If nothing more dramatic, the recent diplomatic gestures are expected to dissipate the misgivings and clear the air for future cooperation. The results of these diplomatic engagements have yet

to materialize, but still one can discern positive outcomes at least in stabilizing the situation in the sub-region. Of course, utilizing this opportunity for the improvement of conditions in the sub-region, and particularly upholding Ethiopia's own interests, requires acumen and a keen understanding of the subtleties informing the dynamics.

Goodwill and optimism aside, the entire situation requires strategic thinking, with the ability to align the priorities of the country with the needs of its partners in cooperation. If nothing else, the recent diplomatic engagements should be considered primarily as an extension of goodwill. The critical task of instrumentalizing this goodwill, turning it into actionable platforms, remains the challenge—and the opportunity. A new set of challenges lie ahead!

CDRC public seminar hosts Dr. Alex de Waal

CDRC, in collaboration with the World Peace Forum, conducted a public seminar on 31 March 2017. Government officials, the diplomatic community and academic institutions attended the seminar, in which Dr. Alex de Waal spoke at length on the theme "Recent Political Developments in US and Europe: A Potential Retreat from Multilateralism towards Economic

Nationalism, Populism and Anti-migration." The presentation synthesized the emerging shifts in global politics in the context of their implications for the Horn of Africa sub-region in general and Ethiopia in particular.

Transactional market politics has long informed developments in the Horn of Africa sub-region, according to Dr. Alex, and has now found its way to the global arena. Political upheavals in the West—in the form of BREXIT and the ascendancy of populist politicians in the US—seem to be redefining the global order. 'Politocracy,' a term Dr. Alex used to describe corporate, industrial and populist interests in the United States and Europe, appears to be an indicator of the ascendancy of transactional politics, whereby rent-seeking, corruption and clientelism characterize the new administrations. This phenomenon is more visible in the US, where the defense, finance and oil sectors constitute the 'iron triangle' in the transactional market. These sectors pose problems for the world order, Dr. Alex argues, as the immense defense budget fosters untoward security pacts, inadvertently leading to large-scale corruption, and the oil sector encourages states to act as mere corporations.

This global trend towards transactional politics has a range of consequences.

Among others, according to Dr. Alex, there is a shrinking of the concept of globalization and ascendancy of protectionism, the emergence of strictly market-based politics, a move away from a public utility approach with a focus on short-term economic gains, growing corruption where political loyalty and services abound, an emergence of layers of rivalry where there is a desire to monopolize the political sphere with a concurrent increase in the cost of doing politics.

Africa in general and Ethiopia in particular are affected by these changes in the US and Europe. Budgetary cuts also pose challenges to the multi-disciplinary agendas of multi-national institutions like the African Union and the United Nations, and thus challenge the existing world order. Flagship projects conducted in cooperation with the west, such as peace-keeping missions, are expected to suffer as a result of these budgetary cuts. On the other hand, counter-terrorism efforts may secure some support to the contrary.

The discussion also assessed the implications of these global changes for Ethiopia and the region at large. Ethiopia's relative economic 'isolation,' which has been maintained for quite some time, is coupled with its recent fast-track development to a middle-income country. This provides a certain

amount of immunity from drastic alterations elsewhere. Nonetheless, Dr. Alex maintains, Ethiopia does not have sufficient resilience to effectively withstand these global challenges. Rather, parallel elements of vulnerability such as severe drought and international oil price hikes, coupled with the fragility of the economy, could generate unbearable waves of unrest in the country. Of course this is not a problem for Ethiopia alone. A number of countries may be affected by political turbulence generated by financial cuts from the US and possible spikes in oil prices in the Middle East, and in fact this may entail challenges for the entire continent, as well as multilateral organizations like the AU. However, no changes in the US approach to security issues are expected, and the Obama legacy will be maintained in this regard.

Secondly, economic turbulence may be in the offing. According to Dr. Alex, Ethiopia was fortunate to use its petroleum reserves to kick-start the response to the 2015 drought. But the question remains: 'Can the country withstand yet another similar shock in the near future' if its reserves dwindle due to possible price hikes in the oil market? The 2008 crisis in the financial sector and the concurrent high-level inflation rates were cited as indicators of the country's underdeveloped capacity to withstand such shocks.

The third area of vulnerability for Ethiopia relates to climate change and its consequences. Dr. Alex argues that Ethiopia's food security is likely to increase despite climate change. But he wonders about the country's capacity to absorb the shock of climate change if it occurs in conjunction with other parallel vulnerabilities.

Finally, in the face of the growing threat of cyber attacks, and in relation to its immense impact elsewhere, Dr. Alex raises important questions as to whether Ethiopia is resilient enough to protect itself from this evolving area of vulnerability. He indicates that because of the shifting nature of political and economic competition in the global sphere, such a security challenge poses a much larger threat to Ethiopia's national security interests. Dr. Alex argues that the cyber sphere now constitutes a new power domain where states demonstrate their far greater capabilities—or lack thereof. In this regard, Ethiopia's much cherished power grids and utilities infrastructure could easily fall prey to external manipulation. He cited incidents during the Gulf War wherein Iraqi military installations were easily infiltrated, destroying their infrastructure and war capabilities in a matter of days.

Dr. Alex's presentation was followed by remarks by the discussant, Mr. Abdul Mohamed, and a lively question and

answer session. All appreciated CDRC organizing a public seminar on such a timely and pressing issue.