

Indispensable role in regional anti-terrorism campaign

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The Horn of Africa is a volatile region. Its people have been suffering of both natural and manmade disasters since time immemorial. The recurring drought is one of those catastrophes that has been causing millions of people including children and women to deaths. This reoccurring severe drought coupled with lack of peace and stability coerced the people in the Horn Region to lead miserable life.

The countries in the Horn Region: Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan, Djibouti, South Sudan and Kenya were in a volatile situation for years. Still the situation in this region has problems of stability. Relatively speaking Ethiopia and Kenya have stable situations since the past two decades.

Post 1991, the situation in Ethiopia was altered altogether with the coming of EPRDF with its foreign relations policy mainly focusing on realizing internal peace and living with neighboring countries with respect to one another and mutual cooperation. No major problem occurred in Ethiopia since those two decades although there are some instability in recent times particularly this years here and there due to lack of good governance.

But the situation in Somalia is quite different from the situations in the other countries in the Horn region. The country lost its peace and stability some three decades ago when it had fallen under a severe conflict among ethnic groups that paved the way for the country to be a safe heaven for the al-Qaeda linked terrorist group al-Shabab.

With the support of the African Union Peace Keeping in general and the support of Ethiopia in particular Somalia has been making a steady peace and political progress ahead of a planned presidential vote this year.

The political and security progress the country has made will be at risk unless there is a strong and confident Somali military that is capable to guard the country from the revival of the militants of al-shabab.

Besides, the consolidated effort of the Somali people is crucial. This is highly impacted by enhanced economic opportunities and livelihoods for the massively young population. It is known that the country's infrastructure is destroyed. There is no real functioning road system, the ports are in poor shape, there is no national electricity supply grid in Somalia.

One of the biggest bumps in the road is the war against al-Shabaab, who mostly withdrew from Mogadishu in 2011 but still carry out attacks in the city and against African Union peacekeepers across the country.

In 2016, there will need to be quite a hard look at what international partners collectively are doing, to identify whether it is sufficient in quantity and whether qualitatively it is properly coordinated and delivered to best effect.

It was forced out of the capital, Mogadishu, in August 2011 and left the vital port of Kismayo in September 2012. The loss of Kismayo has hit al-Shabab's finances, as it used to earn money by taking a cut of the town's lucrative charcoal trade.

Although African Union (AU) forces are trying to squeeze al-Shabab further, the group is still able to carry out suicide attacks in Mogadishu and elsewhere. Al-Shabab advocates the Saudi-inspired Wahhabi version of Islam, while most Somalis are Sufis.

Al-Shabab and al-Qaeda have long worked together and foreigners are known to fight alongside Somali militants. There have also been numerous reports that al-Shabab may have formed some links with other Islamist groups in Africa, such as Boko Haram in Nigeria and al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, based in the Sahara desert.

Al-Shabab gained support by promising people security. But its credibility was knocked when it rejected Western food aid to combat a 2011 drought and famine. With Mogadishu and other towns now under government control, there is a new feeling of optimism and many Somalis have returned from exile, bringing their money and skills with them.

Ethiopia's leading role in anti-terrorism campaign in the Horn of Africa region especially in Somalia and South Sudan.

The government of Ethiopia said that the country's contribution in restoring peace and security in Somalia will continue until Al-shabab is driven out of the country.

Ethiopia has determined to work in collaboration with other countries to bring lasting peace and stability in the region. Recently it expressed its readiness to cooperate the United Arab Emirates have expressed their strong desire to work together to ensure peace and stability in the Horn of Africa and the Middle East regions. Ethiopia expressed its commitment to ensure stability in the Horn and urged UAE to extend its support in this regard.

On the other hand, the South West State of Somalia says it wants continued Ethiopia support to ensure peace and stability in the country. Ethiopia has been assisting the country through offering trainings for its security forces on the bases of the Country's need to bring lasting peace and stability.

Ethiopia is part of the African Union Mission to Somalia and it has been supporting Somalia by providing trainings for security forces in South West State of Somalia, he

said. “We are very much grateful with the collaboration of Somali armed force with Ethiopian armed forces in South West State of Somalia,” President Adan stated.

Now al-Shabab has lost most of its strongholds in Somalia. It has also facing challenges from the African Peace Keeping Forces in Somalia and the National Army of Somalia. More than 70 Al-Shabaab militants were killed and 30 others were captured by the Somalia’s Puntland forces recently. Besides, large number of Al-Shabab militants have killed by the Ethiopian Peace Keeping in Somalia.

There are now reports that indicates the death of that terrorist group. Al-Shabaab has been facing a major onslaught from the Somali security forces backed by the African Union Mission to Somalia troops. It is in fact time for all parts to come together and drive out al-Shabab from that country so as to help the Somali people breathe peaceful air.

Ethiopia has been contributing indispensable role in Regional Ant-Terrorism Campaign. The Ethiopian government has taken the lion’s share in this case. Ethiopian have been striving to help Somali brothers for the past five consecutive years.

They devoted to see one Somalia and stable country as Somalia’s stability has direct connection with the peace of the Horn of Africa. The government of Somalia is also striving to restore its peace in collaboration with the African Union Peace Keeping Forces.