



General Assembly

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Security Council

This is a special part of the United Nations. The UN created this group to try to protect peace. They decide what is a danger to peace. There are 15 members of the Security Council: 5 are permanent and 10 change every two years. The permanent members are China, France, Russia, United Kingdom and the US. The other members are Bolivia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Senegal, Sweden, Ukraine, and Uruguay.

This group helps peace in several ways. They ask states to solve problems peacefully. They also advise states to do something different or offer ways to resolve the situation. If a problem becomes bad the Security Council recommends sanctions. This means other states will punish the country in a non-violent way. An example might be not buying the country's products or not allowing a country's sports teams to compete internationally. If things get really bad the Security Council recommends the use of force to bring back international peace and security. All the states of the UN must follow what the Security Council decides.

All the permanent members of the Security Council get a veto. This means no resolutions can pass unless all the permanent members agree. All the other members get one vote. They have passed resolutions on peacebuilding, the situation in Western Sahara, and starting peacekeeping operations.

The Situation in Somalia

Background

The area that is now Somalia has a very long and rich history. Located in the Horn of Africa, the ancient peoples living there traded with Ancient Egyptians and Greeks. During Roman times the traders in Somalia controlled the flow of spices from India into the Mediterranean region. In the 19th century many European states began invading Africa to divide it and turn the areas into colonies. Somalia was one of only three countries that managed to stay independent by 1914. In 1920, however, Britain took over the northwest of Somalia and during the 1920s Italy took over southern Somalia.

The area of Somalia stayed under the control of Italy and Britain until 1960. The two parts united and become an independent country. In 1969 the president of Somalia was murdered by one of his bodyguards. A few days after his funeral the Somali Army took over the country. The Army controlled the country for the next 22 years until 1991.

The Army's rule of Somalia became less and less popular. In 1991 opposition groups overthrew the government. The groups wanted to improve the country and give more rights to its people. However, the groups began fighting one another. The northern part of Somalia said it was independent and called itself Somaliland. It controls its borders and is more peaceful than the south. It has a democratic government. Another northern

Background

region declared its independence in 1998. This area is called Puntland. It is also a democracy. It is important to note that no countries view these areas as states. The international community sees them as independent regions until Somalia becomes safe enough to become united again.

The southern part of Somalia has experienced the most conflict. Different groups fought over control of Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia. No one group could get complete control. After years of fighting Somalia began to be seen as a failed state. This means that it was a country with no government or control. The living conditions were getting worse and worse.

In 1992, the UN decided Peacekeepers might help fix some of the problems Somalia was facing. Sadly, some of the armed groups saw the Peacekeepers as a threat. The soldiers were attacked and in 1995 all UN Peacekeepers had to leave the country. The UN and other groups continued to try to bring stability to Somalia but no big changes happened. The fighting continued. This caused almost one million people to flee the country and another million people are internally displaced. This means they are in Somalia but had to escape from where they were living.

The situation in Somalia did not improve from 1995 to 2010. There were attempts to create a stable government but they failed. In 2006 the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) took over most of the south. With the help of the US military, Ethiopian troops and African Union peacekeepers the ICU was stopped. The group broke into smaller groups and the fighting continued.

Finally, in 2011 there was progress being made to end the fighting.

Recent Developments

One of the actions that has been helping to stop a lot of the violence is the presence of the Peacekeepers who are part of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). The African Union is a regional organization that wants to improve all African countries. The United Nations had trouble sending Peacekeepers in the past. Also, Peacekeepers from countries in the region might be seen as less of a threat than Peacekeepers from across the world. AMISOM helps support the government of Somalia by trying to stop Al-Shabaab armed groups. They have been in the country since 2007.

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia also works to support the government of Somalia. Created in 2013, it offers advice and support to Somalia. Also, it works to help protect human rights in Somalia. It will report to the Security Council if it sees anybody's rights being violated. One of the areas it puts a lot of focus is women's rights and the rights of children.

After the ICU fell, the group broke up into different parts. Al-Shabaab is one of those groups. Al-Shabaab is an armed group that fights the government of Somalia and their allies. Many countries view it as a terrorist group. It uses children as soldiers. Also, they are responsible to terror attacks. One attack was the Westgate shopping mall attack in Nairobi. The group has been reduced a lot since 2011. However, they are still very active in rural areas of the country.

You have probably heard a little bit about Somalian piracy. There was even a Hollywood film called *Captain Phillips*. This movie is based on a true story. The reality behind the problem is much more complex. The United Nations believes illegal fishing may have been partly responsible. Since Somalia could not protect its coast many foreign ships took advantage and caught fish there. This put many local fishers out of a job. Some turned to piracy to make money and protect the area. Piracy has been mostly stopped since 2013. However, illegal fishing continues.

Arms Embargo

In 1992, the Security Council decided it would be a good idea if countries did not sell weapons to anybody in Somalia. However, in 2007 the government of Somali became more stable. The UN then allowed weapons to be sold to the Somali government. One big problem with the embargo is Eritrea. In the past, Eritrea has sold weapons to armed groups in Somali. Another problem is Somali soldiers. Since they are not paid well some soldiers sell their weapons to feed their families. These guns end up on the black market to be used by anyone who buys them.

Threats to Peace and Security

Corruption is a problem in Somalia. This is when people in power take money for themselves when it is supposed to be used to help the state. When money is stolen, it means there is less to pay soldiers, build roads, and develop the country. Over time this can make a state unstable because people do not trust their leaders. In Somalia, it stops the state from ending the conflict because there is not enough money to pay for what they need to do. Some armed groups make money in Somalia selling natural resources. This also, prolongs the fighting because these groups have money to buy more weapons or attract new members.

Charcoal Ban

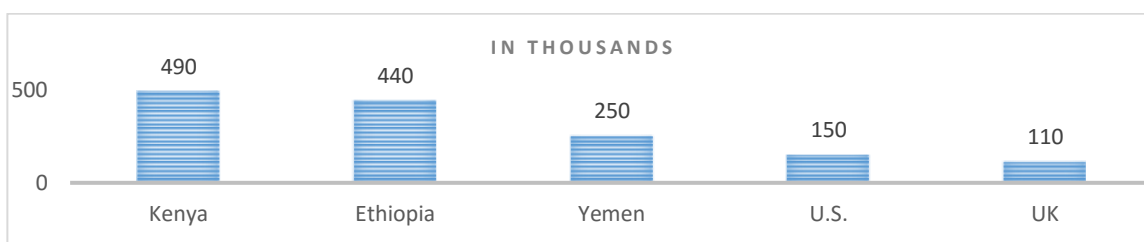
A hookah or waterpipe is a tool that is used to smoke tobacco. They are very popular in the Middle East. To heat the tobacco charcoal is used. One of the most expensive and good quality charcoals comes from Somalia. For this reason, many armed groups sell charcoal to make money. In 2012, the UN banned the sale of charcoal from Somalia. Many merchants still manage to smuggle charcoal out of the country and make money. Sometimes, armed groups will work together in order to smuggle charcoal.

Humanitarian Access

A child born when the civil war started would be 26 years old today. Imagine how the experience of living in a country involved in constant war would affect that child. The UN believes it is extremely important for aid workers to be allowed into the country. This includes doctors and people providing emergency food. People should have access to what they need to survive and be healthy. Sadly, because many areas are controlled by armed groups NGOs are not always allowed to do their work. Some groups are attacked or told to leave. This causes many people to suffer.

Somali Migrants Around the World

There are a little more than 10 million Somali people living in Somalia. Many people left, however, to find a better life elsewhere. These are the five countries with the largest populations.



Guiding Questions

1. How would a more stable Somalia help to make the world a safer place?
2. Does your country have a large Somali migrant population? Why would the international Somali community be interested in resolving the problems in Somalia?
3. How can the arms embargo be improved? How can charcoal ban be improved? How can more humanitarian help get into the country? How can threats to peace and security be improved?
4. How can armed groups in Somalia be stopped? How can Somalia keep them from getting new soldiers? How can other countries keep them from getting money?
5. The war in Somalia has been going on for 25 years. If the violence stops, what needs to happen to keep it from happening again?
6. How can people most at risk be protected?
7. China, Russia, France, the UK and the US all have vetoes. What can they agree on? What will they disagree on? How can they work together?
8. Does the problem exist in your community?
9. Who is working on it? NGOs, not for profits, other groups or individuals?
10. Knowing about this problem, how does it impact your world view?
11. How could you make an impact on this issue through your life choices?

Resources

Title	Hyperlink	How is it helpful?
<i>UNSOM</i>	https://unsom.unmissions.org/	The official website for the United Assistance Mission in Somalia
<i>Why is Trump Sending More U.S. Troops to Somalia?</i>	http://www.newsweek.com/us-troops-somalia-donald-trump-al-shabab-586004	Newsweek article about America's involvement in Somalia.
<i>Why Should Somalia's Children Starve to Pay for a Debt Crisis they Didn't Create?</i>	https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/apr/20/somalia-debt-arrears-children-starve-famine	Guardian article about how a drought in Somalia is affecting people.
<i>Somalia Country Profile</i>	http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14094503	BBC News overview of Somalia.
<i>AMISOM</i>	http://amisom-au.org/	Official site of the African Union Mission in Somalia.
<i>UN Approved Weapons Imports Resold in Somalia</i>	http://www.reuters.com/article/us-somalia-un-exclusive-idUSKCN12B1WF	A Reuters article about how guns are being resold on the black market in Somalia.
<i>In the Market for War</i>	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/jun/07/somalia-civil-war-arms-trade	Article about how black market arms sales continue the violence.
<i>A Charred Harvest</i>	http://www.economist.com/news/middle-east-and-africa/21623793-unlikely-link-between-gulf-lounges-and-somalias-jihadists-charred-harvest	An article about how charcoal sales fuel the violence in Somalia.
<i>Aid Workers Say Somalia is on the Brink of a Massive Catastrophe</i>	http://time.com/4749869/somalia-drought-hunger-famine/	Time article about how the drought in Somalia.