Chapter V

SOMALI REFUGEES IN ETHIOPIA AND KENIYA
While the two preceding chapters present a discussion on two rather compact case studies of refugees situation in a sub-region of Asia, the present chapter undertake to offer an understanding of a complicated refugee situation in yet another region of third world i.e. Africa.

As many studies have shown that Africa has become one of the major theatres of massive refugee movement involving Angola, Muzambique, Uganda, Rwanda and Liberia, etc. Given the limitation of doctoral study, a choice is made to relatively more publicised refugee situation in the recent time involving Somalia.

Somalia is located in the Horn of Africa with an area of 637,140 square kilometre. The coastline stretches on the Gulf of Aden to 1,046 kilometres, and on the Indian Ocean 2,173 kilometre. Somalia shares its international border of 2,388 kilometre with three neighbours - Kenya 682 km, Ethiopia 1,645 km and Djibouti 61 kilometre. These borders were arbitrary lines drawn during colonial times that ignore ethnic boundaries. The population of Somalia in 1980 was around 3,510,000 whereas according to 1986-87 provisional Census report, Somalia's population gone up to 7,114,431. In size of population, Somalia's rank is 97 in the world. The capital city of Somalia is Mogadishu. It may be noted that the causatory factor that brought Somalia into the limelight of the refugee problems are not only deep secret but also multifarious. It is necessary to appreciate the social, economic and political aspects associated with underlined conditions in and around that

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3 ibid.
country before the international responses to the refugee situation are examined.

Like Afghani refugees situation, Samali refugee are found in more than one neighbouring countries. They are Ethiopia, Libia, Kenya, Djibauti, Yamen. Although Ethiopia received maximum number of refugees. International effort to provide relief to these refugees under the leadership of UNHCR had to be multi pronged and simultaneous. The challenges associated with the relief effort point to some patterns as well as problems. It is in this light a discussion is taken of in the pages that follow regarding the patterns/problems in relief effort for Somali refugees.

**DEEP - SEATED AND MULTIFARIOUS CAUSES**

**Clan System**

Somalis trace their origin to two brothers, Samaal and Saab, said to have been members of the Arabian tribe of Quraysh to which Muhammad belonged. The descendants of these two brothers constitute six clan-families or tribes. The Samaal clan-families comprise the Dir, Isaq, Hawiye and Darod. They are primarily pastoral nomads and variously distributed throughout the land. They are estimated to be 75 per cent of the population. The Saab clan families comprise Rahanweyn and the Digil. They are farmers and sedentary herders.

Relationship among clans and sub clans is based on the principle of contracts. They are usually associated with a given territory defined by the

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circuit of nomadic migration. The overlapping of territories of neighbouring clans results in occasional conflicts. Clans have ceremonial heads known as Soldaans or sultans. Their internal affairs are managed by informally constituted councils known as Shirs of which all adult males are members. Inter-lineage or inter-clan alliances are known as dia-paying groups or groups that accept the burden of paying blood compensation for homicide.

Saab clans are subdivided into three Sub-clans, each called a Gember whose affairs are managed by leading elders called gobweins. The saab are also more heterogeneous than the Samaal and have assimilated some non-Somali elements.

There are also a number of despised groups who are believed to have inhabited the country before the arrival of the Somalis. Known as Sab. among the Samaal and as Bon among the Saab. Their occupation is hunting, blacksmithing, weaving, tanning and shoemaking. The most numerous of these groups are the Midgaan, the Yibir, the Tumal, the Dardown, the Gaggab and the Madarrala.

Although every Somali belongs to one of the six clan families one identifies oneself more immediately with the sub-clans into which each clan family is divided. For example, the Darood, the largest clan family consists of Majeerteen, Mareehan, Ogadeen, Dullbahante and Warsaangali. Each of these clans is further divided into numerous sub-clans and other lineage segments. The classification of the Somalis into this lineage segmentation is a very complex structure. The Minority Rights Group notes that:

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5 Sab and saab both are different groups. Saab is the bigger group whereas sab is a smaller group among samaal.
The pastoral clan organisation is an unstable, fragile system, characterised at all levels by shifting allegiances. Power and politics are exercised through temporary coalitions and ephemeral alliances of lineages so that the graphic representation of Somali lineage political groups would look much like a genealogical version of a game-theory chart. 7

The clan or sub clan lineages in part account for the delicate nature of political balance or imbalance in Somalia as a result of vying for political representation and power between these groups.

**Political Instability**

The new independent republic faced a lot of problems that needed immediate attention. The first was to bring those Somalis who were still living under colonial rule in Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti under the Somali flag. Secondly, mechanisms were needed to integrate the former British and Italian territories which had different administrative structure, into a single state. Thirdly, an official language of education and administration had to be chosen. Although nearly all citizens of the new republic spoke the Somali language but they did not have a script for their written language. Finally, the new government was required to address the problem of urgent economic needs.

Immediately after independence, the legislatures of the two territories met in joint session and elected Aadan Abdullah Usmaaan from Hawiye sub clan as provisional president. 8 In June 1961, the new constitution of independent Somali Republic was approved. Somalia was to become a liberal democracy, with all citizens having the right to vote. Citizens would vote for

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6 Kurian, n.1,p.1617.
7 UNHCR, Centre for Documentation and Research, *Background paper on Refugees and Asylum Seekers from Somalia* (Geneva, October 1994), p.5.
members of the National Assembly which in turn would vote for a president who would became the head of the state. He could dissolve the Assembly when in his view, it ceased to discharge its functions and he could appoint and dismiss the Prime Minister. The prime minister and his subordinate ministers constituted the government which had responsibility for implementing the laws of the National Assembly. The army was put under the jurisdiction of the minister of defence, the police under the minister of the interior.

The constitution also provided for a judiciary that would be independent of the executive and legislative powers. The judicial system was a careful mixture of the British and Italian court systems and of the Shariah (Muslim legal system) and the civil court traditions. In short, under the constitution the Somali Republic was a unicameral parliamentary democracy. The principal organs of the State were the National Assembly, the President of the Republic, the Government and the Judiciary. 9

The polity of Somalia in the first decade of its independence, was characterized by instability due to frequent changes in alliances among political parties, political violence and killings. One reason for this instability lay in the realities of Somalia’s social structure. Beneath the apparent homogeneity at the national level, Somali society was divided, not only by social and occupational stratification and differences between urban and rural sectors, but especially by the clan forms of social organisation to which most Somalis belong.

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Despite the constitutional renunciation of war as a means of settling international disputes, Somalia's leaders recognised that their hopes for a unified Somalia might one day bring them into armed conflict. They hoped to increase the size of their army and they sought foreign aid to achieve this goal. For this purpose, Somalia's leaders went first to the United States. But, the United States was reluctant to arm the Somalis in light of the U.S. alliance with Ethiopia. Then the erstwhile Soviet Union was pulled into this power vacuum. By 1962 the Soviets had agreed to give loans worth $52 million and to help build a 14,000 troop army. The Soviets provided the Somali army with T-34 tanks, armoured personnel carriers and MIG-15 MIG-17 aircrafts. Some three hundred Soviet advisers worked in Somalia and more than five hundred Somali personnel were trained in the Soviet Union during the 1960s. The Soviet Union had great influence on the security network in Somalia and Soviet advisers assisted the Somali army during the coup d'état of October 1969.

**Siyaad Barre era**

When in 1960 the British and Italian Somalilands united to form the independent Somali Republic, a coalition government was formed and subsequently elections were held in 1964 and 1969. Seven months after the 1969 election President Shermarke was assassinated by a soldier. In October, 1969, following the assassination of President Shermarke, General Mohammad Siyaad Barre staged a bloodless coup d'état and became head of the State. The National Assembly was abolished. A supreme Revolutionary

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Council (SRC) seized control to "preserve democracy and justice and to eliminate corruption and clanism." 11

In the post coup regime, Siyaad Barre was the unquestioned leader. He chaired the Supreme Revolutionary Council, which had the power to legislate new law, repeal old ones and to direct ministers on questions of administration.

On the first anniversary of the revolution, Siyaad Barre announced that henceforth Somalia would be a "Scientifically socialist" state. The president's key socialist link was, of course, the erstwhile Soviet Union. A series of economic and military agreements provided resources for Siyaad Barre to enhance the power of his army and to fund his first five year plan. Somalia's incorporation into the socialist world was symbolised by the signing of a Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation with the Soviet Union in July 1974. 12

In a report, it was described that "the progress of the Siyaad Barre regime over the years as a devolution into a repressive and dynastic form of crypto-Marxism which strongly favoured his own minority sub-clan, alienating majority clans and fuelling several clan-based insurgencies 13. Thus any explanation of the level of hostilities between Somalia's clans could be sourced to president Siyaad Barre's deliberate divisive tactics for maintaining power. Despite his rhetoric on the elimination of clanism, Siyaad Barre's government was dominated by members of his own Mareeshan clan. The

10 Laitin and others, n.8, p.78.
11 ibid, p.79.
12 ibid, p.82.
monopoly that the relatives and clan members of the President Barre had over education, health, employment and business opportunities generated deep-rooted grievances and has had an important political effect on alienating other clans. The groups which had organised some of the opposition to the Siyaad Barre government i.e. Majeerteen sub clan members of the Darood clan, Hawiye and Isaaks were among the principal targets of government repression. However, other groups which opposed the Siyaad Barre regime also suffered a lot. Since Siyaad Barre retaliated against political dissent by punishing whole clans or sub-clans, ethnic divisions were sharply aggravated. As shifting coalitions in the wake of Siyaad Barre’s fall demonstrated that clan and subclan hostilities are more a response to regional and political considerations than immutable historical fault lines14.

President Siyaad Barre began to provide his support to the leadership of the Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF), the umbrella organisation of the Somali guerrilla movements in Ethiopia. As a result, hostilities between Somalia and Ethiopia arose. By 1977 Somali regular troops entered the fray and made substantial inroads. But the Soviet Union refused to support this Somali war effort against Ethiopia. Rather the Soviet Union supported Ethiopia. The Soviet Union stopped all aid to Somalia and supplied about $1.5 billion in military equipment to Ethiopia. Ultimately the Ethiopian forces, aided by Cuba and the Soviet Union, drove the Somalis back across the border, leaving Somali hopes for victory dashed. By 1977 Soviet military support for Ethiopia had

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reached such a scale that Somalia expelled Russians military missions and turned to Americans. 15 As a result the U.S. agreed to provide defensive weapons, refugee relief and economic aid to Somalia. This war proved as the central turning point in Siyaad Barre’s rule. Its consequences snow balled into a major political, economic and social crises.

When the 1977-1978 war failed, the Majeerteen officers were the first to criticise Siyaad Barre’s leadership. Somalia’s defeat in the 1977-78 war with Ethiopia not only deteriorated social, economic and political conditions but also resulted in a fighting between government troops and dissident militias and by 1988 the country was in the throes of a civil war.16

In April 1978, some Majeerteen officers in the north-east led by Mohammad Sheikh Usmaan attempted to stage a coup d’etat. It failed, but one of his men, Abdillaahi Yusuf Ahmad escaped, formed an opposition movement called the Somalia Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF) with its base in Ethiopia.17

In 1981 a number of Isaaq Emigres living in London formed the Somali National Movement (SNM) against Siyaad Barre and started a guerrilla war.18 This became the second clan-based opposition group to Siyaad Barre’s rule. The fighting there intensified in 1988 when the SNM occupied Hargeisa, the largest city of the region. The city was in turn destroyed by government aircraft and artillery. As a result, around 50,000 people lost their lives in this

14 ibid.
17 Laitin and others, n.8,p.92.
18 ibid, p.93.
fighting and an estimated 5,00,000 were driven from their homes. Out of that some 3,70,000 fled to Ethiopia. 19

In central Somalia, the United Somalia Congress (USC), which was getting support from the Hawiye clan, also took to arms against President Siyaad Barre’s government and in 1990 formed an alliance with the SNM and an Ogaadeen-based movement, the Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM). The SPM was created at the initiative of Colonel Omar Jess early in 1990 and was the political expression of the Ogaadeen clans. 20

In December 1990, President Siyaad Barre declared a state of emergency. One month later his army crumbled and he fled from Mogadishu to the south with a rump force. Huge quantities of heavy weapons fell into the hands of the victorious factions.

The United Somali Congress (USC) which took control of Mogadishu, was itself divided into rival factions based on different sub-clans of the Hawiye.

One faction was headed by General Mohammed Farrah Aideed of the Habr Gedir sub-clan who had led the USC’s military operations against Siyaad Barre government. After the death of Mohammed Farrah Aideed in August 1996, his son Jussein Mohammed Aideed took over the leadership of this group. Thus, this group of USC was called the Somali National Alliance (SNA).

The other group of USC was called the Somali Salvation Alliance (SSA) headed by Ali Mahdi Mohammed of Abgal sub-clan. Ali Mahdi was

an elected as interim president of Somalia on 29 January 1991.21 This move was bitterly opposed by general Mohammed Farrah Aideed and several other faction leaders. A fighting between these two factions took place in which about 30,000 people were killed or wounded in four months in Mogadishu in 1992. 22 Ali Mahdi is a strong supporter of the United Nations operations in Somalia. Ali Mahdi put together the main alliance of clans against Aideed.

In addition to above mentioned fighting factions in Somalia, some other groups also emerged after 1991. For example, the Somali National Front (SNF) led by General Morgan is based on Siyaad Barre’s Mareehan clan and remained the focus of support for General Aideed and later for his son, Hussein Mohammed Aideed. The SNF almost recaptured Mogadishu in April 1992 but was eventually pushed back to the Kenyan border by a temporarily reconciled USC. The SNF survived in a diminished form in and around Kismayo in the south of Somalia.

In 1991, the Southern Somali National Movement (SSNM) was created under the sponsorship of General Aideed to support Colonel Omar Jess in his fight against the SNF in the area. During the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) which will be discussed in detail later, the SSNM split with one branch supporting the United Nations and another remaining faithful to the SNA. The SSNM is a small front because of its limited clan base, but it occupies a strategic area in the South of Somalia.

The Somali Democratic Movement (SDM) was created essentially to protect the sedentary peasants of the Digil and Rahanweyn clan families living

20 UNHCR, n.13, p. 9.
in Southern Somalia from the warring factions. The SDM did not however, succeed much in this mission. This was the area most affected by famine in mid-1992 when SDM was unable to stop the attacks on the villages and the looting of the grain reserves. During the UNOSOM intervention, the SDM split into a faction led by Mohammed Nur Aleeyow which supported General Aideed and another faction led by Abdi Mussa Mayow which decided to cooperate with the United Nations. The SDM is politically important because of the size of its constituent clans i.e. the Digil and Rahanweyn together are about 40 per cent of the population of Somalia, but SDM is a militarily weak group.

Recent Developments in Somalia

The chance of normalizing the situation in the country after the fall of former President Siyaad Barre in 1991 was destroyed due to rivalries between more than a dozen militias based on clan. Shifting alliances among them and splits within the groups have continued to characterise the political front in the country. The main faction in Mogadishu the USC which was already divided in 1991, was further divided when Ali Osman Atto took control of SNA and allied himself with Ali Mahdi of the SSA in 1995.

By late 1991, the country had no any government and the state had collapsed “Subclan fighting had largely distorted and looted city of Mogadishu, where those who survived the constant bombardments found little

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22 UNHCR, n.13, p.7.
safety from the numerous heavily armed clan or family-based marauding gangs terrorising the city."^23

Throughout 1991, battle among these factions militias was continued. In November 1991, an all-out war for control of Mogadishu broke out between the forces of General Aideed and Ali Mahdi. Mogadishu was divided into two zones, one in the southern part was dominated by General Aideed’s forces, the other in north Mogadishu held by Mr. Ali Mahdi’s militia. The south of the country also became a battleground. The chaos and violence in the southern agricultural regions, resulted in the plundering of grain stores and the uprooting of local farming populations. This was the most important cause of the famine which was to grip southern Somalia in 1992-1993.

HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN SOMALIA AND THE UNITED NATIONS RESPONSE

The outbreak of famine

Somalia has only 2 per cent of arable land which can sustain food crops. Somalia’s land is suitable only for raising livestock. Thus, the country has always food deficit but it has been a major exporter of livestock. During 1974-1975 a devastating drought took place in which crops destroyed and lakhs of nomads lost their livestock. The vast exodus of ethnic Somalis and

related people from the Ogaden region of Ethiopia into Somalia during 1977-1978 created further pressures on scarce land and water resources that created humanitarian crisis.24

As far as health services are concerned only 27 percent of the population had access to it in 1988-1991, compared to 81 percent for all developing countries. Only 60 percent of population had access to safe drinking water and only 17 percent to sanitation. In these conditions, the Somalis were particularly vulnerable to disease, especially if a major food crisis further eroded nutritional levels. Thus, in this poor condition, drought or other natural calamities could put Somalia in the danger of a humanitarian crisis. But it was warfare that drove Somalia into famine. The civil war in Somalia had uprooted an estimated 1.7 million people who sought refuge in the neighbouring countries and 250,000 people displaced within the country.25 This displacement of people badly affected the food production. According to the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) the area of cultivated land fell by almost half between 1989 and 1991. During the same period the production of grains also declined. The armed militias destroyed the farmland, plundered grain and seed stocks, damaged irrigation facilities, killed livestock of opposing clans so that they could not get food and water.

Not only that, the factions and armed men prevented deliveries of food and other humanitarian relief supplies by the United Nations and other voluntary agencies. They were looting the food stock which were provided to starving people. Instead of paying their soldiers in cash the militias promised

them a share of the loot they captured from their enemies. Militiamen were terrorising civilians and aid workers by stealing food from aid agencies warehouses and from the docks and airports and by attacking trucks delivering food to the needy.

By November 1991, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) found that in southern Somalia, 40 per cent of the people were severely malnourished and another 50 per cent were moderately malnourished. In short, the most of the population was at risk of starvation and approximately one third of all Somali children under the age of five died from starvation. 26

**UNOSOM I**

Nation-wide fighting in 1991-1992 divided Somalia and contributed to a famine in which around 350,000 people died. 27 The scale of human suffering and the intense media coverage of the plight of the Somali people, stimulated the United Nations to deploy a peacekeeping force in Somalia. This peacekeeping effort of the UN is known as the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM). On 24 April 1992, the Security Council decided to establish UNOSOM.28 In the light of the deteriorating situation in Somalia, the Security Council through resolution 733 (1992) imposed a general and complete embargo on all deliveries of weapons and military equipment to Somalia. Further, the Security Council asked the Secretary-General to deploy unarmed but uniformed United Nations military observers in Somalia. It also asked to continue consultations with the parties in Mogadishu in that regard.

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27 UNHCR, n.14, p.7.
However, on 23 June, the Secretary-General informed the Security Council that both principal factions in Mogadishu had agreed to the deployment of the unarmed observers. The observers under a Chief Military Observer (CMO), Brigadier General Imtiaz Shaheen of Pakistan arrived in Mogadishu. In accordance with the agreements, the cease-fire in the capital was to be monitored by a group of 50 unarmed uniformed United Nations military observers. They were provided protection and security for United Nations personnel, equipment and supplies at the seaports and airports in Mogadishu and escort deliveries of humanitarian supplies from there to distribution centres in the city and its immediate environs.

For the first time in the history of United Nations peace-keeping, one of the primary purpose of the UNOSOM was to make possible the delivery of emergency assistance to civilian population.29 When peace-keepers were deployed, they made every effort by peaceful persuasion to stop the fighting between warring parties but they did not force them to cease their hostilities. The security force sent to Somalia was intended to help deter armed attacks on humanitarian relief operations and was to use its weapons only in self-defence if deterrence failed.

However, very quickly after the deployment of UNOSOM, some leaders of the fighting factions in Somalia began to take an aggressive threatening stance towards the United Nations. Meanwhile, conditions within Somalia continued to deteriorate. To deal with this situation the Secretary-General proposed that the United Nations should enlarge its efforts to help bring about an effective cease-fire throughout the country, while at the same time pressing

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around with parallel efforts to promote national reconciliation. It should establish a presence in all regions and adopt a comprehensive approach dealing with all aspects of the Somalia situation such as humanitarian relief and recovery, the cessation of hostilities and security, the peace process and national reconciliation in a consolidated form work. The Secretary-General further said that “the desperate and complex situation in Somalia will require energetic and sustained efforts on the part of the international community to break the circle of violence and hunger.” 30 The United Nations could support the process but only the people of Somalia could resolve the conflict.

Furthermore, in July 1992 the Security Council endorsed the sending of a technical team to Somalia in order to obtain the agreement of local political leaders for the deployment of security units in Somalia. The team was headed by Peter Hansen of Denmark, Under-Secretary-General for humanitarian affairs, which visited Somalia in August. However, on 12 August the Secretary General reported to the Security Council that an agreement had been reached on the deployment of security units in Bossasso and Gedo region where a large number of displaced persons were concentrated.

After all, these troops could not be deployed and UNOSOM-I could not extend its operation beyond Mogadishu.31 Once again some of the faction leaders refused to approve the deployment of peace-keepers which in turn increased problems in providing adequate security for famine relief. On 16 October, the Security Council stated that “persons hampering the deployment

30 The Blue Helmets, n.29, p.291.

of the Operation in Somalia would be responsible for aggravating an already unprecedented humanitarian disaster". 32

In another development, general Aideed who previously agreed to the deployment of Pakistani troops in Mogadishu later on changed his mind. He objected and warned that any forcible UNOSOM deployment would be met by violence and killings. He further ordered the immediate expulsion from Somalia of UNOSOM’s Co-ordinator for Humanitarian Assistance whose activities were allegedly against the interest of the Somali people and his security could no longer be guaranteed.

Meanwhile, a new conflict had developed in the south-west of Somalia where the militia of former President Siyaad Barre succeeded in recapturing Bardera in October 1992. Relief workers from the World Food Programme (WFP), UNICEF and Voluntary agencies were trapped in the city and food stocks were looted. The daily death rate was increased up to 300 during the fighting. Whatever progress the international community had made in months of efforts in Bardera was erased by the new fighting.

Notwithstanding such distressing circumstances made it difficult for the United Nations Operation to achieve the objectives approved by the Security Council. Not only that, the on going warfare and also deteriorating situation in Somalia such as failing to allow for the safe delivery of humanitarian assistance led to change in the international community’s approach to Somali crisis.

UNITAF

Through a resolution 794 (1992) adopted by the security council on 3 December 1992, Unified Task Force (UNITAF) was established, which was code-named “Operation Restore Hope” by the United States. The operational command of UNITAF forces was assumed by the United States, which had the largest contingent. The UNITAF consisted of approximately 37,000 troops. Out of that the United States has provided 28,000 marines and infantry. Other soldiers were from more than twenty countries. These forces were spread out across the central and southern parts of Somalia, which were the worst affected areas by the famine. These forces immediately captured and secured ports and airports that provide protective convoys for humanitarian relief supplies and guard food distribution centres. In most cases officials of the United Nations and the United States went ahead of the troops and succeeded in convincing Somalia militias to leave the town before the UNITAF forces arrived. As UNITAF achieved its immediate objectives, its troop strength declined gradually. In March 1993, it came down to about 28,000.

The improved security conditions made it possible for United Nations agencies and NGOs to strengthen their staff in Somalia. As a result the WFP, the UNICEF and WHO expanded their operations throughout Somalia by January 1993. All these agencies were providing food and medicines and

34 The troops under UNITAF were from the United States, Australia, Belgium, Botswana, Canada, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, India, Italy, Kuwait, Morocco, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab and Zimbabwe.
opened many new hospitals, health centres and one central pharmacy in Mogadishu.

However, the UNITAF was believed as a temporary exercise in peace enforcement. Its main goal was to create a secure environment for the delivery of international relief aid to Somali people, and then hand over operational responsibility to a United Nations peace-keeping mission. But, since the cease-fire agreement which was concluded in January 1993 by the leaders of the 15 movements, was violated by some of the factions and thus it became clear that the follow up mission would also need the power to use force. 36

UNOSOM II

The Security council on 26 March 1993 unanimously adopted resolution 814 (1993) and established UNOSOMII.37 Through this resolution the Security Council entrusted UNOSOM-II with the responsibility under Chapter VII of the Charter for the consolidation, expansion and maintenance of a secure environment throughout Somalia, after a transition from UNITAF. It was the first peace-enforcement operation which was both organised and commanded by the United Nations. The Security Council also instructed UNOSOM-II to assist in the process of national reconciliation, in the rehabilitation of Somalia's institutions and economy, and in the re-establishment of the nation's police forces.

However, General Aideed's faction could not support UNOSOM II and militia attacked on UNOSOM II troops in south Mogadishu. Consequently,

36 ibid, p.39.
25 Pakistani soldiers were killed and many wounded. The Secretary General Condemned this act of militias against peace-keepers who were on a mission of peace, reconciliation and reconstruction and urged prompt action against them.

As a result the Security Council passed a resolution 837 (1993) on 6 June 1993 and condemned the attack. It was also reaffirmed that the Secretary General was authorised under resolution 814 (1993) to take "all necessary measures against all those responsible for the armed attacks on UNOSOM II personnel, including their arrest and detention for prosecution, trial and punishment."38

Moreover, to implement resolution 837 (1993), UNOSOM II initiated military action on 12 June 1993 and conducted a series of air and ground military actions in south Møgadishu . UNOSOM II destroyed militia’s weapons and equipment in a number of storage sites. UNOSOM II removed Radio Mogadishu from the control of General Aideed’s faction. That action by UNOSOM II was strongly supported by the Security Council. Further, the Security Council condemned the practice of some Somali factions in using women and children as human shields to carry out their attacks against UNOSOM-II. In addition, on 17 June 1993, the Special Representative of the United Nations called on General Aideed to surrender peacefully to UNOSOM II and to urge his followers to surrender their arms.39 He further directed the UNOSOM Force Commander to detain General Aideed for

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investigation of the 5 June attack. And it was also said that General Aideed would be treated decently, fairly and with justice. But efforts to capture Aideed was failed and militia continued their attack on UNOSOM II.

However, UNOSOM II had no choice but to take forceful action to disarm the militias. The Secretary General said that "effective disarmament of all the factions was a precondition for implementing other aspects of UNOSOM’s mandate, be they political, civil, humanitarian, rehabilitation or reconstruction. Subsequently, UNOSOM II pursued a coercive disarmament programme in south Mogadishu. Active patrolling, weapons confiscation’s and operations were directed at the militia and depots of General Aideed’s faction. Besides, in support of the UNOSOM II, the United States forces i.e. the United States rangers and the Quick Reaction Force were deployed in Mogadishu. These forces were not under United Nations command and control. As part of the coercive programme the Rangers launched an operation in south Mogadishu on 3 October 1993 and captured a number of Key aids of General Aideed. Hence, the operation succeeded in apprehending 24 suspects and other key aids of General Aideed.

However, on 9 October 1993, General Aideed’s faction declared a unilateral cessation of hostilities against UNOSOM II forces. Thereafter, situation was generally quiet but Mogadishu remained tense.

In the light of the changing circumstances, the Secretary-General presented three options about the mandate of UNOSOM-II as laid down by the Security Council would remain unchanged. In the second option, the

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40 The Blue Helmets, n.26, p.301.
41 ibid.
Security Council would decide that UNOSOM-II would not use coercive measures and rely in the co-operation of the Somali parties in discharging its mandate and use force only in self-defence. Under the third option, UNOSOM-II would be limited to keeping secure the airport and port in Mogadishu and in other parts of the country to maintain open supply routes for humanitarian purposes.

However, in February 1994 the Security Council approved the Secretary General's recommendation for the continuation of UNOSOM-II. After that the review of the situation in Mogadishu and other parts of the country was done accordingly the mandate of UNOSOM II was renewed. Finally on 4 November 1994, the Security Council by resolution 954 (1994) extended the mandate of UNOSOM-II till 31 March 1995. It was affirmed that the primary purpose of UNOSOM-II until its termination was to facilitate political reconciliation in Somalia. It is noteworthy that following the Security Council's decision to end UNOSOM’s mandate on 31 March 1995, the rival factions in Mogadishu began to work together. On 21 February 1995, a peace agreement was signed by General Aideed and Mr. Ali Mahdi on behalf of SNA and SSA respectively to promote national reconciliation and a peaceful settlement. In that agreement both parties accepted the principle of power-sharing.

Nevertheless, the withdrawal of UNOSOM-II forces took place and between 28 December 1994 and 5 January 1995 the Zimbabwean and Malaysian contingents were repatriated. The personnel of the Pakistani forces would

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hospital were repatriated on 11 January 1995. The headquarters staff were reduced by 50 percent by 15 January 1995. Later on, by 2 February 1995, Indian, Pakistani and remaining Zimbabwean and Malaysian contingents were repatriated.

However, the withdrawal of UNOSOM-II marked a point of transition in the efforts of the United Nations to succour a people and a country caught in the throes of famine, civil war and the collapse of all institutions of government. The major political achievement of the United Nations in Somalia was to bring a cease-fire in Mogadishu and then nationally. The success was greatest in the humanitarian field. The United Nations agencies like UNICEF, WFP, UNDP and UNESCO worked with a host of governmental and non-governmental agencies to meet the vast humanitarian challenge. Millions of Somalis benefited from these activities and their lives were saved. Despite the withdrawal of the United Nations peacekeeping force, the agencies and programmes of the United Nations system continued to be involved in humanitarian work in Somalia.

SOMALIA’S EXPERIENCE WITH ETHIOPIAN REFUGEES
The first refugees exodus took place during the 1977-1978 war between Somalia and Ethiopia. That war is popularly known as Ogaden war. The Ogaden region is in fact two separate areas in eastern Ethiopia. The south-east comprises the upper Jubba and Shabeelle rivers. The large majority of the people are Somalis of the Ogadeen clan-family.* In the north-east an area known as the Haud is a key seasonal grazing area for Somalis of the Isaac and Dir clan-families. The Oromos and other people are interspersed with Somali communities in these areas. In the southeast of Harare the overwhelming majority of the people consider themselves Somalis. 43

However, these people have never been given an opportunity to voice their political preferences. The Ethiopians exploited the wealth of the land and nothing have put to Ogaden. Thus, it remained barren and ignored by the colonial powers in the twentieth century.

Subsequently, when Somalia got its independence in 1960, the Ogaden Somalis, (the somalis who were living in Ogaden region) with support from the Somali Republic, put pressure on Ethiopia for liberation. Besides, for Siyaad Barre, the liberation of the Ogadeen from Ethiopian control was an important agenda. Thus, he began to give his support to the leadership of the Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF) the umbrella organisation of the Somali guerrilla movements in Ethiopia. As a result a war between Somalia and Ethiopia took place in 1977-1978. At that time Ethiopia got support of Cuba and the Soviet Union and consequently, Somalia was defeated. 44

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* The world Ogadeen is name of a clan whereas Ogaden means a region. Besides, Ogadeen means people of Ogadeen region,

43 Laitin and others, n and.8, pp.135-136.

44 ibid, p.142.
The aftermath of the Ogaden war of 1977-1978 brought a human tragedy of horrible proportions. The war produced hundreds of thousands of refugees. According to the government’s estimate about 2 million refugees crossed the border, whereas according to the relief agencies estimates around 650,000 refugees sought refuge in the neighbouring countries.\(^{45}\) Most of them crossed the border into Somalia. It is observed that Somalia accepted within its boundaries a higher percentage of refugees, based on its own population. These refugees came to Somalia with virtually no resources, having lost their land and flocks. They faced the problem of homelessness, starvation, thirst and disease.

All refugees were not Somalis, but many were Oromos. But, in 1978, arrivals were so massive that the Somali government had to turn to the international community for massive amounts of aid. In September 1979 the Somali government appealed for help to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). As a result the UNHCR responded by launching a first emergency programme.\(^ {46} \) In 1979 even more refugees came and in the month of December of the same year the United Nations sent an inter-agency mission to assess the gravity of the situation.

Thereafter, an extended programme was quickly worked out. The foremost aim of that programme was to feed the refugees in camps. The refugees camps were mainly located in five places i.e. Hargrsla, in the northwest, Lugh Ganana, Belet Uen, Qoriolei and Gialalassi.\(^ {47} \) Since the refugees

\(^{45}\) ibid., p.146
\(^{47}\) ibid.
influx continued and refugees were moving from camp to camp, it was
difficult to count them. Their herds were killed and destroyed by disease. The
drought which raged at the beginning of the year added to the general
suffering. It became necessary to transport water to the camps. In March due
to onset of monsoon, several camps in the south, rendered road unusable by
the food convoys. Malaria struck the already malnourished children.

By 1981, Somalia set up 40 camps for refugees. According to a survey
of three refugee camps sponsored by the United Nations Research Institute for
Social Development in 1981, these camps shattered more or less settled
communities. The camps covered from 4 to 7 square kilometres with houses
averaging from 3 to 4 square meters. 48 Most refugee families had a
compound with two rooms, one for living and other for cooking. The average
household comprised eight or nine individuals, two or three of whom were
adults. About two-thirds of the households were headed by women. Around
many compounds the refugees had constructed a traditional thorn tree fence,
and many families had goats, donkeys, cattle and even camels within their
compounds. In addition, family was provided with cooking utensils, decent
clothing and many women had jewellery also. Further, camps in southern
Somalis were reportedly accompanied by shops with a surprisingly large
supply of commodities. 49

The camps were directed by a commandant from the National Refugee
Commission of Somalia. Each camp had a refugee leader who was reporting to
the commandant as well as to the international agencies. Besides, there were

48 Laitin and others, n.8, p.147.
49 ibid.
women's committees that worked on a variety of family oriented programmes and handicrafts. In the camp areas schools were operating in both at the primary and adult education level. To boost this effort around 450 Somali teachers were trained by national institutions under a UNHCR programme. 50 500 refugee were provided in-service trainees in the newly set up institute in the first year. The secondary education and vocational training as well as non-formal education also featured in UNHCR programmes.

In the sphere of health, all camps had well-developed health care systems. There were dispensaries, TB clinics, antenatal and mother and child clinics in the refugee camps. In addition to the World Health Organisation (WHO), there were 18 voluntary organisations involved in providing health services. This effort was co-ordinated by a Refugee Health Unit. The construction of health centres for all camps was completed and about 1,600 community health workers from among the refugees were trained. 51 Besides, immunisation programmes also took place. The supply of medicines and medical equipment and some specific disease control projects etc. were the measures undertaken by WHO. It is noteworthy that UNHCR had its Branch Office in Mogadishu and three sub offices in the camps. These offices of UNHCR were staffed with some 60 people. 52 The co-ordination of the assistance programmes at the national level was the responsibility of the Somali government and its National Refugee Commission. The UNHCR coordinated the activities of a number of United Nations agencies, including UNICEF, WFP, WHO and ILO, and some 30 international voluntary agencies.

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50 UNHCR Report, GAOR, session 37, supplement No. 12, (1982), p.25.
51 ibid.
52 Zarjevski, n.46, p.131.
such as the Belgian Medical Team, Help the Aged (U.K.), CARE (USA) etc.\textsuperscript{53} UNHCR ensured co-ordination of the international assistance with food supplies channelled mainly through WFP.

In addition to distribution food, United Nations and voluntary agencies provided other basic needs such as drinking water, tents for shelter and helping newcomers to install themselves etc. In this exercise UNHCR received advice from United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Centre for Human Settlement (Habitat), UNESCO and the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO).

Hence, on all these programmes, the total obligations by UNHCR in 1981 amounted to $49,078,164. Out of that $36,111,449 was under General Programmes and $12,966,715 under special Programmes. The total obligations also included the contribution in kind valued at $12,112,804. \textsuperscript{54}

However, in the first three years e.g. 1979 to 1981, the assistance programme for refugees in Somalia was designed to ensure their basic welfare by providing care and maintenance, medical services and education for the children. After 1981 the number of refugees in the camps stabilised which made it possible for UNHCR to plan measures to reduce their dependence on aid by enabling them to take up remunerative work. As a major measure in this direction agriculture was undertaken on a small scale in six regions. Around 1200 hectares of land was shared among 2960 refugee families. Besides, during 1982 additional land was brought under cultivation, so that

\textsuperscript{53} UNHCR Report, n. 50, p.24.

\textsuperscript{54} ibid.
the number of beneficiaries could be doubled. Aforestation was also launched to give work to more refugees.

In 1983 the Somali government agreed to a UNHCR programmes to apply improved farming methods to the cultivation of land already allocated near the camps. An amount of 12 million dollars were required to improve the settlements. In addition, other self-help schemes were also planned and implemented by the National Committee for Aid to Refugees with the help of United Nations volunteers. In a report Leon Dvico note that:

Gone are the days when the refugees, too weak to move, totally apathetic, lay before their huts awaiting the next food distribution - which was not always on time. Today the refugees walk about, smiling, with a friendly greeting. And above all they work. The whole day they till the soil, dig irrigation ditches, water the corn or sesame. Near Jalalaqsi some women work in a soap factory, the first to be set up for the refugees. Part of the output will be given to the women in payment for their work, the other part will be bought by UNHCR and distributed in the camp.55

After 1983 the overall number of refugees in Somalia remained stable. The UNHCR gave its attention to promoting the voluntary repatriation of refugees as soon as changes in circumstances permitted. As a result, about 300,000 refugees were repatriated to Ethiopia in 1984. 56 However these numbers fluctuated for the next few years as a result of both organised and unorganised repatriation as well as new arrivals. In 1986-1987, UNHCR’s earlier emergency programmes in Somalia were partially terminated and

55 Zarjevski, n.46,p.133.
emphasis was given on voluntary repatriation. Subsequently in 1988, 4,450 refugees were repatriated from Somalia with the help of UNHCR. However, in May 1988 a fresh outbreak of the rebellion against the Siyaad Barre regime that was triggered by various clans who were trying to capture power, seriously disrupted the UNHCR assistance programme in north-west Somalia. Some refugee fled the camps, and others became involved in the conflict. Thus, it became very difficult for any further UNHCR humanitarian assistance. However, an agreement was reached between the Somali government and UNHCR in February 1989 on the re-registration of all refugees remaining in camps in north-west Somalia as well as on their relocation to other areas where their security was better assured and the conditions for the delivery of humanitarian assistance could be met. That operation was started immediately. But, the developments in north-western Somalia did not allow the planned relocation.

Somalis also sought asylum in Djibouti in 1990. In Djibouti also UNHCR and WFP were mobilising assistance.

After the fall of Siyaad Barre government fell in 1991 and the severe famine that struck Somalia subsequently approximately 200,000 more refugees fled to Ethiopia. Thus, the number of Somali refugees in Ethiopia went up to 500,000. 59

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SOMALI REFUGEES: PROBLEMS

Like Afghan refugee situation, Somalia refugees are found in more than one neighbouring countries. They are Ethiopia, Libiya, Kenya, Djibouti and Yemen. Although Ethiopia received maximum number of refugees. Therefore international effort to provide relief to these refugees under the leadership of UNHCR had to be multi pronged and simultaneous. The challenges associated with the relief effort point to some patterns as well as problems. It is in this light a discussion is taken of in the pages that follow regarding the patterns/problems in relief effort for Somali refugees in different host countries. First and foremost is the situation in Ethiopia.

Somali Refugees in Ethiopia

The Government of Ethiopia generously accepted the Somali refugees. One of the largest refugee camps in the world at Hartisheik of eastern Ethiopia, was established. The blue and white tarpaulins, distributed by UNHCR in 1988, to cover their dome-shaped huts. Later on, the plastic sheeting had been replaced by tattered wheat sacks sewed together. Apart from Hartisheik, there were many other camps in eastern Ethiopia. For example Teferi Ber, Kebri Beyah, Darwanaji, Camaboker, Rabasso, Daror and Aisha. Most of the refugees in these camps originated from Hargeisa and other urban centres in north west Somalia.

In 1992 and by the middle of 1993, UNHCR implemented a new "cross-mandate" and "cross-border" approach to the delivery of assistance to
all needy persons living in the same community. That approach was adopted in eastern and southern Ethiopia, as well as in the Ogaadeen. However, under the cross-mandate approach, mixed populations comprising refugees, returnees, internally displaced persons, demobilised soldiers and civilians affected by war and drought were provided basic food rations, agricultural seeds and veterinary drugs. They were also benefited from improved water supplies, rehabilitated schools, expanded clinics equipped with essential medicines and other social facilities. Moreover, the implementation of cross-mandate activities was undertaken collectively by the United Nations, non-governmental organisations, governmental bodies and also by the donor countries like the United States.

The “cross-border” approach was implemented along the borders of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. The objective of that approach was to prevent population movements and creating conditions conducive to the voluntary repatriation of refugees or the safe return of internally displaced persons. As a result of the cross-border activities, nearly 120 Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) were initiated in the sectors of water, health, agriculture, livestock and infrastructure development inside Somalia. The approach called for collaboration between UNHCR, WFP, UNICEF and UNESCO, as well as voluntary agencies which supported innovative approach. The major voluntary agencies who provided their assistance were the African Education Fund International (AEF), the Co-ordinating Committee of the Organization of Voluntary Services (COSV), and Medecins Sans Frontieres Belgium (MSF-B).

61 UNHCR, n.84, p.23.
62 ibid.
Initially it was funded and implemented for nine months in 1993. While funding was clearly vital, the major constraint was lack of security in the region. However, in that regard, efforts were made by the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM-I) and the United Nations Task Force (UNITAF) to improve security along the border, particularly in those areas where refugees were living. Meanwhile, lack of funding compelled UNHCR to cut down on assistance programmes, unfortunately affecting the programmes for children, education and other support work.

The search for durable solutions, particularly repatriation was given emphasis in the later period. As a result spontaneous repatriation movements into north-west Somalia took place on a considerable scale from eastern Ethiopia. But, repatriation processes is not free from obstacles. The chief among them being the menace of mines. Plans for the repatriation of Somali refugees, from the camps in eastern Ethiopia during 1994 were suspended when the renewed conflict in north-west Somalia discharged a fresh influx of refugees into eastern Ethiopia. However, repatriation programme was shortly revived during 1995. By 1995, in north western Somalia- the home region of the majority of the refugees political stability has been restored which could encourage the refugees to return. Besides, the cross-border approach was useful in creating conditions conducive to the return of Somali refugees to their home areas.

As part of preparations for repatriation, UNHCR has spent $13.8 million in north west Somalia on “quick impact projects” since 1992 to the

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end of 1996. 64 These project include the construction or repair of hospitals, schools, water systems and facilities at border entry points where returnees would be received once the repatriation programme got off the ground. Moreover, in a press releases by UNHCR on 14 August 1996, it was said that a group of 10 Somali refugee representative was visiting north west Somalia as a result of a UNHCR programme to promote the voluntary repatriation of some 275,000 Somali refugees in Ethiopia. Accordingly, the group crossed Ethiopia’s border town of Teferi Ber and entered Somalia through Togwajale, looking at 10 potential returnee areas which had enjoyed relatively peace and stability over the past 19 months. According to Kyaw Zin Hla, head of UNHCR’s office in north west Somalia “the visit is going very well and we are hopeful that the repatriation movement will go on as planned.” 65 It was also stated that by the end of 1996, UNHCR was organising a pilot repatriation project. However, the organised repatriation of the refugees began in February 1997 and just one month later, at the end of March, 2,600 refugees returned to north western Somalia. 66 Similarly by the end of 1997, as peace and security continued to hold in north - west Somalia, more than 11,200 refugees had repatriated from Ethiopia to their places of origin. The Hargeisa authorities approved the repatriation of 100,000 refugees from Ethiopia during 1997 and 1998. 67

64 The Somalis of Hartisheik, n.85.
65 UNHCR, Press releases on 14 August 1996.
66 ibid.
The office of the UNHCR, located in Mogadishu, Hargeisa and Boroma in Somalia, helped in the organised repatriation of some 60,000 refugees from Ethiopia to north-west Somalia during 1989. The assistance provided by UNHCR, includes transportation and distribution of repatriation packages prior to the departure from Ethiopia. UNHCR also to ensure rights of the refugees are respected both in Ethiopia and when they return in north-west Somalia. The refugees who return spontaneously to north-west Somalia from Ethiopia received repatriation packages in exchange for their refugee ration cards. These packages consisted of construction materials for urban returnees, seeds and tools for farmers and veterinary services for livestock herders. 68

Somali Refugees in Kenya

Following a civil war that led to the overthrow of Siyaad Barre regime in January 1991 and the subsequent famine the Somali refugees not only fled towards Ethiopia but also sought asylum in Kenya. A Series of violence, anarchy and severe drought in Somalia compelled them to flee. In 1992 an average of 900 refugees entered each day in Kenya. 69 However, by the end of the year, more than 285,619 Somali refugees were in Kenya. After Ethiopia, Kenya was the second largest host country of Somali refugees. In addition to Somali refugees, around 1,14,381 refugees from Ethiopia and Sudan also sought refuge in Kenya. As usual, the influx required a massive emergency relief assistance. 11 camps were established immediately in Kenya during the year and assistance budgets of UNHCR were enhanced. During that period, the international community was looking beyond the traditional

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68 ibid.
approach of delivering assistance only to the country of asylum. Therefore, at
the request of the United Nations Secretary-General, UNHCR launched a
cross-border operation in the month of September 1992. The initial aim of
that new approach was, to stabilise population movements inside Somalia
itself and stemming the momentum of refugee flow into neighbouring
countries. Thus, in addition to providing emergency relief i.e., shelter,
clothing, food and medicines to Somali refugees, emphasis was given on the
essential pre-conditions for the return of Somali refugees from Kenya. As a
result, the cross-border operation was intensified in January 1993 and UNHCR
and other organisations began to expand their presence and programmes on the
Somali side of the border. However, that programme, at one level aimed to
check the principal causes of displacement by providing assistance in specific
areas that people might otherwise be forced to leave mainly for famine-related
reasons. A second level that programme sought to create conditions
conducive to the eventual voluntary repatriation of refugees from camps in
Kenya. However, in the month of October and November 1992 approximately
3,200 Somali refugees returned home voluntarily within the framework of the
programme. In addition to providing of the programme. In addition to
providing food and other relief items, it was hoped that the cross-border
operation would begin rehabilitating the social infrastructure, including
schools and clinics, and encourage a return to self-sufficiency in agriculture
and livestock.

ibid.
In June 1993, more than 160 Quick Impact projects were implemented in the area of health, water, livestock, agriculture and infrastructural development in Somalia. In implementation of these projects, more than 20 non-governmental organisations including Kenya Red Cross Society (KRCS) extended their co-operation. Simultaneously, 188,000 Somali refugees agreed for voluntary repatriation from the Kenyan camps. Around 12,000 of Somali refugees had already returned home with the help of UNHCR.

Another significant organised repatriation movement to Somalia was achieved in 1994 when around 60,000 persons were repatriated from Kenya within the framework of the UNHCR’s initiated cross-border operation form Kenya into Somalia. Furthermore, over 13,000 Somali refugees had repatriated by March 1995. The same report revealed that “in spite of generally poor security in southern Somalia, over 1,14,000 Somalis returned from Kenya with UNHCR assistance to safe areas of origin between January 1992 and December 1994.”

However, the repatriation of refugees from Utange camp in Kenya continued in February 1995, but slowed down considerably as the date for the celebration of Eid approached. Two ships left with 192 refugee passengers for Kismayo when normally a minimum of 400 persons were required. Also,

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72 UNHCR, n.69, p.95.
73 ibid.
74 ibid.
aircrafts flew to Somalia with only 129 passengers when 200 minimum were required.

The UNHCR branch offices in Nairobi and Dadaab, both in Kenya hoped that refugee numbers would pick up at the end of the Eid celebrations. Meanwhile, the deadline for registration of repatriation was set for 15 February and the last food distribution for 15 March and 31 March 1995. UNHCR planned to end all services to refugees in Utange and close the camp. At the same time, an information campaign was launched in Utange to explain the schedule to the refugees and to describe the options available to them i.e., either their return to Somalia or being sent to the north eastern region of Kenya. This resulted in a peaceful demonstration by 20,000 refugees who were unhappy with both the options. Due to this refugee opposition, UNHCR anticipated that the repatriation may be delayed. Further, it was agreed by UNHCR and the Kenya Red Cross Society that all essential water, sanitation and emergency medical services would continue for those remaining behind. It was also estimated that approximately 20,000 refugees may be still in the camp after the March deadline.

Since the inception of the cross-border operation in 1992, the emphasis was placed given on the Geddo and Lower Jub valley regions from where the majority of the Somalis in Kenya originated. Owing to the unsettled political situation in Somalia, however, the focus of activities since 1995 has shifted towards pursuing rehabilitation activities in some parts of Somalia that are considered safe for the return of refugees. However, between 1992 and 1996,
1,54,872 Somali refugees were assisted by UNHCR to return to their home areas. 76

After that repatriation, Kenya still sheltered over 1,00,000 Somali refugees. It was estimated that approximately 10,000 of them will repatriate voluntarily during 1998. 77 Most of them would return to the lower and Middle Juba and to the north east regions of Somalia. In addition, most of the reintegration assistance is in the form of Quick Impact Projects which would also benefit the local communities. These community-based projects have involved the local people, returnees and have continued to serve as the main instrument for bringing assistance as well as stability to areas of return in Somalia. An estimated some $ 26.8 million was budgeted for 1995 to include the cross-border operation from Kenya and reintegration assistance in north west Somalia. 78

In Kenya, the office of UNHCR worked with the governmental agencies to ensure refugees received due protection under the law. Apart from that, UNHCR staff meet with refugee elders and distribute leaflets to inform refugees about repatriation issue, including security conditions in areas of return and travel arrangements. UNHCR also helped elders visit to areas of return so that they can assess conditions for themselves.

However, the effectiveness of the cross-border programme in Somalia has still to be determined and is, to some extent, hostage to a political solution to the Somali crisis. It is, nevertheless, an interesting example of an innovative approach that aims to prevent and solve problems of displacement by

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77 UNHCR, n.13, p.3.
extending assistance to all people in need in a given area, in the hope that some of them will be able to avoid becoming refugees, and that those who have fled their homes will be able to return.

Somali Refugees in Djibouti, Yemen and Libya

In addition to Ethiopia and Kenya, Djibouti also is a host to some 20,000 Somali refugees since 1992. The Cross-Border Operation already been discussed above, was implemented along the border of Djibouti also. While those Somali refugees living in Libya and Yemen came from different backgrounds, including economic migrants who have found themselves in refugees-like situation. The main reason is they lack the protection from their own country. They also don’t want to go back due to either fear of persecution or lack of resources in their country of origin. By 1996 over 2,000 Somali refugees in Libya were of concern to UNHCR. Out of that some 1,120 Somalis have repatriated from Libya since October 1995.

After 1992, some 10,000 Somali people sought asylum in Yemen due to fear of civil war and a prolonged drought. Following the upsurge in Somali arrivals, UNHCR opened a branch office in Sana’a and a sub-office in Aden in 1992. A camp was established in Al Gahin in 1992 by UNHCR. However, out of 10,000 refugees in Yemen 5000 have already been repatriated with the help of UNHCR.

Given the improving security conditions in parts of Somalia, voluntary repatriation has become a viable durable solution for Somali refugees who are

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78 UNHCR, n.78, p.20.
left in these countries. An estimated, 1,500 refugees in Djibouti have requested UNHCR for assistance to repatriate. 79

UNHCR office at Djibouti-ville is providing every possible assistance in their. The main hindrance to repatriation is that the return areas lack basic infrastructure and services, and that they are heavily mined, reintegration and de-mining activities must be initiated before the repatriation process can begin. Refugees will be registered for repatriation land provided with travel documents. Besides, public information and awareness campaigns will inform the public at large, and the refugees in particular, about the repatriation exercise and conditions at home.

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79 UNHCR, n.13, p.3.