

**POLICY BRIEF**

# Status of peace and security in the East and Horn of Africa



**American  
Friends  
Service  
Committee**



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**Salama Hub**  
Nurturing Solutions for a Peaceful Africa

## Abbreviations

AACC	All Africa Conference of Churches
ADF	Allied Democratic Forces
AFSC	American Friends Service Committee
ATMIS	African Union Transition Mission in Somalia
AU	African Union
CAR	Central African Republic
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CSP	Centre for Systemic Peace
ELF	Eritrean Liberation Front
ENDF	Ethiopian National Defense Force
EPLF	Eritrean People's Liberation Front
EU	European Union
FGS	Federal Government of Somalia
FMS	Federal Member States
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GPI	Global Peace Index
HoA	East and the Horn of Africa
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IOM	International Organization for Migration
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
ONLF	Ogaden National Liberation Front
OSBPs	One-Stop Border Posts
RSF	Rapid Support Forces
SAF	Sudanese Armed Forces
SSF	Somalia Security Forces
TPLF	Tigray People's Liberation Front
UN	United Nations
US	United States
WHO	World Health Organization

## Executive summary

The East and Horn of Africa (HoA) region is a vast and strategically significant region characterized by complex geopolitical and socio-economic dynamics. The region has a long history of conflict, ranging from interstate wars to secessionist movements, intra-state violence, foreign interventions, terrorism, and piracy. These conflicts are often fueled by negative ethnicity and historical grievances and sustained by disputes over resources and power. Recent conflicts in Ethiopia (2020) and Sudan (2023) underscore the persistent historical injustice, governance failures, ideological divides, and political gaps that underpin these crises. In addition to traditional security challenges, the region faces non-traditional threats such as small arms proliferation, illicit financial flow, droughts, environmental degradation due to climate change, refugee flows, over and above human rights abuses, and sexual and gender-based violence. Rape as a weapon of war is a common occurrence.

Millions in the region also suffer from food and water insecurity, malnutrition, and limited access to essential services, including health and safety. Millions have been internally and externally displaced by drought and other climate change-related crises, with millions more at risk of acute food insecurity and famine. These crises necessitate immediate humanitarian assistance and long-term resilience-building efforts. The region grapples with a migration crisis, with millions from Somalia, Ethiopia, and Djibouti seeking refuge in Europe and the Gulf countries. Regional integration and human mobility, facilitated by measures like One-Stop Border Posts (OSBPs) and digitalization, can contribute to socio-economic development and address this challenge.

This Policy Brief recommends that in Sudan, International Development Partners, in collaboration with IGAD and AU, should diplomatically pressure the RSF and the SAF to come to a peace deal that will benefit the people of Sudan. The International Development Partners should also establish an impartial international mediation entity backed by key actors to oversee negotiations. Finally, they should engage neighboring countries, international bodies/regional economic communities to ensure regional stability.

In Ethiopia, there is a need to mobilize humanitarian aid for the conflict-affected regions, work with NGOs, support post-conflict reconstruction, and encourage dialogue and reconciliation at all levels. In Somalia, there is a need for international support to ensure internal security and safety following the imminent exit of ATMIS. In addition, communities need to be supported in implementing climate resilience programs and promoting sustainable energy sources. In South Sudan, the International Development partners should provide support for governance and institution-building assistance, pressuring Kiir's government for reforms and inclusive dialogues. For Kenya and Uganda, there is a need to holistically strengthen democratic institutions, national cohesion, and reconciliation and support social justice and poverty alleviation by building more social safety nets.

# Background

The Horn of Africa region, a prominent geographical feature on the eastern fringes of the African continent, extends into the Indian Ocean, encompassing Ethiopia, Somalia, Eritrea, and Djibouti. The 'Horn of Africa' definition is subject to interpretation. Still, it conventionally includes the above states, along with the contiguous territories of Kenya, Sudan, South Sudan, and Uganda. The combined population of all these countries is slightly over 300 million, and according to the World Bank, their aggregate economic output amounts to \$393.042 billion in nominal GDP and \$337.82 billion in GDP adjusted for purchasing power parity (PPP) (World Bank, 2022). Ethiopia (115,737,983) has the largest population in the region, followed by Kenya (54,016,230) and Sudan (44,127,881). Djibouti has the smallest population (IGAD, 2023). Considering its unique geopolitical and socio-economic dynamics, this region holds strategic significance and warrants comprehensive policy consideration. The region has fittingly been labeled as one of Africa's flash-points regarding issues of peace and security. Since the 1960s, the countries in the region have witnessed interstate wars [Ethiopian-Somali War -1962, 1977; Ethiopian-Eritrean War - 1998; Kenya -Somalia- 1963; Ugandan-Tanzania war - 1978. The region has also witnessed *intrastate wars* [Sudanese Civil war - 1955-2005; Al-Shabaab in Somalia, civil war in South Sudan, Tigray conflict in Ethiopia, internal repression in Eritrea, coups in Sudan, political tensions and localized unrests in Kenya and Djibouti], with *secessionist movements* [Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF); Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF); Oga-den National Liberation Front (ONLF); Republic of Somaliland; Jubaland; South Sudan; Oromia Secessionist Movements; and Sidama Liberation Movement].

Equally, there have been *foreign interventions, non-state military attacks, piracy, and violence* after contested elections. The recent conflicts in Ethiopia (2020-2022) and Sudan (April 2019-present) are illustrative of the internal strife that is characteristic of many countries in the Horn of Africa (Melvin, 2019). These conflicts are engrained in governance failures, ideologi-

cal divides, and political ineptitude. The region has also faced diverse non-traditional security threats, such as the proliferation of small arms, droughts, refugee flows, climate change, and environmental degradation. These threats have had a destabilizing effect on the region and have contributed to humanitarian crises.

Besides political instability, millions of people in this region face chronic food and water insecurity, malnutrition, and limited access to essential services, including health care, infrastructure, education, and social welfare. Climate change has made droughts more intense and frequent; a conservative estimate is that they have become about 100 times more likely. The drought has directly affected about 50 million people and another 100 million in the greater Horn of Africa region (WHO, 2022). At least 20 million people are at risk of acute food insecurity and potentially famine. The area has been experiencing a severe drought for the past three years, with five consecutive seasons of below-average rainfall. This has led to extended dry conditions and short, intense rainfall that has often caused flash flooding. As a result, at least 4.35 million people need humanitarian assistance, and at least 180,000 refugees have fled Somalia and South Sudan to Kenya and Ethiopia.

The harsh climatic conditions caused by climate change, interconnected crises, persistent insecurity and conflict, public health emergencies, socioeconomic drivers, and more traditional seasonal factors have triggered the Horn of Africa migration crisis. About 1.4 million people are expected to move from Somalia, Ethiopia, and Djibouti to Yemen to Europe or the Gulf countries. This has prompted the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to appeal for more than \$80 million to provide humanitarian and development assistance to migrants and the communities hosting them (IOM, 2023). The Eastern Migration Route has been the busiest, and most migrants originate from Ethiopia, Somalia, and Djibouti through Yemen to the Gulf states. Women and children have been adversely affected. To address this burgeoning problem, focusing on



regional integration and human mobility is imperative, which can transform the region's socio-economic development by promoting trade and labor mobility. Integrated border management, such as One-Stop Border Posts (OSBPs), and digitalization of operations can also enable legal cross-border movement of people, goods, and services. More importantly, there is a need for emergency life-saving humanitarian aid, including shelter, clean water, food, medical supplies, and psychosocial support, to those affected by

this crisis. In the long-term, there is a need for the U.S. Government to invest in sustainable development programs in the above-mentioned affected countries, focusing on access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities to build resilience within the communities. Supporting initiatives that promote peace, reconciliation, and conflict resolution to reduce the number of refugees and internally displaced persons is also paramount.

## **The rationale**

This Policy Brief analyses the peace and security landscape in the East and Horn of Africa region. It identifies the key challenges and opportunities facing the region. It makes policy recommenda-

tions to the US Government and international partners, AU IGAD, for advocacy and peaceful change going into the future.

# Peace and security in the Horn of Africa: key issues on the state of play

The Horn of Africa has been beset by conflict since the 1960s. All the countries have experienced and continue to struggle with armed conflict, ethnolinguistic disputes, religious radicalism, terrorism, boundary and territorial disputes, civil wars, and political and ideological conflicts.

## Sudan

Sudan is presently entangled in an internal conflict involving two factions within its security forces. Its position in the 2023 Global Peace Index (GPI) underscores its status as the ninth least peaceful nation globally, occupying the 155th rank out of 163 countries. The country received an overall GPI score of 3.023 out of a possible 5, highlighting significant challenges to peace and stability within its borders. In mid-April 2023, fighting erupted in Sudan between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). This conflict was sparked by a power struggle between the military leaders Lieutenant General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan of the SAF and Lieutenant General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo of the RSF, and it has evolved into a war of survival. The conflict has displaced approximately 4.8 million people within the country and across its borders as of September 7, 2023 (CPA, 2023). It is projected that by December this year, the population in need of humanitarian assistance will be an estimated 26.5 million individuals. Within Sudan, 24.7 million people require aid, with 7.2 million facing internal displacement and another 1.1 million classified as refugees. Additionally, neighboring countries (the Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, and South Sudan) grapple with 1.8 million refugees and migrants, 719,500 returnees, and 52,000 Third Country Nationals. The targeted assistance efforts aim to reach 1.9 million individuals, with 1.35 million located within Sudan and 543,000 in the surrounding nations, coupled with a supplementary 600 individuals in need (IOM, 2023). The crisis has also had ramifications for foreign nationals, comprising approximately 11 percent of Sudan's internally displaced popula-

tion (IDPs), encompassing refugees who have fled conflict zones in South Sudan and Ethiopia (Relief Web, 2023).

There have been numerous diplomatic efforts, such as the US-Saudi-led ceasefire negotiations, the African Union's attempt at an all-inclusive process, and the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development, IGAD (Dersso, 2023). None of these initiatives has made significant progress, and each has failed. The AU, which initially demonstrated proactive leadership by convening its permanent decision-making body and an international ministerial gathering while establishing a coordination platform, has encountered obstacles in assembling the core group and initiating the long-anticipated intra-Sudanese dialogue to unite diverse civilian actors within Sudan. To some extent, the current civil conflict is a product of Sudan's historical backdrop, wherein political authority is obtained and transmitted via coercive means instead of electoral processes. According to the Centre for Systemic Peace (CSP) and Statista, Sudan has witnessed 35 coup d'état incidents throughout its history, with six resulting in successful takeovers. The frequent coups indicate the weakness of civilian institutions in Sudan. This weakness stems from factors such as the absence of a robust democratic tradition, a history of military rule, or the military's substantial influence within the state. It is, therefore, imperative to note that the causes and consequences of this war extend beyond the generals themselves. A multi-stakeholder approach, including extra-national efforts beyond the battlefield, is required to resolve this war, not just the generals' will.

## Ethiopia

Ethiopia has recently emerged from an unprecedented magnitude – the Tigray Conflict. The root causes of this conflict can be traced to 2018 when Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's government embarked on paradigm-shifting political reforms, transitioning from an 'ethno-centric' governance model to an all-inclusive, citizen-centric rooted in the concept of *Medemer* (an Amharic word meaning coming together or synergy), (Yussuf, 2020). However, these attempts aimed at political and ideological realignment were disrupted by the resurgence of conflict in northern Ethiopia by TPLF, who were discontented with the reforms. This resurgence was ignited by the unprovoked assault launched by the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) on the Northern Command of the Ethiopian National Defence Force (ENDF). TPLF was a hegemonic political party of Tigray that exercised immense influence over national-level decision-making for over three decades despite its minority status. In response, a coalition of Ethiopian security forces launched a counter-offensive.

According to Ghent University's findings, by the end of 2022, when a peace deal was signed in November 2022, the conflict had precipitated a catastrophic human toll, with an estimated 600,000 casualties stemming from violence associated with warfare and famine-induced conditions (Mutambo, 2022). The magnitude of this grim

human cost and the extensive societal devastation prompted *The New York Times*, in November 2022, to characterize it as "one of the world's bloodiest contemporary conflicts" (Dahir, 2022). Reports have indicated that all warring parties involved in the conflict engaged in acts constituting war crimes. ENDF and other forces are also implicated in crimes against humanity, including homicide, sexual violence, rape, and systematic persecution. Further, the International Organization for Migration's National Displacement Report, which covered the period from November 2022 to June 2023, stated that a total of 4.38 million people were internally displaced.

Sanctions and restrictions from the U.S. on Ethiopia and Eritrea remain in place due to Ahmed's administration's failure to fully implement the peace deal reached with the TPLF in November 2022. While progress has been made toward the cessation of hostilities, reports of human rights abuses in the country persist. As of September 2023, security concerns still encompassed a range of issues, including ethnic tensions, violent crime, civil unrest, armed clashes, roadblocks, and specific regional threats. For instance, in early August, Ethiopia declared a six-month state of emergency in response to conflict in the northern Amhara state. Conflict has also been reported in Gambella, Oromia, Tigray, and Benishangul-Gumuz regions.

## Somalia

Despite nearly three decades of foreign intervention, Somalia remains mired in a seemingly eternal conflict and unstable governance. Non-state armed groups remain the primary threat to peace and security in Somalia and neighboring countries, particularly Kenya. 2022 was one of the deadliest years in Somalia, with non-state armed groups killing at least 613 civilians and injuring 948. The group was linked to violence targeting civilians while carrying out attacks in Somalia, including suicide bombings, targeted assassinations, and armed assaults. Al-Shabaab also engages in extortion and imposition of taxes in areas under their control. These attacks have had a devastating impact on Somalia. They

have displaced millions of people, exacerbated the humanitarian crisis, eroded the authority of the Somali government, and fostered an atmosphere of perpetual insecurity. Though relative calm appears to prevail at the political level, underlying tensions persist between the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and the Federal Member States (FMS). Further, unresolved territorial and border disputes, leadership conflicts inside and between the FMS and the FGS, and disagreements over the political system's structure, particularly the distribution of authority and resources at the national and regional levels, are some issues at the heart of the tension.

The state has made some gains to counter violence from non-state actors. There has been a notable shift in strategy under President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, whose administration has been characterized by an assertive Somali-led approach. Bolstered by the backing of the ATMIS, the Somalia Security Forces (SSF) has been launching comprehensive offensives, resulting in the resecuring of some territories under the control of non-state armed groups. Of note, ATMIS remains steadfast in adhering to its pre-

determined exit strategy, thus underscoring its commitment to Mogadishu's long-term reconstruction and stabilization efforts. Climate change effects have also intensified Somalia's insecurity, with increased droughts causing displacement, food scarcity, and conflict. This situation will likely persist in the foreseeable future, underscoring the urgent need for decisive action to prevent potential spillover effects, including conflicts in neighboring countries.

## South Sudan

Slightly over a decade since its independence, South Sudan still faces a significant development crisis. The country is impoverished and underdeveloped, with a large proportion of the population living in poverty. A peace deal brokered in 2018 has failed to end the conflict, and the government has been unable to engage the people in state reconstruction. This has left the country without the institutions it needs to govern itself effectively. These challenges include incomplete security sector reforms, ethno-political violence, human rights abuses, gender-based violence and exclusion, political power strife, and exclusionary negotiation processes. In tandem with the absence of resolute political willpower, these impediments have cultivated a hostile environment that has effectively dispirited and driven away conflict mediators.

The signing of the 2018 Revitalized Peace Agreement for South Sudan on August 4, 2022, on to a further two-year extension of the transitional governance arrangements, delaying elections

until late 2024, is the newest governance and political reform setback besetting South Sudan. Nonetheless, the structure of the electoral system remains vague. This ambiguity can lead to confusion and potential disputes when organizing elections. Meanwhile, South Sudanese who criticized the government or exposed atrocities have received death threats, been incarcerated or tortured, and the political and civic space is shrinking. South Sudan continues to face high susceptibility to climate change impacts, including flooding. These factors hold substantial implications for the nation's stability and security. Droughts and floods have detrimentally affected food security and livelihoods, intensifying competition between pastoralists and farmers dependent on grazing land and water resources. The resultant climate-induced livestock losses, coupled with preexisting rivalries, elevate the risk of cattle raids, subsequently fostering retaliatory actions, communal conflicts, population displacement, escalating inter-communal hostilities, and the emergence of armed factions.

## Kenya and Uganda

In Kenya, despite being relatively better off than its neighbors, several threats loom over its peace and security. Among them is violence by non-state actors, which has launched numerous deadly attacks, causing widespread fear and casualties. Kenya has also experienced political violence, exemplified by the 2007-2008 post-election turmoil, 2017 and 2022. While the 2022 elections were largely peaceful (*with*

*Kenya being variously described as the most progressive and stable democracy in Africa*), opposition leader Raila Odinga's calls for mass demonstrations over economic concerns and alleged election rigging led to further fatalities, with accusations of police brutality as well. Nonetheless, Kenya has made strides in enhancing its security. The government has intensified efforts against terrorism and



crime, addressing root causes like poverty and inequality. Strengthened security forces and improved intelligence gathering have curtailed attacks. However, enduring challenges such as persistent unemployment, rising costs of living, and the ravages of climate change still threaten to convolute Kenya's human security picture.

In neighboring Uganda, peace and security face threats from the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), a non-state armed group based in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. The ADF has staged attacks, including the 2021 Kampala suicide bombings. Cattle rustling in the Karamoja region is another concern exacerbated by poverty, unemployment, and climate change. Uganda also grapples with political instability, corruption, and human rights abus-

## **Eritrea and Djibouti**

The 2018 Peace Agreement between Eritrea and Ethiopia effectively ended a 20-year border war, leading to a thaw in relations and cessation of hostilities between the two countries. However, while relatively stable, Eritrea's human rights record remains poor, with reports of forced labor, torture, and arbitrary detentions, among other human rights abuses. There is also a significant refugee problem in Eritrea, with an estimated 500,000 Eritreans living in exile.

Djibouti is a relatively stable country and has not experienced any major armed conflicts in recent years. Its strategic location at the inter-

es. President Yoweri Museveni's government is accused of suppressing dissent voices, election rigging, corruption eroding trust in the government, and potentially inciting violence.

To reduce the cattle rustling practice, which is gradually evolving from a cultural practice to an economic enterprise, development partners, including the US government, should support governance and law enforcement reforms to strengthen Uganda and Kenya's ability to protect communities and uphold the rule of law; foster cross-community dialogues and cooperation to resolve conflicts and reduce violence; and support the development of community-led conflict resolution mechanisms to help address tensions and resolve disputes peacefully.

section of Africa and the Middle East made it attractive to major powers. The country is crucial in regional counterterrorism efforts, hosting military bases for several international partners, including the United States, China, France, Italy, and Japan. However, like its neighbor, Djibouti still faces similar challenges, notably political repression, limited democratic freedoms, and economic inequality, potentially undermining long-term stability.

# Policy Recommendations and Call to Action to Development Partners, AU, and IGAD

## In Sudan:

1. In Sudan, the International Development Partners, in collaboration with IGAD and AU, should consider exerting diplomatic pressure on RSF and SAF to engage in meaningful negotiations. This should include imposing targeted sanctions and travel bans on those obstructing the peace process.
2. Consider establishing an impartial and dedicated high-level international mediation entity with a mandate for full-time peace mediation efforts in Sudan. This entity should be supported by key regional and international actors (especially IGAD, AU, and neighboring countries), including the United Nations. It should be able to oversee and facilitate negotiations between the conflicting parties. This will help maintain sustained commitment to the peace process.
3. Actively engage neighboring countries, primarily those hosting Sudanese refugees and with influence in the region, such as Ethiopia, Chad, Egypt, and South Sudan, to play a constructive role in the peace process. This could involve coordinated efforts with the UN, EU, AU, and IGAD to ensure regional stability and cooperation in resolving the crisis.
4. Additionally, a thorough and inclusive peace process that considers the concerns and ambitions of all stakeholders in Sudan is necessary. Building trust among the disputing parties, addressing the core causes of the dispute, and ensuring that any ensuing agreements are adequately enforced are essential to any successful peace project.
5. Promote inclusive peace and conflict resolution processes between the warring parties, including civil society and women's organizations. Additionally, it provides diplomatic and financial support to mediation efforts led by regional organizations like the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).
6. Ensure humanitarian organizations have safe and unrestricted access to vulnerable populations in conflict-affected areas.

## **In Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Djibouti:**

7. In Ethiopia, mobilize humanitarian assistance and reconstruction efforts in the conflict-affected regions to address the population's immediate needs. Collaborate with international organizations and NGOs to ensure the delivery of food, medical aid, and essential services to internally displaced persons and vulnerable communities. Concurrently, support initiatives for post-conflict reconstruction and development to rebuild infrastructure and promote economic recovery.
8. Further, facilitate dialogue and reconciliation efforts at Ethiopia's local, regional, and national levels. Encourage and support initiatives that promote inter-ethnic and inter-community reconciliation to address underlying tensions. Engage with civil society organizations and religious leaders to play a role in peace-building and fostering social cohesion.
9. In Eritrea, the International Development Partners should invest more in education to empower communities with knowledge and information access and strengthen the push for governmental responsibility and accountable governance.
10. In Djibouti, the International Development Partners should invest more in supporting education and community-level efforts towards value addition and wealth creation, over and above enabling climate change adaptation.
11. Conduct a comprehensive review of the Kampala Ministerial Declaration on Migration, Environment, and Climate Change (KDMECC) signed by 48 African countries on August 25, 2023, with a focus on identifying points of convergence that specifically address the critical nexus between human mobility and climate change in Africa.

## **In Somalia:**

12. Mobilize international support for Somalia's stability beyond ATMIS. This should include redirecting funds and resources to strengthen peace and stability in the country. Donor countries and international organizations should coordinate their efforts to provide long-term resilience building to local civil society that can accompany the communities in peacebuilding and peacemaking efforts.
13. Collaborate with international organizations to implement climate resilience programs in Somalia. This should include support for climate adaptation measures, such as drought-resistant agriculture and water resource management, to mitigate the impact of climate change.
14. Invest in Somalia's youth education and vocational training programs to give young people the tools to build prosperous, secure lives. This helps young people feel more in control of their lives and financially secure and offers them alternatives to joining extreme groups and avoiding radicalism.
15. A comprehensive approach is needed to mitigate internal and external displacement caused by conflict and climate change in Somalia. This includes promoting peace and conflict resolution, adapting to climate change, establishing early warning systems, ensuring disaster preparedness, protecting vulnerable populations, providing education and healthcare, supporting livelihoods, addressing land disputes, fostering international cooperation, engaging local communities, collecting data, and strengthening the legal framework. Collaboration among the government, international organizations, and local communities is crucial for success.

## **In South Sudan:**

16. Continue providing technical and financial assistance to South Sudan for strengthening governance and institution-building. Leverage diplomatic pressure and incentives to encourage President Kiir's government to commit to democratic elections, comprehensive security sector reforms, and inclusive political dialogue and governance. Engage with international partners to coordinate efforts and maintain a unified approach supporting South Sudan's stabilization and development.
17. Invest in civil society groups to empower local actors and build a foundation for sustainable peace in South Sudan. This investment should be transparent, accountable, and aligned with the priorities and needs of the local population. Additionally, an enabling environment for civil society activities should be fostered, including protecting the safety and rights of activists for their effectiveness in peacebuilding efforts.
18. Extend support to South Sudan's newly appointed Catholic Church cardinal, viewing it as a pivotal opportunity to engage with the South Sudanese population ahead of next year's elections, a period marked by significant political uncertainty. The U.S. government should seize this moment and strengthen diplomatic and humanitarian efforts in the country.
19. Actively encourage and, where possible, assist UNMISS, the transitional government, and humanitarian partners to enhance their provision of shelter, food, medical care, and relocation services for returnees and displaced persons while ensuring a balanced approach that addresses the needs of host communities and those displaced less recently (from Sudan and Ethiopia).



## **In Kenya and Uganda:**

20. There is a need for International Development Partners to support Kenya in consolidating her democratic gains by holistically enabling national cohesion building, strengthening democratic institutions, and constructing social safety nets to alleviate the effects of poverty and unemployment.
21. Support Kenya's ongoing bipartisan talks to prevent chaos and mitigate further conflict.
22. Encourage the governments to open civic spaces and freedoms of expression for the citizenry, specifically the marginalized and Civil Society Organizations. Additionally, it fosters community peacemaking and conflict resolution efforts by funding local civil society organizations.
23. Revitalize the traditional peace-building mechanisms to address perennial political and ethnic-based electoral violence. Specifically, invest in prevention efforts to avoid politically instigated political violence and speak out in favor of democratic procedures that encourage input from all Kenyan/Ugandan society sectors.
24. Mobilize Kenya and Uganda to respect the international rule of law and human rights and practice justice towards their citizens. By respecting human rights and the rule of law, these countries can create a more stable and prosperous society for all their citizens. In addition, advocate for these principles and hold those in power accountable for their actions.
25. Consider funding programmatic activities to help local communities adapt to the effects of climate change, such as drought-resistant crops and livestock breeds, inclusion, and protection of the rights of those most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. As Kenya and Uganda await the loss and damages funds, the international community must implement ecosystem-based adaptation projects for the region.
26. Continue supporting cross-community dialogues and cooperation initiatives to promote understanding and build trust among themselves to reduce instances of cattle rustling. Encourage community-based conversation and reconciliation efforts to mend wounds and strengthen social bonds.

## **Conclusion**

The combination of political instability, dysfunctional conflict, displacement, and humanitarian crises has devastated peace and economic development in Sudan. Looting of humanitarian warehouses, violence against aid workers, and attacks on humanitarian premises have hindered humanitarian responses, necessitating guarantees from involved parties to protect personnel and assets. In summary, the humanitarian situation is reaching a breaking point. Despite these challenges, partners assist affected civilians with first aid services, psychosocial support, and hospital medical supplies. Other ongoing efforts include remote protection monitoring and exploring modalities for food distribution to refugees.

# Recommendations

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## In Sudan:

- In Sudan, the International Development Partners, in collaboration with IGAD and AU, should consider exerting diplomatic pressure on RSF and SAF to engage in meaningful negotiations. This should include imposing targeted sanctions and travel bans on those obstructing the peace process.
  - Consider establishing an impartial and dedicated high-level international mediation entity with a mandate for full-time peace mediation efforts in Sudan. This entity should be supported by key regional and international actors (especially IGAD, AU, and neighboring countries), including the United Nations. It should be able to oversee and facilitate negotiations between the conflicting parties. This will help maintain sustained commitment to the peace process.
  - Actively engage neighboring countries, primarily those hosting Sudanese refugees and with influence in the region, such as Ethiopia, Chad, Egypt, and South Sudan, to play a constructive role in the peace process. This could involve coordinated efforts with the UN, EU, AU, and IGAD to ensure regional stability and cooperation in resolving the crisis.
  - Additionally, a thorough and inclusive peace process that considers the concerns and ambitions of all stakeholders in Sudan is necessary. Building trust among the disputing parties, addressing the core causes of the dispute, and ensuring that any ensuing agreements are adequately enforced are essential to any successful peace project.
  - Promote inclusive peace and conflict resolution processes between the warring parties, including civil society and women's organizations. Additionally, it provides diplomatic and financial support to mediation efforts led by regional organizations like the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).
  - Ensure humanitarian organizations have safe and unrestricted access to vulnerable populations in conflict-affected areas.
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## In Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Djibouti:

- In Ethiopia, mobilize humanitarian assistance and reconstruction efforts in the conflict-affected regions to address the population's immediate needs. Collaborate with international organizations and NGOs to ensure the delivery of food, medical aid, and essential services to internally displaced persons and vulnerable communities. Concurrently, support initiatives for post-conflict reconstruction and development to rebuild infrastructure and promote economic recovery.
- Further, facilitate dialogue and reconciliation efforts at Ethiopia's local, regional, and national levels. Encourage and support initiatives that promote inter-ethnic and inter-community reconciliation to address underlying tensions. Engage with civil society organizations and religious leaders to play a role in peacebuilding and fostering social cohesion.

- In Eritrea, the International Development Partners should invest more in education to empower communities with knowledge and information access and strengthen the push for governmental responsibility and accountable governance.
  - In Djibouti, the International Development Partners should invest more in supporting education and community-level efforts towards value addition and wealth creation, over and above enabling climate change adaptation.
  - Conduct a comprehensive review of the Kampala Ministerial Declaration on Migration, Environment, and Climate Change (KDMECC) signed by 48 African countries on August 25, 2023, with a focus on identifying points of convergence that specifically address the critical nexus between human mobility and climate change in Africa.
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## In Somalia:

- Mobilize international support for Somalia's stability beyond ATMIS. This should include redirecting funds and resources to strengthen peace and stability in the country. Donor countries and international organizations should coordinate their efforts to provide long-term resilience building to local civil society that can accompany the communities in peacebuilding and peacemaking efforts.
  - Collaborate with international organizations to implement climate resilience programs in Somalia. This should include support for climate adaptation measures, such as drought-resistant agriculture and water resource management, to mitigate the impact of climate change.
  - Invest in Somalia's youth education and vocational training programs to give young people the tools to build prosperous, secure lives. This helps young people feel more in control of their lives and financially secure and offers them alternatives to joining extreme groups and avoiding radicalism.
  - A comprehensive approach is needed to mitigate internal and external displacement caused by conflict and climate change in Somalia. This includes promoting peace and conflict resolution, adapting to climate change, establishing early warning systems, ensuring disaster preparedness, protecting vulnerable populations, providing education and healthcare, supporting livelihoods, addressing land disputes, fostering international cooperation, engaging local communities, collecting data, and strengthening the legal framework. Collaboration among the government, international organizations, and local communities is crucial for success.
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- Invest in civil society groups to empower local actors and build a foundation for sustainable peace in South Sudan. This investment should be transparent, accountable, and aligned with the priorities and needs of the local population. Additionally, an enabling environment for civil society activities should be fostered, including protecting the safety and rights of activists for their effectiveness in peacebuilding efforts.
  - Extend support to South Sudan's newly appointed Catholic Church cardinal, viewing it as a pivotal opportunity to engage with the South Sudanese population ahead of next year's elections, a period marked by significant political uncertainty. The U.S. government should seize this moment and strengthen diplomatic and humanitarian efforts in the country.
  - Actively encourage and, where possible, assist UNMISS, the transitional government, and humanitarian partners to enhance their provision of shelter, food, medical care, and relocation services for returnees and displaced persons while ensuring a balanced approach that addresses the needs of host communities and those displaced less recently (from Sudan and Ethiopia).
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## In Kenya and Uganda:

- There is a need for International Development Partners to support Kenya in consolidating her democratic gains by holistically enabling national cohesion building, strengthening democratic institutions, and constructing social safety nets to alleviate the effects of poverty and unemployment.
- Support Kenya's ongoing bipartisan talks to prevent chaos and mitigate further conflict.
- Encourage the governments to open civic spaces and freedoms of expression for the citizenry, specifically the marginalized and Civil Society Organizations. Additionally, it fosters community peacemaking and conflict resolution efforts by funding local civil society organizations.
- Revitalize the traditional peace-building mechanisms to address perennial political and ethnic-based electoral violence. Specifically, invest in prevention efforts to avoid politically instigated political violence and speak out in favor of democratic procedures that encourage input from all Kenyan/Ugandan society sectors.
- Mobilize Kenya and Uganda to respect the international rule of law and human rights and practice justice towards their citizens. By respecting human rights and the rule of law, these countries can create a more stable and prosperous society for all their citizens. In addition, advocate for these principles and hold those in power accountable for their actions.
- Consider funding programmatic activities to help local communities adapt to the effects of climate change, such as drought-resistant crops and livestock breeds, inclusion, and protection of the rights of those most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. As Kenya and Uganda await the loss and damages funds, the international community must implement ecosystem-based adaptation projects for the region.
- Continue supporting cross-community dialogues and cooperation initiatives to promote understanding and build trust among themselves to reduce instances of cattle rustling. Encourage community-based conversation and reconciliation efforts to mend wounds and strengthen social bonds.



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### About the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)

The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) promotes a world free of violence, inequality, and oppression. Guided by the Quaker belief in the divine light within each person, we nurture the seeds of change and respect for human life to fundamentally transform our societies and institutions. We work with people and partners worldwide of all faiths and backgrounds to meet urgent community needs, challenge injustice, and build peace. Through its Africa Regional Office in Kenya, AFSC promotes projects in Kenya, South Sudan, Somalia, Burundi, and Zimbabwe, with an evidence-based advocacy component for policy change in the Horn of Africa, with an office in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. AFSC has decades of experience leading advocacy, evidence-based research, and worldwide civil society strengthening programs. AFSC brings Global South leaders and Civil Society Organizations through the Dialogue and Exchange Program to learn and exchange ideas every year. Due to the challenging situation in the Horn of Africa, AFSC focused intensely on this region to link up with existent civil society networks and Faith Leaders to contribute with its specific expertise.

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### About the All Africa Conference of Churches, AACC:

The All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) is a continental ecumenical body that accounts for over 140 million Christians across the continent. AACC is the largest association of Protestant, Anglican, Orthodox, and Indigenous Churches in Africa and is a member of the worldwide ecumenical network. AACC is a fellowship of 204 members comprising Churches, National Christian Councils (NCCs), Theological and Lay Training Institutions, and other Christian Organizations in 43 African Countries. AACC works through member Churches and with member Churches in the continent to address issues facing the people of the African continent. AACC also works with and collaborates with global ecumenical partners (in and out of Africa), multilateral bodies (African Union (AU), United Nations (UN) agencies, development agencies), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), foundations, private Businesses, etc. Through its AU Liaison Office, the AACC follows the ambition of its strategic plan for 2019-2023 for a solid political engagement at the AU level.

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