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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. O'HANLON: Good morning, everyone. And welcome to Brookings. I'm Mike O'Hanlon in the Foreign Policy program.

And we are going to talk today about Somalia, in all of its manifestations, but with a particular eye on security conditions, and political transitions, and ongoing challenges faced by that country of 11 million in the Horn of Africa.

I've got a distinguished panel here to inform us and discuss matters, and then we'll go to you for the second half of the program for your questions.

Next to me is Ambassador Stephen Schwartz, a retired U.S. ambassador and Foreign Service officer, who was the United States ambassador to Somalia through last fall, spanning both recent presidencies in Somalia, as well as both recently presidencies in the United States. He was also a Foreign Service officer and ambassador in a number of other African countries and around the world as well. And I'm really pleased to have him here today to join us. And also at a personal level, like me, he was a Peace Corps volunteer in Africa in the early 1980s; in my case in DRC, and his in Cameroon.

Just to his left is my good friend and co-conspirator on all things, Africa Security Initiative at Brookings, Vanda Felbab-Brown, who, in addition to her recent book on wildlife trafficking, has studied Africa in many dimensions over the years with her ongoing focus on transnational crime, insurgency, civil conflict and many other related matters. She's one of the most distinguished and intrepid, and brilliant researchers in this kind of work anywhere in the world, and really a one-of-a-kind scholar who I'm proud to be colleagues with, and who has done field research again this year in Somalia that will inform many of her views.

And then finally, to her left is Landry Signé, who is from Cameroon,

speaking of that great nation, and is currently a Rubenstein fellow here at Brookings, a two-year visiting fellowship, in the Global Economy and Development program, which is another one of the research programs at Brookings where the Africa Growth Initiative is focused and located.

And that the Africa Growth Initiative focuses on matters, as you would guess, of development and economics. And so we are very happy to partner with them whenever we can in the Foreign Policy program, thinking about our Africa Security Initiative.

So, let me just add a brief word of orientation and background, and then really get to the experts who know this country much better than I, to give us some updates on where things stand.

As you are aware, Somalia remains a very troubled country. It has essentially been in one degree or another of chaos and civil war ever since the former president, Siad Barre, was no longer president and deposed from office in 1991, or ceased to function as President at that time. And since that time we've had of course a great deal of challenge in this part of the world, including the tragic Black Hawk Down episode in 1993, early in Bill Clinton's presidency. Then that led to the withdrawal of American forces by 1994.

There's been one degree or another of chaos and civil conflicts since that time, but there are pockets of hopefulness as well. For example, in some of the northern regions of Somalia there are autonomous regions, Somaliland and the Puntland that are functioning essentially as mini states, and there's some tension between them and Mogadishu over what their actual status is, or should be, and who should be calling the shots. And that's certainly been one of the issues we've been reading about in recent years.

Also, there is a government in Mogadishu run by the current president,

Mohammed, who succeeded the previous president, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud. So, two President Mohammeds, but they were chosen by a proper process. There was a democratic transition, there were a lot of shady allegations of corruption, and vote-buying, and so forth, and it was not a nationwide poll, it was essentially impossible to have such an election at a national level because of security conditions, but nonetheless there were parliamentarians who had previously been chosen through various kinds of quasi-democratic processes who then selected the new president.

And so there has been an element of hopefulness there as well. And as you know there is a large African Union deployment, a peacekeeping mission of some 20,000 soldiers which, as Vanda has explained here previously at other ASI events, has its has its downsides, and its challenges, and weaknesses, but nonetheless continues to try to stabilize at least certain parts of the country.

And in many ways things are better, as I understand it at least, since the worst of the worst periods in the 1990s and thereafter. So, it's a troubled country, but it's a country with an amazing diaspora around the world. Somalis are everywhere it seems, very entrepreneurial, very successful in this country. There are only 11 million of them in Somalia, and yet they are a powerful force on the face of the African Continent and in African politics. So, I find this part of the world a tragic and yet also hopeful part of the broader Continent.

And without further ado, therefore, let me turn things over to Ambassador Schwartz. And what I'd like to do is just begin with a broad question, and invite you to give us some background, and tell us a little bit about your experience. But I'd really just like to, you know, in broad terms hear about what you did over your tenure? How you saw the political transition in Somalia? And how you size things up today?

MR. SCHWARTZ: Thank you, Michael. And thanks to all of you for coming. I think Somalia deserves a good bit of attention in policy circles here, and that

we should be paying this kind of attention to the circumstances there, and what the U.S. could do.

It was a real privilege to serve as U.S. Ambassador, the first since 1991, and it signaled a sort of a continual uptick in U.S. engagement with Somalia, consistent with, I think, the development of Somali political authorities moving from transitional to a permanent government, the Federal Government of Somalia.

You know, when I got there I think, you know, the Somali Government and society was a bit stuck. Hassan Sheikh had been in over three years, he was on his third Prime Minister -- corruption is a huge problem, there's a huge lack of social trust going back at least to the early '90s, if not beyond. Insecurity, of course, is rife with the government authorities controlling a minuscule portion of the country in reality, and even that is only because of AMISOM's, the African Union Forces' presence.

And there was a very protracted and, you know, unprecedented sort of political electoral mechanism being put in place by the Somalis, with a lot of help from the United Nations. And the process that unfolded to elect the Parliament was highly imperfect, but then the Parliament itself acted very responsibly.

They moved the location of the vote for President to a hangar with no side rooms where corruption could happen. It was all live stream, no cell phones could be brought in the room, and the 300-some of them, voted individually all on camera.

And out of 22 candidates they elected President Mohamed, more popularly known as Farmajo, who, I think many people thought was a very strong candidate. He had been Prime Minister; he had a reputation for getting some things done when he was Prime Minister, AMISOM, with help from Somali Forces cleared Shabaab out of Mogadishu. He was seen as a modest man, somebody who fought corruption, and he wasn't from the sub-clan, the Hawiye Abgaal clan that had been -- the last two presidents had been from that sub-clan.

It signaled a dramatic shift, I think, and a very positive one for Somalis. Hassan Sheikh was a candidate and he was the runner-up. He acceded power peacefully, as had his predecessor, Sheikh Sharif. And there was this great inauguration where Farmajo is at the lectern, and the two Former Presidents were standing behind him. And that doesn't happen everywhere. It's a heck of an achievement.

And I think that, you know, that says a lot, as you pointed out Michael, the process itself was not comprehensive and universal, although people from every part of the country were able to vote for Parliament in some numbers, and they did the best they could, I think. So, not only was he, is he, I think, a fairly capable and attractive leader, but the government in Somalia I think to this day is still seen as legitimate by the people, more or less.

I mean it's what they have. I think they think that it is their government; it hasn't really performed for them in any way. There's a huge lack of capacity which can't be fixed overnight, not with foreign aid, not with anything. It's something that has to be built. They have no money. In 2016 the Federal Government spent I think it was $170 million, less than the salary cap for the Washington Nationals. That's it.

You effectively have sort of six city states, you know, Mogadishu and the other regional capitals but, you know, it is what it is, and as a photograph, it doesn't look very good, but if you do sort of a -- you know, if you look at it over time, over the last 15 years, over the last 30 years, there's clear progress.

And the Somalia of today is vastly better and more hopeful than the one of 10 years ago or 20 years ago. So, I mean, I think that I really value the chance to sort of lead the U.S. engagement with Somalia. I think we achieved a good bit, I think we have the capacity to do even more, and I hope the U.S. does that.

MR. O'HANLON: Fantastic. And thank you for setting the scene so well, and for your service there. And any hope that I think Somalia now has, you know, it's

benefited largely from what you've done, and other Americans, and the African Union Mission, and of course the Somalis most of all themselves.

Vanda, I wanted to turn to you. I know that you've been following Somalia for a long time. You've been there many times. I admire your commitment and your bravery in doing so, but I also know that you share some of the Ambassador's views on the progress, but also that you're very concerned about a number of the challenges today, and the potential for reversal potential for things to go in the wrong direction, and of course there's a long ways to go in the best of all cases. So, how would you see things, and how would you set the scene for us, please?

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Well, thank you, Mike. And thank you, Ambassador, for your comments. Let me perhaps focus on where we are with the security situation today, and some of the timelines that we are, potentially, quite soon coming up to, and how that intermeshes with the political situation. As Mike mentioned, I was there in December again.

One of the reasons I went there, apart from regular updates, and regularly going there, is a project for the United Nations Universities on Amnesty and Defectors Program. This has a number of case studies. I'm writing the Nigeria and Somalia one. The papers will be public in May, and we'll be also doing later on a launch of some of the findings here at Brookings.

I won't very much focus on those issues right now at all, that will be for the other events that I hope you'll attend. But those issues inevitably intersect with security and political developments, which is what I want to focus on today.

You know, of course depending on where one sets the baselines one has a different assessment of where we are in the security situation, compared to 2009 where Shabaab was dominating Mogadishu, or even compared to 2006 when Ethiopian Forces were raging a very brutal -- were raging a very brutal counterinsurgency against

the previously Islamic Courts Union, the situation today is much better, both in terms of security, and in terms of politics.

However, just today, this morning, there were several attacks in Mogadishu, including two bomb attacks, fortunately this time they did not kill many people. One of them took place very close to the international airport, which is where just about the entire international presence is located, and where most of government offices operate from, or operate very close to that area.

And these are not rare occurrences. Some sort of military action in Mogadishu takes place almost every day, often this is just assassination, and I say, just, this would be of course very problematic and very disturbing in many countries.

They are often alleged to be conducted by Al-Shabaab. That is far more problematic, a lot of insecurity is conducted by other actors, often who are hired by economic interests as well as by political actors to eliminate their economic or political rivals.

Al-Shabaab is only one of at least sixty warring actors in Somalia, and so Somalia will not achieve peace unless it starts doing a much deeper reckoning with the multiplicity of armed actors there, that of course very much intersects with the issues of power delegation, state formation, that the Ambassador alluded to, and Mike also, and I'll come back to it a bit as well.

Let me just at the beginning focus on Shabaab. AMISOM has nominally, 22,000 Forces in Somalia in practice, no one knows how many forces are there on actual day. There continues to be very suboptimal level of communication between AMISOM and Somali Government, and AMISOM and international partners.

We have started seeing, last year, withdrawals of forces such as by Ethiopia, and so the moment the Ethiopian Forces withdrew, Al-Shabaab almost immediately took over those territories.

AMISOM never announces in advance when it will withdraw, but what is happening for several months now is that when local populations see AMISOM packing its bags they start fleeing. So, we are seeing new internal displacement, very significant, because the population fears Al-Shabaab retaliation.

And this of course intersects with the food security crisis. Fortunately, the worst of the famine was avoided, 2016 and 2017 could have been much worse. The international community and the Somali Government deserve credit for that, so does Al-Shabaab actually, they did not prevent food distribution in the same way they did in 2010 and 2011, which crucially caused them legitimacy. There was more ability to distribute food. But Somalia still has many large parts with very intense, very significant food insecurity.

So, when AMISOM Forces leave, Shabaab immediately takes over, that's been the pattern, and they have started victimizing population that has existed under AMISOM -- that has existed around AMISOM areas. I have, on purpose, rephrased that sentence because the key problem for AMISOM and the Somali National Army is that they have absolutely no holding capacity.

AMISOM's clearing operations, its offensive operations have essentially been stalled since 2015, and much of AMISOM's deployment remains in locked garrisons with minimal interaction with local population.

Nonetheless, even the garrison presence has some deterrent effect on Shabaab, and when the garrison presence its eliminated Shabaab returns and brutalizes local populations, hence the displacement.

Shabaab's numbers are estimated a mere 3,000, nonetheless those numbers vary, and we have seen, in the last year, Shabaab very much intensified forceful recruitments, including illegally, and very sadly, of children. But at the same time, Shabaab really has not experienced any inability to recruit, nor any inability to conduct

operations.

It regularly attacks AMISOM's bases, it regularly attacks SNA contingents. The SNA capacity, despite the fact that the international community has funded it at the level of 250 million a year for multiple years now, is absolutely minimal. Not only does it have no offensive capacity, it has no holding capacity, it's barely capable of going on joint patrols with AMISOM, and frequently doesn't.

Nominally there are some 29,000 SNA Forces on the books, and many of those are widows, the elderly, ghost soldiers. So, maybe there are some 12,000 SNA soldiers that have a weapon, that have some ammunition, and that have some level of capacity to perform on the battlefield.

In December, the United States suspended its support for the -- or cut the level of its support for the SNA. That generated a lot of attention in Mogadishu. I was there at the time as this was unfolding, and that was, in my view, a good measure because the level of corruption that surrounds the SNA has been really enormous, with massive amount of funding stolen, with salaries not paid, in the worst of time for six to eight months.

President Farmajo managed to reduce the level of debt to two months; nonetheless, it's only every two months if -- that soldiers are paid. The police are pretty much in a similar shape.

So what it means in practice is that both the Somali Forces as well as AMISOM rely on local clan militias and warlord militias for controlling population, and for holding territories that they seize from Al-Shabaab.

Now, one of Somalia's absolutely key defining characteristics, and it's key defining misfortune is the level of clan hostility, clan rivalries that dominate and really are the defining characteristics of politics in the country, and since no one is formally paying the militias, although various intelligence services have their favorite sub-elements

to whom they may be giving money, the militias essentially exist by predation on local communities, extorting local communities for money, and often engaging in theft of resources from rival clan militias.

And this clan rivalry constantly creates entrenchment opportunities for Al-Shabaab, and reasons for why Al-Shabaab is still around, because more than any other entity in Somalia, perhaps with previous iterations -- with the exception of previous iterations of Islamists, like Al-Ittihad and like the Islamic Courts Union, Shabaab has the capacity to be pan-clan.

It very adroitly inserts itself into clan rivalries, often siding with minority clans, its membership is often Hawiye but highly -- predominantly so, it has members from virtually every clan. It tends to appoint its ameers to be from different clans, not from local area so they don't engage in typical clan discrimination, and it makes some efforts to make its appointments on the basis of merit.

I have asked my Somali friends and interlocutors for many years every time the single question: why is it that it's only the ICU and the Al-Shabaab manages to rise above clan politics, which so debilitate the functionality of governance, which so debilitate the Somali Parliament, and the interactions between the Executive and the Somali Parliament?

And I've never heard a good answer. And often I'm not given any answer to that question at all, other than we don't know. But that's one of the issues that Somalia deeply needs to do reckoning with itself in how to overcome that issue. Even just over the past days, quite dramatic events have been unfolding in the political domain, typical tension between various key political leaders.

In this case it's not been between the Prime Minister and the President, as has often been the case for years. This time it's been between the Speaker of the House and the President that almost resulted in small arm exchange that was averted,

but yet it's a symptom of the constant challenges in how power is delegated.

There are now six states, and one of the big progress since 2015 has been the formation of Constitution, the Constitution is not complete, many laws have been stuck in the Parliament for months or years at this point, many absolutely vital laws, such as a law on counterterrorism and other laws, but nonetheless some drafting has taken place, some parts have been approved, and there's been state formation, the form of creation of sub-federal states underway.

There are six states but only four have been -- so only two have been formalized, four are still not legally formalized, and major disagreements exist between Mogadishu, as to how economic and resources will be divided. And it is along with the clan divisions, are very much overlapping, and intersecting with the clan division, is the issue of power delegation, share of control.

Some key elites from the sub-federal state level are even suggesting that Mogadishu should not be the capital, should it be Benaadir or not, very many difficult issues pervade the situation.

What I think is, however, importantly different over the past eight, nine months, is that the old divisions between federal, sub-federal level over power delegations between the Mogadishu, who controls Mogadishu, who controls key resource area, now intersects with the Middle East Division, the Middle East dispute between Qatar, Saudi Arabia and its allies.

And we are seeing that very much play out in the context of Somalia. So, the external environment which has never been benevolent for Somalia is -- and Somalia has not been benevolent to its external -- to its neighbors is now really compounded by that Middle Eastern conflagration as well.

My final point is that we need to appreciate that Al-Shabaab remains deeply entrenched because of the deficiencies of governance, and with that also

government in Somalia. One is the persistent discrimination against minority clans, extraordinary exclusionary politics, politics that are deeply corrupt, where often the purpose of achieving political power is to illegally or extra-legally gain resources for oneself and one's clique.

And Shabaab, not only manages to rise above clan rivalries, but also delivers justice that is not corrupt, that might be harsh but then nonetheless is swift, and that is predictable. And so there are repeated stories including those that I heard from my fieldwork of police officials who work in Mogadishu going to Al-Shabaab controlled areas, some of which are very close to Mogadishu, the difference might be 30 kilometers, or less in some cases. And Shabaab deeply operates in Mogadishu.

It taxes everyone, by the way, or very many people are never included in Mogadishu. They go to Mogadishu courts for dispute resolution. This is police officers. No one trusts the judicial courts that are both dominated by particular clans, but are also extraordinarily corrupt.

Women often prefer to have disputes, or property disputes resolved by Shabaab. This, despite the fact that Al-Shabaab has of course brutalized women for adultery, prohibited many issues of liberty, such as a dress code, but in terms of property disputes, because of Sharia, the rulings are often far better than in justice courts, or than in clan courts where women don't have any representation, they cannot address clan elders, and where often males, and particularly males from dominant clan, can prevail to seize inheritance property for example.

And Al-Shabaab also, more than any other actor in Somalia, is better to deliver -- is better able to deliver security such as for travel on roads. If you go on Al-Shabaab routes from Mogadishu to Southern Jubba, to border of Kenya, you pay $1,500, on the first Shabaab checkpoint you're issued a receipt that you have paid your fee. You are not harassed afterwards, women are not raped during the travel, cargo is not stolen.

If you travel on roads that are nominally controlled by AMISOM or clan militias, you'll pay up to $5,000 for that same segment, you'll pay multiple times, and the risks of robbery, assault and rape, are very prevalent.

And so that means that crucial businesses, economic businesses that operate in Mogadishu, that are behind some of the very fancy buildings that have gone up in the city are often using Shabaab, or are often paying Shabaab for the provision of security for their business.

So, understanding this war economy, as well as how AMISOM intersects with the war economy is very crucial for understanding conflict dynamics. And unless these governance issues are addressed in a much better way, we will see some version, some iteration of Al-Shabaab just as we have seen before, Al-Ittihad and ICU.

Of course the crucial problem for the Federal Government is that it doesn't control -- that it doesn't have much capacity to collect taxes, and it's a chicken-egg problem. When I spoke with businessmen in Somalia about their paying taxes they would say, well, why should we pay taxes to Mogadishu, to the Federal Government that doesn't provide -- give us protection, that doesn't provide education to the labor force, that doesn't provide roads, infrastructure, any public services? Now, government officials will of course say, how could we do any of these things if we cannot collect taxes?

But I want to add on a very discouraging note, and I think that it's a very significant one. As Mike mentions, I've been there multiple times, and I've seen a set of interlocutors always some new ones, but also some set interlocutors repeatedly, and one of them raised something that really distressed me.

We were talking about where we are in the trajectory, the right expectations that people have to have, the immense capacity limitations of the government, and my interlocutor, a woman, a very brave, a very admirable Somali woman said, who has opposed Shabaab, and who has really fought for women rights

against Shabaab, as well as against clan oppression and government injustice said: do you know what, maybe at the end of the day some Shabaab presence is good, because I really fear that if Shabaab is fully defeated, or somehow integrated into the political process, we will see the country once again disintegrate into civil war.

And I found that an extremely discouraging, depressing comment. And I said, surely that's not the case, surely the horrors of the late-1990s, of the early 2000s were so significant that this could -- this has to be avoided, everyone has to understand that.

And she said, no, I don't think that the elites understand this, Somalia's pervasive fundamental problem is still one of extreme impunity.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you, Vanda. Despite the discouraging conclusion but, still, a very good history and explanation of where we are today.

Landry, I want to now ask you for your thoughts. Let me give a couple more words about our distinguished colleague, who has been here now for a few months. He's sort of a man of the world. He was educated not only in his home country of Cameroon, but in France, in Canada. He's a Professor at the University of Alaska at Anchorage, which is a long ways from Cameroon, although Washington feels like Alaska enough these days, that I'm not sure if you made much of an improvement in the weather coming here.

But he's also got a perch at Stanford, which is very wise and maybe, you know, complements the Alaska base. But he studied issues of Pan-Africa political economy, not so much Somalia specifically but broader regional dynamics.

And so I just wanted to invite you to offer whatever comments you'd like to, and of course before I do, let me just say that one of the interesting dimensions, we've all been referring to the African Union Military Operation which is, as Vanda said, not without its problems, but it's also been there for quite a while with 20,000-some troops

from a half-dozen countries including Kenya, which has suffered a terrorist attack, or two, or three, out of Somalia, and yet stuck with the mission.

Other neighboring states, for better and worse have stuck with the mission, and so it's a fascinating example of Africans doing something to try to help one of their fellow nations, despite the imperfections along the way.

So, maybe that is one aspect you want to comment on. But let me just give the floor to you, my friend.

MR. SIGNÉ: Thank you very much, Mike. Ambassador, Vanda, and hello, everyone! Hello, everyone!

GROUP: Hello.

MR. SIGNÉ: Good. So, I would like to speak about Somalia from a comparative perspective, providing you some indicator on how Somalia compare to other African countries, or internationally, from the political and economic perspectives. So, I will start with the nature of the political regime.

I may not be as enthusiastic as Ambassador. According to *Freedom House*, Somalia ranks -- has a score of 7 out of 7 in terms of civil liberties and political rights, which means the worst call that a given country has and it translates the level of political participation, political competition, contestation, among other factors. So, we are really -- we are still very far from a strong improvement, and the score has not changed since 1999.

So, if we would also speak about the level of state fragility, for example, Somalia has been, from 2006 to 2012, the most fragile state in the world, and in 2012, after the creation of South Sudan of course, South Sudan -- become the weakest state.

So, which translates the ability, and I think Vanda has highlighted this point, of the limited ability of the state to provide basic public services, and goods to the citizens, including security, health, education, and even territorial integrity.

So, also speaking about terrorism, the country ranks seventh in terms of the highest impact of terrorism, not very far from countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, among others. So, we still have critical challenges, that which need to be addressed, and of course, I think most of you all know that it's also considered as the most corrupt country in the world, or has been the most, or one of the most for many years.

So, the challenge is definitely at a very high level. In terms of rule of law also, one of the worst performance -- almost no rule of law, or perhaps even speak about the rule by law, so it means that the law is there to serve a few instead of ensuring that things are working well for all the citizens.

So, I can explain more on corruption, but I think I will turn, rather, on economic -- from an economic perspective. And there perhaps we can see some signs of hope. For example, according to the World Bank Report in 2017 the country is projected to have a nominal annual growth between 5 and 7 percent in the short -- or in the medium term.

So which is, of course it has to be adjusted to inflation, but it is still encouraging based on the fact that the level of state effectiveness is very low. However, 70 percent of the population is under the age of 30, and 67 percent of the population is unemployed. Those are easy targets for terrorist groups who can provide some revenue to those people in order to cover for what the state cannot be doing.

So, the per capita income is estimated at USD435, which is in the top five or six worst performance globally. So, this is important to mention, and even broadly in the country, about 50 percent of the population lives below poverty line.

So, we are really coming -- although we have seen some improvement the situation is still quite dramatic or challenging, let me put it that way. There's an over-reliance on external funding, and limited added value created in the economy. So, mostly

agriculture, and the industrial builds is almost inexistent after so many years of conflict. Of course we have a dynamic -- the Somali community is very dynamic, and we have many business people who are making the economy working at a certain level despite all the constraints.

However, things remain quite challenging. So, of course many of the factors which affect the economy are the level of insecurity, the limited developed domestic resources, weak state capacity; we also spoke, Vanda, about the ability to collect taxes. So, I will not be as enthusiastic, although we are seeing signs of progress.

So, I hope my colleagues, who have been extensively in the country much more than I have done, will be then discussing some of the solutions to those challenges. So, how will you, based on meaning -- when only focusing on Somalia, we can see that there is some progress, but when comparing to other African countries, we can say that it's still at the bottom. So, how do we move from there?

MR. O'HANLON: Right! Very good; thank you. A couple of things: I'd like to follow up with a couple of additional questions up here, and then we'll go to you. I'm going to do a little bit of a different approach than I've often done. I want the first round of questions to be from Somalis or Somali-Americans if we have some here. So, just be preparing your questions. Maybe small thoughts or contributions in addition to questions, but I will try to keep them brief, and group a few together in the first round before we come back to the panel.

However, before I do that I want to just make sure that for those in the room who are generalists, or those watching television who don't know Somalia in detail, we'll get a few more basic facts and figures on the table. A lot of them have already been presented by these excellent remarks we've heard from all three.

But, Ambassador Schwartz, if I could just sort of play a lightning round of quick factual questions with you. So, the AMISOM Mission I think consists, primarily, of

six different countries' troops. Is that correct?

MR. SCHWARTZ: Five.

MR. O'HANLON: Five at this point, and it's Ethiopia and Kenya, and Uganda?

MR. SCHWARTZ: And Uganda, Burundi and Djibouti. Yes.

MR. O'HANLON: Fantastic. It used to have Zambia also, or there was one other major country?

MR. SCHWARTZ: There was Sierra Leone (crosstalk).

MR. O'HANLON: Sierra Leone? Okay, thank you. And the mission has been there now for?

MR. SCHWARTZ: Ten years, if I can --

MR. O'HANLON: Ten years. Is that also dual-hatted as a U.N. Peacekeeping Mission? Or is it authorized by the U.N. but implemented by the African Union?

MR. SCHWARTZ: No. It is a hybrid, I think it's not an official U.N. mission, it's authorized by the African Union, but with logistical support provided by the United Nations. There's no other model like it.

MR. O'HANLON: Now, shifting to Somali politics and the six states that we've been hearing about, is one of those Somaliland, or does Somaliland not recognized the central government, and consider itself completely separate and distinct?

MR. SCHWARTZ: I'd ask Vanda. I mean there's five Federal Member States that I know of, then there's Benaadir, which is sort of Mogadishu, and then there's Somaliland as well, so I mean you could count seven if you wanted, but --

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Well, that's at the core of the dispute, Mogadishu certainly sees Somaliland as one of the Member States, Somaliland seeks independence, has not been successful, and indeed the battle between the Speaker of

the House, and the President, and Prime Minister that was unfolding over the past several days was triggered by actions of Somaliland, of lending the Port of Berbera to UAE, with politicians in Mogadishu rejecting the notion that Somaliland or a sub-federal state entity can make that move without approval of Federal officials.

And in fact, the Speaker went further and sought to pass a law that any foreign investment in any part of Somalia would have to be authorized by the sub-federal level without consulting the Prime Minister and President about that, who then opposed that move, and so to impeach him.

MR. O'HANLON: In the meantime does Somaliland send representatives to Parliament? Or is it effectively boycotting, and consider it just to be a separate entity altogether?

MR. SCHWARTZ: They completely disregard Mogadishu. Although there are many citizens or people from Somaliland who personally were from Somaliland; or their parents and who -- or Members of Parliament, there is a Somaliland portion or quota in the Parliament. Although nobody -- the Somaliland, the government would never recognize them as representing them or the territory.

MR. O'HANLON: Two more questions, one for Vanda, one for Ambassador Schwartz. Then I think I'll cut myself off and go to you. And if I have further thoughts later I'll bring them in subsequently. You've both talked about, and especially Vanda, you talked about clans. I think it's just worth underscoring this basic point that in Somalia there are not different ethnic groups, there's essentially one ethnic group, one main Somali, you know, not just tribe or clan, but a broader sectarian community which speaks Somali, which is primarily Sunni Muslim, which has quite a bit of homogeneity in that sense, and yet you've talked about different clans.

Is there a way to break down the clan structure, and understand the clan structure? Or is it just so flexible, and shifting that we can't really put our finger on that

kind of a hierarchy, or a, you know, broader taxonomy?

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Mike, you are opening a lot of wasp nests here, one of them is the political science definition of what does ethnicity mean. And, you know, there are some political scientists who would define clan-based identification as ethnicity.

MR. O'HANLON: Yes.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: The more relevant issue of ethnicity versus clans is the fact that identification with a clan, and there are hundreds of clans, and sub-clans, and sub-sub-clans in Somalia, is for many people in Somalia, if not for all, is the principal social organization of their life.

Often in a way that is very exclusionary, that generates significant marginalization, but there is little ability for many to experience political freedom, economic freedom, and social realization outside of the clan structure.

So, if a clan, for example, exposed a woman, but even a man, but particularly a woman, the woman and her children will have, essentially, no ability to obtain protection and often obtain any kind of livelihoods.

So disregarding clan and elders, breaking with clans is enormously costly for most people, less so for Diaspora, less so for some of the urban population, but even in major urban spaces, even in the capitals that's the case.

MR. O'HANLON: Go ahead.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: What I want to finish, though, by saying is that you have a set of clans that are considered dominant clans, or dominant supra-clans under which there is a lot of politicking, a lot of subdivision underneath. And often the more dominant clans that might be quite relative in terms of standing, again, tend to very much restrict access to political power and to resources.

But some of the clan identification gets very complex. I often do not seek

to engage with my interlocutors on -- about the clan background, but when it comes up in the conversation sometimes people themselves are not sure how many of the layers of supra-clans above them actually belong to what lineage, with the splitting, with the differentiation.

MR. O'HANLON: With the civil war scenario that you've finished on, that specter of a complete breakdown, which of course we all hope will never happen, but to the extent that it ever could, would it be largely fighting among these supra-clans? Or would it be more chaotic with dozens and hundreds of separate combatants, you know, sort of more anarchy than civil war?

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Well, it would be both. I mentioned that there are at least 60 warring -- 60 armed actors in Somalia, many of which are constituted along clans, clan affiliation shifts, it shifts, they shop between dominant clans, they shop between dominant clans and Al-Shabaab, they shop around warlords.

We don't have the late-1990s early-2000s warlord-like scenario or, in fact, you know, mid-1990s, before Al-Ittihad emerged, but nonetheless warlords also emphasize or de-emphasize their clan identity, sometimes clan membership can be multiple clan membership. And again, political actors shop among clans, depending on the basis of -- depending on the matter of particular political convenience.

So, clan lines would play a significant line in that, but that could still mean very fractured-like scenario. Now, I do hope that my interlocutor was wrong, that in fact the political elite has learned from its past horrors and terrible suffering to have more responsibility.

MR. O'HANLON: Excellent! And then just one last question for me, and again for Ambassador Schwartz, given your background, because I think one more thing we need to get clear on the table before going to the audience discussion, is the relationship between Al-Shabaab and the broader al-Qaeda and ISIS movements around

the world, or violent extremism broadly defined.

And we often hear discussion of linkages, but we also know that Al-Shabaab, as Vanda explained, really is largely a local actor that operates and succeeds, often with its ability to understand clan politics, and Somali society. How do you assess the Al-Shabaab connection to the broader, you know, Salafist-Jihadist movement, or whether it's called ISIS, al-Qaeda, or something else?

MR. SCHWARTZ: Thank you. Al-Shabaab has maintained, publicly, an affiliation with al-Qaeda. There have been internal, you know, movements to try to affiliate with ISIS, and they've been rejected and put down brutally in a sort of mini purge or civil war within Shabaab over the last two or three years.

There is a small ISIS element in Somalia, up in Puntland, in the mountains. I don't know how successful it's been in growing out of the mountains --

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: It hasn't.

MR. SCHWARTZ: It hasn't? You know, or in expanding beyond, essentially, a sub-sub-sub-clan. But it's there, and it can be attractive, the idea can be attractive to some of the Shabaab members who might be -- are disaffected for reasons of ideology, or clan, or pay, or whatever it is. But Shabaab itself is seen as a part of al-Qaeda, although I don't believe the relationship is very intimate.

MR. O'HANLON: Yes. Very good! Okay. Well, I'd like now to go to you. And let's take three or four questions, comments, from Somalis and Somali-Americans. So, let's see how this experiment goes. But we definitely want to get your voices in. So, let's start here in the front row, and then I see actually three more. So, we'll take all of you, and then these three together before we come back to the panel, and then I'll have another round.

MR. AHMED: All right, my name is Abdullah Ahmed from Virginia Tech School of Public International Affairs. I would call myself American-Somali, rather than

Somali-American.

MR. O'HANLON: Okay, very good.

MR. AHMED: So, my question is actually very technical, and somewhat pointed, and it's to the Ambassador, and to Vanda. It seems you guys are talking much more about Mogadishu and South-Central than Somali. About 15 years ago when Shendi Abrazo was working for the State, there was something called peace dividend a concept, a framework, whereby Puntland and Somaliland should be rewarded for the peace that they maintained. And clan is not necessarily a negative thing, because those two entities -- I don't need to lecture you -- those entities actually use clan lords to bring people together and defeat terrorism and Islamists. So, I would like to speak about that please.

MR. O'HANLON: Okay. Great! And then let's, there were three here, right, exactly. And then after that, it will be the gentleman right behind him, and then in the back row.

MR. ESSA: My name is Anils Abdullah Essa. I am Founder, and also Director of Somaliland Advocacy Group based in Washington, D.C. I have a little comment and three questions, please.

MR. O'HANLON: How, one or two questions. But go ahead.

MR. ESSA: Oh, two, all right. Okay. My little comment is, I think the Somali people doesn't need the caller of peace, what they need is creator of peace. The Somali people don't need peacemakers, but they need peaceful people.

If you are preparing, well, whatever, you need peace; you are not making a peace. It's in Somali words, it says in Somali: *Soo Sakaaro Ima Barat*o, which means, whenever an antelope sees -- you know antelope, a little, really small animal, antelope, whenever an antelope sees me it runs, it never learns," said by one man who never hunts.

What I mean is that, the so-called international organization never ever learned from their mistake in Somalia. My question is, why Somalia? It's a failed state with tourism problems, until now, today we are talking, Somaliland it's a success state with stability and good governance, pays on election, and democratization process.

MR. O'HANLON: Okay, good.

MR. ESSA: So, my last success story, and it's that stability sets an example for Africa. Will the Trump administration reward the Somali people for their political achievement, while the rest of Somalia is still in chaos until today? Thank you.

MR. O'HANLON: By the way, while you've got the microphone, let me ask you a question, since we got two Somaliland oriented -- Roughly, how many people live in Somaliland?

MR. ESSA: Probably I can say, between 3.8 to 4.5.

MR. O'HANLON: Four- 500,000?

MR. ESSA: No, no, no; 3.8 million to 4 million.

MR. O'HANLON: Almost half the population of the whole country?

MR. EESA? Yeah.

MR. O'HANLON: Okay. To the gentleman behind you, please?

QUESTIONER: Hello. My name is Hassan Kahn, and I'm a retiree from the U.N. I will ask four questions in quick succession.

MR. O'HANLON: No more than two.

QUESTIONER: Two questions. The first is that the event was called, *Seeking Solutions for Somalia*. Could you suggest some solutions for the problems here that you have described? The other question is about corruption. We heard a lot of about corruption. The colleague from Cameroon mentioned our Somali persistently ranks high on the list of corrupted countries in the world. Do you have any figures of the amount of money that is circulating in Somalia in corruption?

I recently have seen WikiLeaks report mentioning that one former Prime Minister pocketed 40 million in one go. It is very critical. About Al-Shabaab, Vanda has asked a question saying that, you asked a lot of Somalis question and they never answered to you. But you, when you were speaking about our Al-Shabaab you said that they have good justice, they improve security, and also they collect taxes. Doesn't this answer your question?

MR. O'HANLON: Okay. Thank you.

QUESTIONER: Just this, and the last -- the last question.

MR. O'HANLON: Three is enough. Three is enough. I've got to put my foot down somewhere. Thank you. Those were very good questions?

QUESTIONER: Good morning. My name is Mo Fattah. Until last December I was the National Security Director of Somalia. I remember Ambassador Schwartz in Mogadishu, I actually served in Mogadishu. I'm only one of -- probably the only Somali who served in the U.S. Government previously, successfully until 2011, working and coordinating Africa (inaudible) with the NSC, and also went back to Somalia, served (inaudible) in Mogadishu working in Ballo Somalia and outside the Green Zone.

So, I can give you a little bit about -- you know, basically I've heard a lot of things about Somalia, Somalia has made a lot of progress. I'm going to be short on -- just because I know you've got just a little bit of time, but we made a lot of progress. There's a lot of investments in Somalia, there's a lot of optimism, there's a lot of hope.

Yes, there are problems of course, in Mogadishu, there are problems with terrorism, but when I hear people say that, well Al-Shabaab is providing services, al-Qaeda did provide services, the Taliban did provide services, but we never accepted them, we went to war with them.

When you talk about Somaliland, Somaliland is a Federal Member State of Somalia, let's be clear about this. This is the policy of the U.N., this is the policy of the

African Union, there is no ambiguity about, Somalia as a state, 1960 to 1991, is the same as it exists today. There are states, Federal Member States, a growing economy, there are banks, financial institutions, schools that are operating. So there are a lot of positive things in Somalia.

So, I hear a lot of gloom and doom, the sky is falling. I lived in Mogadishu, I'm back here. Yes, we survived terrorism, we survived IED attacks but, still, we're fighting. Somalis are fighting, Somalis are fighters. They're fighting Shabaab, they're fighting ISIS.

And let me just say one last thing, the U.S. Embassy, or the U.S. Mission in Somalia is at the Mogadishu Airport. We transact in (inaudible) that tells you a lot about the footprint of the U.S. Government. That tells you a lot about the footprint of the international community.

A lot of it is fear. They don't want to come out of the airport, that's the truth. Somali has an army that has been built over the last 20 years or whatever, or 10-plus years, a lot of it by the U.S. Government. Well, Somalia has done, you know, ORA, which is Operation Ready Assessment, national defense policy, police policy.

Somali has rebuilt the institutions, there are functioning ministries, there are a lot of positive things happening, and one thing I heard about the conflict today between the Prime Minister -- or the President and the Speaker of the Parliament, that's part of the political discourse that exists on Somalia. Effective leadership is required, so if there are changes -- challenges between the Executive Branch and the Legislative Branch that that doesn't mean the state is failing.

And one last thing I want to say, it's about the militias, so-called militias. Name one warlord that exists today in Somalia? What we are talking about is, government-approved, or regional government-approved militias that are part of the Darwiche, which is the local state security that are actually doing the work in combating

Shabaab in those areas.

So, these are not militias, these are militia -- these are organizations that are paid for by the local state, whether they are Southwest, or Kismaayo, or other parts of the world. So what I'm saying is, Somalia is making progress, Somalia is improving, but what used to happen is then -- you cannot go back, you have to move forward, and the only way you can move forward is to combat terrorism.

That's the only thing that is holding back today's Somalia is Shabaab, no other organization, political problems. We live in Washington, the city of politics where everybody is fighting. The same thing is happening in Somalia, but at a lower level. So, thank you. (Applause)

MR. O'HANLON: What I'd like to do begin, begin with Landry on corruption, and see if he wants to make any estimates about the size of that. Then of course we have this ongoing debate about Somaliland and the Puntland, and their role in the future of Somalia as a theme. And then also the broader question of, you know, even beyond. The gentleman asked about what solutions do we need for what -- improvements in policy, American policy, other policies?

I will make one observation, however, before going to Landry, which is in regards to the eloquent statement we just heard from our friend in the back. And by the way, we were privileged to have the previous President of Somalia here at Brookings event in 2014, I interviewed him, during the Africa Leaders Summit. And so, we are delighted to be able to continue the conversation, and now have it in the context of a new government. And we admire, I admired the transition process, even though it wasn't always smooth and easy along the way.

But I will point out that even in our country, 160-some years ago, or almost 160 years ago, we had a civil war because we didn't necessarily figure out how to agree about where different regions should have their autonomy, and where they might

not.

So, I think it's more complicated than just saying it's all about Al-Shabaab, because we've already heard some pretty passionate statements on both sides about Somaliland's future role in this country. And if there is not agreement on that, history would tell us we had better be nervous about the potential for fighting over that issue, as well as all the other clan issues, and other matters that are on the table. So, I've heard enough to both be encouraged and a little scared.

And with that, I'll now ask the panelists to respond, starting with Landry,

MR. SIGNÉ: Thank you very much, Mike. I may not have the full number, but some estimate was over 300 million for Al-Shabaab, of illicit -- of profit from illicit trade of charcoal. So that is one of the recent estimates. And I would like also to discuss the solutions. One of my -- I think a question was asked about it, and the solution can only be at the nexus between security, state capacity, domestic resource mobilization, and accountability.

So, when we speak about security that is the primary function of a modern state individual -- except to restrict their freedom, in order to receive protection from the state. So there's a rupture of social contract if the state is not able to ensure safety of -- the safety of the citizens.

Now in terms of state capacity, of course, we discuss about how weak the Somalian State is, it's critical for anything else, including for security, for tax collection, and for order -- for other factors. The government reforms are needed to ensure the effectiveness of the public administration.

And this is an incremental process. We can only be -- we have seen some countries which have made impressive progress. The case of Rwanda, for example, but most of the country will rather be slow-moving, so it is an important factor to take into consideration. A third one is economic reform. I think economic freedom is

critical, it's important for investor, for entrepreneur, for the Diaspora to be able to invest in Somalia, and to be certain that they will not be -- that your property will not be seized, or will not be the subject of terrorist actors, among other.

I want to speak perhaps about domestic resource mobilization. You cannot build a state if you are not able to collect taxes, and one important factor is also the accountability that it creates, because when citizens pay taxes they ask for accountability to the decision-makers. So, that is really critical.

And I'll finish very quickly. On the final point, accountability, I just publish -- I've recently published a policy paper on accountability. And for me it's the key to successful transformation. And accountability may be at many levels, whether the country is democratic or not, maybe the personal accountability the leader has to deliver, whether they are authoritarian or democratic, they have to deliver for the citizen.

The second, maybe the peer accountability, what are the peer -- or other leaders surrounding the key decision-makers, are doing to ensure that citizens are well served? Then we have the vertical accountability which you all know, are related to elections, and for having elections, having a fair level of political participation, competition is critical.

We have the horizontal accountability which is related to the check and balance, how the institutions, such as the judiciary, and the Parliament are ensuring, are overseeing the Executive, for example.

And finally, perhaps, which is related to the question of one of your colleagues, who was speaking about the peaceful people, we need also diagonal -- what I call diagonal accountability which is the vibrant civil society. Of course it's not easy to develop that one, we didn't even have security, but without it, it is also difficult to have an effective state who will deliver basic public services and good for the citizens. Thank you.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. Vanda, over to you?

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Thank you.

MR. O'HANLON: Whichever questions you take on.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Sure. You know, the issue of how a national boundary is drawn is certainly not unique to Somaliland. By the way, Puntland has not sought to (inaudible), it has maintained, for a number of years, especially during the Al-Shabaab years, but even subsequently, quite autonomous operations, but it has never formally secede, and that's not been part of the conversation.

Somaliland has sought independence in ways that is different than Puntland's posture, but we see these same debates about Scotland, about Catalonia. There is even a movement for greater autonomy in Lombardy, Iran, Milan. The era of unification, and enlarging territories, and establishing Pan State political entities, such as the European Union might now be a different era.

But whatever the era is there's not been any international recognition of Somaliland. Turkey for a while took it upon itself to try to broker that, and negotiate it, promised a lot to Puntland -- I'm sorry -- promised a lot to Somaliland, to Hargeisa, promised a lot to Mogadishu, and did not achieve any resolution.

I would just point out that although there has been much less violence in both states, certainly in Somaliland, neither state is free from clan problems and governance problems. In Puntland elections have been delayed, presumably presidential elections will take place this year, but it's been delayed. Somaliland at various time also delayed its elections, there are tensions between the two states about the exact divisions of territory, and there are also sub-clans tensions.

In fact the ISIS component that you mentioned, Ambassador, is both a function of the tension within Al-Shabaab, and the leader who seceded, because of his tensions with Al-Shabaab leadership, but it's also a function of tension in Puntland. And the government in Puntland for a long time was distracted from dealing with ISIS, which

is small but very clan oriented, because of its own fighting over Galmudug, and refusing to accept the state formation in that space; so, hardly all three of clan identities, clan conflicts, in either state.

And Somali -- Somalia, broadly, has an often very capable technocratic Diaspora that is able to participate very effectively in international conversations, and sign international declaration, such as on the new architecture -- under the new security architecture that was formally agreed in in August of last year.

However, often there is very little capacity to translate those documents into any meaningful implementation on the ground, and there is much subversion in the implementation or on implementation process.

Just speaking about the new security architecture, as of January that had not yet even been submitted to the Somali Parliament for approval, I don't know whether that has moved since, but other laws very fundamental laws such as on counterterrorism, on anti-corruption, justice laws, have languished in the Parliament for a very long time. Again, that's not unique to Somalia, but what is unique to Somalia is the state of the governance dysfunction and the state of fighting that need to be overcome.

I do not ask my interlocutors, why is it that Shabaab is entrenched? I understand that, precisely because it delivers justice which I would not call good justice, but it's justice that's predictable, that is not corrupt, that is not corrupt particularly in comparison with the so-called justice delivered by the justice system, and because it has capacity to provide security.

Its rule is brutal, but often populations find predictable brutality easier to adjust to, and to develop combat mechanisms with, than chaos. It's the very same reason why the Taliban remains deeply, deeply entrenched despite much more massive international efforts to combat it, and why it is such a potent entity,

The question that I asked my interlocutors is: why only our Al-Shabaab

seems to be able to do this? Why only Al-Shabaab seems to be -- or all other previous iterations like ICU, like Al-Ittihad, seems to be able to overcome, at least to some extent, the clan divisions, and other misgovernance? And that's the answer to that I'm not hearing. And in that answer lies the solutions that people are asking for.

The solutions need to be fundamentally Somali, but it is up to Somali to resolve this fundamental question: How will you overcome decades of exclusion and marginalization? How will you overcome decades of clan divisions? And how are you finally going to overcome pervasive impunity in which those with political or armed power can massively violate justice?

Now there are several nascent processes underway, one of the processes is to significantly restrict impeachment capacity so that impeachment is not the constant games for financial, and political, and resource payoffs, so that it's resorted to -- with legality, with laws backing it, and much less rarely so that there is actual functionality of the Executive and the Legislature.

And by the way, yes, there are ministries, but often the ministerial capacity is very limited and very restricted to few individuals in Mogadishu, and really there is no meaningful presence of line ministries very much outside of Benaadir, perhaps with some, some presence in state capitals.

The other motion that's the other nascent effort to overcome some of these dysfunctions and to move towards some greater pan-clan politics, is new electoral rules that would demand that political parties need to have representations in all regions, which at this point I believe is define a state, not sub-state level. And that have to get signatures from people from different clan groups, so that political party formation, should they take place, does not take place along clan lines only. We are yet to see how well this mechanism, if it really becomes adopted in a meaningful way, will chip at the clan division.

And to the dispute between the Prime Minister and the Speaker, well, you know, there is something different even about the dysfunctional politics here in Washington right now, with both men showing up with armed forces that almost escalated into armed conflict, to the point that the African Union Members felt -- the African Union, the military deployment felt they had to step in to actually prevent potential bloodshed and exchange of armed fire inside the Parliament building.

With all the problems in Washington, we have not seen that, and I very much hope we will never see that in this country.

MR. O'HANLON: We saw it in the early 1800s a little bit.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Well, let's look -- let's not rewind back several centuries.

MR. O'HANLON: Exactly!

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Ambassador, your time.

MR. O'HANLON: Mr. Ambassador?

MR. SCHWARTZ: I have quite a lot to comment on. Well, you know, on Somaliland, several people mentioned Somaliland. I mean, yes we only recognize the Federal Government in Mogadishu. We do deal with the authorities in Hargeisa, I traveled there. I met with government, political, civil society leaders, and we have this separate dialogue, we do have USAID programs up there, we contributed to the electoral process.

So, we are engaged, I think very usefully up there, and have a lot of respect for what the Somaliland people and authorities have achieved over the last 25 years. They're very much self-governing, and they restored their democracy, I think, by finally holding these elections recently. But we do still treat it as part of the country, at least from a legal or diplomatic standpoint.

But, you know, let me sketch out a few things that I think need to

happen. And these are really low-cost things, there's only one of them that really costs any money at all, and I mean I think that the United States Government should provide budget support to the Federal Government.

Its critical problem is that it's bankrupt. They can't meet their salary payments every month, let alone provide public services, let alone do revenue-sharing with the Federal Member States, three of which are completely bankrupt, and two of which have a modest amount of money that they get from the ports of Kismaayo and Bosaso.

I mean, $8 million a month would be plenty, that's less than $100 million a year. We just spent $300 million a year on humanitarian assistance. We are probably spending something similar on security assistance or military costs. We spent $300 million a year in Zambia just on PEPFAR and HIV/AIDS, $100 million, it's not a lot of money, and it would breathe a whole new life into what government could do.

Now, that would need to be coupled with a robust public financial management system, but it could really jump-start things all across the board, and this is really a governance problem, there is just an absence of governance, into which these, sort of, you know, nefarious entities, Al-Ittihad, Al-Shabaab, the Courts Union, have filled the space.

And the government needs to do that. I mean, Shabaab does provide this degree of predictable services that Vanda described, and the government can't on any score, they need to do at least that, and beyond that they need to be providing education, they need to be providing some health care, infrastructure, and most of all security and justice.

It's just not happening and it needs to happen, and there's a lot that needs to go into that, but you can't do it without any money. It's wishful thinking, and not going to happen.

Reconciliation, it's a broken country in so many ways. I mean there are political things, there's a Somaliland, there needs to be a dialogue, there have been movements to have a dialogue which has now been set back by this dispute over Berbera, but the Somalis need to resolve the status.

Vanda pointed out, I think the Gulf crisis has really been a body blow to Somalia's progress. They were on the verge of getting a $50-million assistance package from the Saudis, and that was all put on hold. All sorts of assistance that could have come from a lot of the Arab countries, or Turkey, has been put on hold. They get some, but not what they could. And it's really debilitating, and they are under a lot of pressure particularly from UAE, and it's tough. It's tough.

The Constitution, we've talked about a number of things, elections and the like, but they need to resolve -- they need to finish the Constitution Review Process. They need to decide who is a Somali, who can vote in a Somali election, what are the authorities of the Federal Member States of the municipalities, of the Federal Government, of the Parliament, and the Executive. And these are all unresolved, and it creates a lot of drag on progress.

And then I think, in general, accountability, as Landry said. I mean when you have these tolls on roads all over the country run by soldiers who are completely unaccountable, it reflects badly on government. I mean citizens would rather there be no Somali National Army if their only purpose is to punitively and selfishly tax vehicles and the population with no benefit at all to those people. So, there's a lot that can be done, and it really gets into sort of accountability, governance, and they need that revenue injection.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. We have time for a lightning round, and we've had really, most of the big questions, and big issues are already addressed; the nature of the state, what solutions we should have. So what I'm going to try to do now is

take about six questions, and then ask each panelist to address no more than two of them, in concluding. And we are going to do all that in 10 minutes.

So, I'm going to start, let's see, how do I even begin? There are about 10 hands in the room. I think we'll begin here with the women in the fourth row, the women in the sixth row, and then Doug, and then I'll switch over to this side of the room in just a moment.

QUESTIONER: Thank you. My name is Deirdre LePen. Among a number of activities in my professional life, I spent three-and-a-half years in Somalia before we were evacuated in 1990, working for the United Nations. During that time I became very embedded in the country, and the one thing that struck me the most, given the fragility of the Siad Barre regime, and its ability not to provide basic services to the country, was the strength of the clans.

And we historically talk of six clans in the country that more or less coincides with the six states that are now being proposed for the country, to some extent. I'm wondering if we couldn't think of the clans not as a source of weakness and conflict, but as the basis for the economic social and political capital which the country needs to build upon. And what is needed is some kind of strength in the trust for a centralized state among those clans. If that can be achieved I think Somalia could work for the first time in its 4000-year history, as a country.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. The woman in the red shirt, please?

MS. SLEZAK: Hi. I'm Nicole Slezak, Africa Security, Manager at Chemonics. The first question is for Doctor --

MR. O'HANLON: Just one question per person, please, sorry.

MS. SLEZAK: Okay. There's been a lot of reports in the media about defections from Al-Shabaab. I'm just curious if that's, you know, the media talking these up, really if that's having an impact on Al-Shabaab, and whether that's getting good intel

to the SNA, and to AMISOM working with that?

MR. O'HANLON: Okay. And Doug?

MR. BROOKS: Doug Brooks, International Stability Operations Association. Great talk today. Just a quick question: on the status of the police, on the training, and who's doing the training, on their legitimacy, and is there any movement in terms of creating a Coast Guard which would be a huge revenue earner for Somalia?

MR. O'HANLON: I'm going to take three from this side of the room. I'll begin with the gentleman here in the tan jacket, please, and then the woman three rows beyond.

QUESTIONER: My name is McKee. I'm from Sudan, but I spent 10 years as a Journalist in the region, including Somalia, Mogadishu and Abidjan, others. Why, instead of searching fresh solutions for Somalia, listing down more than 20 failed solutions, and why they failed. Was it external factors, or internal factors? I attended more than three conferences, it was a brilliant opportunity for good solutions, but it has been aborted regionally and internationally. Thank you.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. And then here in the sixth row, or so; and we'll finish up here with this gentleman, this will be the last question right over here. Go ahead.

MS. EVIATAR: Thank you, and thank you for this panel. My name is Daphne Eviatar, I'm with Amnesty International U.S. One thing that you haven't addressed is U.S., or talked about very much, is U.S. policy toward Somalia, and specifically U.S. military policy.

And one thing we do know is that the U.S. has really stepped up the number of drone strikes and air strikes in Somalia. It's not discussing what its purpose is, it says it kills militants, or terrorists, it doesn't say what group they're with, what the goal is. Apparently it says no civilians are killed but there's really no information provided.

And I wonder if you could just comment on the effectiveness of this U.S. military policy toward Somalia, and how it's contributing or not contributing to what you think the country needs.

MR. O'HANLON: Great. And then finally, here, and then we'll go back to the panel starting with you. Right there, in the second row. Sorry.

QUESTIONER: Yeah, hi. John Bannon here, my company is First Hectares Capital. I'm involved in agriculture and infrastructure investment in Africa; Ghana and several other countries. About two years ago I was invited to go to Southwest State in Somalia, I went to Baidoa, spent some time there, spent some time in Barawa as well as Mogadishu. My question really relates to the relationship between agriculture, economics, and security. What I've been really concentrating on is less the politics, and more, how do you create a coherent economic plan that then sets priorities for the security, at the allocation of security resources in the deployment and the focus of troops.

As an agricultural investor, I'm obviously very focused on Jubba River, the Shebelle River. I'm looking at the way that Somalia used to be the top banana exporter from East Africa for, you know, many, many years. There's tremendous economic opportunity especially, you know, in the most unstable areas. So, I'm interested in the panel's views of the relationship between economic planning, coordination.

Just an observation, as an investor obviously I'm looking to work in public-private partnership, and my observation is, there's 20 sub-agencies of the U.N. present in Somalia, there's about 30 countries with sort of bilateral presence either in Nairobi or Somalia, there's about eight or nine developmental banks so --

And then to Ambassador Schwartz's point about capacity. It's very difficult I think from a Somali leadership perspective, even to navigate all the U.N.

agencies, and all of the bilateral agencies to be able to develop a cohesive, coordinated, economic plan. So, to me the economic planning and the security are two sides of the exact same coin, and as a private investor I'm very curious and interested to see advancement on the economic side, and the economic planning. Thank you.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. So, I'm going to give about two minutes to each panelist, starting with the Ambassador, if I could. And then we'll wrap up, please.

MR. SCHWARTZ: Oh, I guess going in reverse order, but --

MR. O'HANLON: Just a couple of them per person.

MR. SCHWARTZ: You know, on the agriculture and, you know, it's much needed. I think there's a lot of -- and it was very, very productive, particularly in the river area. But there's a lot of big problems, I think, getting in now, security obviously. And this has changed to become more complicated over the last 25 years, is land ownership.

I mean a lot of sub-clans, and others have moved in and taken land, stolen land, and Shabaab has displaced people, a lot of people have been displaced. Unfortunately it's particularly the Bantu population who've suffered the most in all of this. But getting at land ownership would be important, and then, you know, there's water issues that weren't as pronounced before, and the Shebelle has dried up three times now in the last three years. So, yeah, if you can make it work, great, but I think it's tough.

You know, on the U.S. Military, and I'm not privy to the last few months. I mean the purpose of the drone strikes is to support Somali National Forces, to support AMISOM against Shabaab, and I believe the overwhelming majority have been against Shabaab, if not all of them.

You know, that said, and I think that they can be effective in weakening Shabaab leadership, and putting them on the back foot and removing particularly, you know, important leaders. But at the same time, absolutely, we've seen elsewhere in the

world it's not an end in itself. I mean, if that's all you're going to do, you're wasting your time.

It needs to be coupled with a development program to build capacity, state capacity, to provide services. What you're fighting for is really the allegiance of the population, you know, and who can do more for them. And the Somali authorities are going to need to do that, and we're just trying to help them.

Police Coast Guard, we're doing some training for the police, but the Europeans are doing a lot as well. And on the Coast Guard there is a plan, I think it was in this new security architecture, there's also talk about a Navy, personally I don't think they need a Navy but they absolutely need a Coast Guard. They have a 2000-mile coastline, they've got a lot of fish, they've got oil, they've got a lot of things, and they have absolutely no ability to patrol anything, and put down piracy when that occurs.

MR. O'HANLON: Fantastic. Thank you very much. Vanda, a couple of the questions for you?

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: I want to add one comment on the issue of agriculture. Agriculture, obviously, is immediately a source of employment for the vast predominant number of the population, but right now most people are employed, or at least participate in armed conflict in one way or another, whether they are formally paid or not. That clearly needs to change if Somalia is to move toward peace.

So, agriculture will be very important. However, I don't believe that it can be treated as a political, technical exercise. Agriculture permeates the difficult political divisions and contestations crucially, and much of the fighting, much of the clan discrimination, much of the displacement of clans has been over who controls Jubba River, and Shebelle River.

And so the politics of equity, accountability, and inclusion, deeply overlay and underpin any successful agricultural effort in my view.

On the issues of strikes, the U.S. Military needs to be given a lot of credit for being very cautious with airstrikes up till the summer when there were vast movements of people, a huge internal displacement as a result of the food insecurity and famine, and AFRICOM was really very cautious in not rushing into the expanded authorization from President Trump to bomb.

Nonetheless, since the summer we have seen significant intensification of bombing, there are widespread allegations by Al-Shabaab in Somalia press, sometimes in Western press about the civilian casualties this has caused. These allegations have been linked to subsequent terrorist attacks. The reality is that most of those areas, when the bombing takes place, are completely inaccessible for any independent observer, for foreign journalists, often for Somali journalists, so they are enormously opaque.

But I want to very much underscore Ambassador Schwartz's point. What's the point of airstrikes if there is no holding capacity on the ground? If it simply leads to, perhaps Al-Shabaab being dispersed, but the dominant clan moving in, oppressing minor clans, stealing land, taking properties, causing new displacement, that's just a prescription from drawing Shabaab back later on.

And, Deidra, on your issues about clans of being the basis of organization, the strength of social capital, you know, I think that the question has become much more complicated than that. The clans right now are often a source of conflict, by the repression of dominant clans toward minority clans. The clans are drivers of conflict in very fundamental ways, very often.

So, the issue of clans, once again, needs to be overlaid by accountability. How our minority clans empowered, included, how are their rights protected? And how our dominant clans held accountable? Also the issue of women and clans, women do not have formal claim representation often, they are often very

oppressed, very disempowered by clans, and that that needs to be combated.

After all, in my view, it is not the clans that are the biggest source of social capital in Somalia; it is Somali women, whose resilience under the most of impossible situations, and under just the most of excruciating choices, is often really absolutely remarkable.

And on the issue of defection, I mentioned in my remarks that one of the reasons I was in Somalia was for the U.N. University Project funded by DVID about amnesty and defections. That's what the paper is all about. I will not get into too many details; the paper will be public in May. We will be holding an event to discuss that paper and other case studies here.

The defections program in my view is very crucial for what are called low-risk defectors, it's crucial to enable people who want to disengage from the battlefield, to come out from the battlefield. Vast improvements need to take place. I am very skeptical about the so-called high-level defections with utter impunity; and many more details in the paper (inaudible) publicly in May.

MR. O'HANLON: Excellent. That's always a good way to start to wrap up, is with an advertisement for the next event, which should be very good. Landry, over to you for a final of word.

MR. SIGNÉ: So, I'll finish with the questions on clans. And I think the concessional democracy is possible which acknowledged differences, but for that to happen the most powerful clans should also be able to respect the rights of the minorities. So, solutions are possible, but again we come back to the question of accountability, rule of law, civil rights, civil liberties, and political rights.

So, on that note not to finish this negatively, I'll say that I'll remain hopeful. And Vanda, we are very much looking forward to your findings, which I'm certain will provide insightful policy options. Thank you.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you all for being here. Please join me in thanking the panel. (Applause)

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