

## **The Ethiopia-Eritrea Conflict and Its Ramifications for Horn of Africa Security**

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### **Abstract:**

Ethiopia is an active border dispute with Eritrea and has kept security in various ways. Under this umbrella, this article will look at the background of the armed conflict religion (ACR), roots, evolution and its impact on regional stability and security of the region. Within a single theoretical framework, key major factors namely institutions and international involvement are analyzed to address three key questions. In addition to essential comments and a useful approach to solving the problem of building peace in the region, the research is also based on this fact.

### **Introduction:**

The Horn of Africa including Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, and Djibouti, are all the places historically tense, ethnically conflicted, and increasingly politically aligned. One of the protracted conflicts in history, the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea, has extended and visible impact here. This conflict has a legacy of mistrust and economic disruption, and human suffering that began as the conflict beginning in Eritrean's independence struggle and later became a full scale war (1998-2000). Despite a litany of peace initiatives, this is still a conflict rife with its scars, meaning that it continues to influence regional stability. This paper is intended to provide a detailed analysis of the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict: its historical backgrounds, recent developments and implications for the security of the Horn of Africa.

### **Historical Background of the Conflict:**

The colonial origin of this lies in the settling of Eritrea by Italy, in 1889. Eritrea was subject to the Italian rule in the first time when modern infrastructure and administration was brought to her. There grew up the sense of focus which set it apart from the administrative traditions of the Empire of Menelik II, Emperor of Ethiopia. With Italy's defeat during World War II, Britain put Eritrea under its military supervision. This ended when, under United Nations Resolution 390(A), the Eritrea question was united with Ethiopia in the year 1952. Ethiopia annexed Eritrea in 1962, under Emperor Haile Selassie, stripping it of its federal status and launching a 30-year fight for independence. The Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) led the charge against successive Ethiopian regimes. In 1993, Eritrea gained independence in a UN-supervised referendum. Unresolved border disputes, especially over the town of Badme, had continued to create tension. The dispute turned into an all-out war between 1998 and 2000, killing thousands and destroying both countries. The hostilities ended when, in the Algiers Agreement of 2000, the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission finally awarded Badme to Eritrea. However, Ethiopia did not comply with the ruling. And on the protracted stalemate with economic strain and militarization, they held the status quo until, on being pinged by Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed through a peace process in 2018, they acknowledged Eritrea's sovereignty over disputed territories. While this peace agreement ended several decades of hostility between the two groups, unresolved problems

and internal issues, such as the Tigray crisis, have reignited tensions, leaving the Horn of Africa with very fragile peace.

### **Recent Developments:**

In 2018, Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed initiated a peace process with Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki that led to a peace agreement which restored diplomatic relations, opened borders, and reinvigorated trade. It is considered an encouraging step toward regional stability after two decades of hostility. The peace was complicated by the fact that the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC) awarded Badme to Eritrea but refused by Ethiopia to accept. The 2020 Tigray conflict saw the governing alliance of Ethiopia come into conflict with the Tigray People's Liberation Front. A peace agreement signed between Eritrea and the TPLF in 2018 didn't diminish the tensions further, although the countries have objections for decades. Violence by both sides and the involvement of both sides made the fragile peace process very weak indeed. A ceasefire in November 2022 was brokered between Ethiopia and Tigray forces, but it is unclear whether that peace will be maintained. The Tigray conflict also severely destabilized the region, on the other hand, Eritrean involvement also questioning the sustainability of long lasting peace in the Horn of Africa.

### **Theoretical Framework:**

In this paper, the Ethiopia-Eritrea dispute will be examined using the theoretical framework of Realism. Now, one of the dominant theories of international relations, realism is the theory of power, state sovereignty, and national security while explaining state behavior. According to the theory of Realism, States, most prominently in terms of security and survival, consider themselves the only player with an interest in self serving actions within a revolutionary international system in which there is no central authority to settle disputes or enforce rules. These are largely the principles that shape the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea. In both countries' main concern was to protect their sovereignty on disputed territories such as Badme. This echoes Realist belief that state behavior revolves around control of territory and the national insecurity. This is not the first session of conflict in Eritrea's long struggle for independence, as well as the 1998–2000 border war; these have been fought over power and security, not regional peace. After series of peace initiatives like Algiers agreement, Ethiopia and Eritrea still refused outside mediation. As Realism argues, states are motivated to behave the way they do rather than respond to the call of the international community. The fact that the United Nations and the African Union had tried to intervene in the conflict further exemplifies how Realist ideas are applied. These organizations never had the power to enforce agreements because both countries were focused on their security and political goals.

### **Research Questions:**

1. What are the historical and geopolitical factors driving the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict?
2. How has the conflict influenced the security dynamics of the Horn of Africa?
3. What roles have international actors and institutions played in mediating or exacerbating the conflict?

## **Historical and Geopolitical Factors Driving the Ethiopia-Eritrea Conflict**

The colonial era spawned the roots of Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict because it created artificial borders among these territories without heeding the complex ethnic and cultural boundaries between the two. Following Italy's colonization of Eritrea in the late 19th century, a legacy of separate administration systems and infrastructure to some level set a separate identity for Eritrea in direct contrast to that of Ethiopia, its traditional system of governance. Eritrea remained under British military administration following the Second World War. In 1952, the United Nations proposed a federal system that combined Eritrea with Ethiopia as an autonomous federation. However, the autonomy did not last as, in 1962, Ethiopia annexed Eritrea, leading to a brutal fight for independence headed by the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF). The war for independence lasted three decades, which was between Ethiopia's successive governments and ended in 1993, when Eritrea gained its formal independence through a UN-supervised referendum.

However, the two nations did not stop fighting over the border issue, especially around the town of Badme. Later to increase a full scale war in between 1998 and 2000, these unsettled issues left behind a history of mistrust, destruction and continued hatred between the two nations. Thousands of lives were lost, possessions harmed and the economies and infrastructures of both countries badly damaged, and this Kent continued to drive them further apart. Influence of the Ethiopia-Eritrea Conflict on the Security Dynamics of the Horn of Africa. On a broader Horn of Africa regional conflict implications, these aspects were very far reaching. Between Ethiopia and Eritrea, there is a war of which instability spilled beyond the boundaries of these two countries to include Somalia and Sudan. It accelerated the proliferation of cross border insurgencies and of arms, in countries already tense and unstable. Moreover, humanitarian impact far outweighed war, as more than a million people had been displaced from war and there had been widespread famine due to the continued military engagement and blockades at the borders. In addition, these factors caused the crises in neighboring countries to deepen. With the economic strain of the war weighing heavily on combined Ethiopia and Eritrea they militarized their societies to their core and resource diverted away from their development and reconstruction process. Militarization also led to the failure of developing a cooperative security framework, which made it impossible for other countries in the Horn of Africa to be able to share vital concerns-the almost unanimous fear of terrorism, piracy, and economic integration. The continued security dilemma between Ethiopia and Eritrea remained the central challenge to regional stability. The Role of International Actors and Institutions in Mediating or Exacerbating the Conflict. The complex involvement of international actors and institutions has both exacerbated and mitigated the conflict. For example, the United Nations and the African Union had the Algiers Agreement in 2000 that supposedly ended active hostilities and was to set the framework for peace. However, some terms of the agreement were not enforced by the international organizations. For instance, Ethiopia refused to abide by the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission ruling that granted the controversial town of Badme to Eritrea. Such a limitation on enforcing power meant that international mediation was not that effective, and the stalemate went on between the two nations. The process received diplomatic and financial assistance from the international powers of the United States and the European Union. The aid, however, was often piecemeal – as it reflected geopolitical self interest and their priorities. Second, the variety of such aid as applied by powers and sometimes conflicting implementation of these powers diminishes the possibility of an internationally unified approach toward the conflict management. Both regional organizations, in particular the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, tried to mediate and otherwise broker peace between Ethiopia and Eritrea. But divisions in IGAD undercut many of these, for the very countries that could have helped deliver effective resolution pursued contradictory national interests. Wider implications of spillover effects and regional stability and peace.

### **Spillover Effects and Wider Implications for Regional Peace and Stability:**

However, the one spillover effects of the conflict have varied far and breath into countries of the two. In a way, the spillover effects of the conflict dubbed regional peace and stability. The Horn of Africa had a volatile security environment in a conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea and on into Somalia. Movement of refugees and internally displaced people in particular to Sudan and Ethiopia stressed resources and chemical issues in neighboring countries. And these problems went far beyond the humanitarian implications: they militarized the two countries. This militarisation of these countries' resources took away from investment which could have been used to help further their economy through creating a culture of conflict rather than cooperation. Within the civilian society, those resources tended to be used mainly for defense, not for infrastructure, so while those places like Ethiopia and Eritrea can be rebuilt to their economic potential, it's very hard to do now. This pushed the region in for an extended vicious cycle of instability. The conflict also negatively affected the trend towards regional integration and economic cooperation, which are basic needs in the Horn of Africa for collective action on problems like poverty, underdevelopment and terrorism.

### **Key Actors in Shaping the Ethiopia-Eritrea Conflict**

The stages of the development of the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea have been with the interventional and the decisions made by the different key players which play a role in the light of the growth and development of the conflict. Leading the way on top are the Ethiopia and Eritrea leaderships themselves. Central to the conflict's trajectory has been decades long rivalry between it on the political and military fronts. The common history and common enemies in a struggle against common adversaries resulted not in, but increased, the tension created by their different approaches toward leadership style. Ethiopia's leadership rather has been more about not wanting to claim territory of its sovereignty or be broken up. This interest in a national unity and political stability can often lead to an aggressive approach, often aggressive, to matters such as the claim by Eritrea over neutral territory such as Badme. Eritrean leaders led by Isaias Afwerki have paid special attention to independence, sovereignty and resistance to foreign interference. Since official peace agreements were signed, tensions have been kept alive by the personal animosities and ideological differences between these two leaders.

### **Significant Case Study: Ethiopia Eritrea Relations and the Tigray Conflict**

The case of the ongoing dynamics between Ethiopia and Eritrea, namely Tigray conflict, initiated at the end of 2020, is the most instructive one. Until the coming to power of Abiy Ahmed, the Tigray region had been a source of internal political friction, principally because of dominance within the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). This angered many regional leaders including the leaders of Tigray as Abiy's administration was trying to control power and center it by means of the reform work. Former EPRDF affiliate, the TPLF responded with military clashes with the Ethiopian government. The revolt descended into a full war between Ethiopia and Eritrea's armies. Eritrea was in a protracted war with TPLF, a party involved in that conflict, which had allied itself with the Ethiopian government by sending its troops to northern Ethiopia. It is the involvement of Eritrean troops in the war that has made things worse and resulting in a grave humanitarian crisis putting millions of people displaced, ethnic violence, and breach of international law. That reminds us how fragile the peace between Ethiopia and Eritrea still is because history and ethnic divisions in Ethiopia have spread into new war areas beyond Ethiopia, with Eritrean forces at the heart of the mess. The Tigray conflict also highlights the fragility of peace in the region and how easily it is upset, even a year after the peace agreement was sealed between Ethiopia and Eritrea in 2018.

## **The Role of Regional and International Institutions in the Mediation Process**

Various institutions have attempted to mediate the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict, albeit to different extents. The African Union has had a significant role in facilitating dialogue between the two countries, particularly through its involvement in the Algiers Agreement and subsequent peace building efforts. The AU, being a continental body, has attempted to facilitate and nurture the peace process without having any kind of enforcing capability and capacity to deal with the root cause of the problem. Its efficacy was further weakened by resource inadequacies, feeble mechanisms for enforcing its policies, and political interests of the member states in that conflict, with some states themselves having interests at stake in it. Besides the AU, there is the IGAD, which is a regional organization with its main aim on the promotion of peace and cooperation in the Horn of Africa. Yet, through the years, IGAD has bargained and provided platforms for dialogue while internal divides within its members states and conflicting national interests have sometimes limited its ability to make a decisive difference. The conflict is particularly difficult to resolve because both Ethiopia and Eritrea do not cooperate fully with external forces and IGAD's influence is further weakened. The UN has, in recent years, been active in peace building efforts internationally, most notably with the oversight the Algiers Agreement and the work of the EEBC. Limiting impact, again, is the UN's inability to force either party to comply with their terms. The international community has been unable to meaningfully enforce sanctions or intervene in the conflict and the global interests, each with their own positions to assert, conflict against that of the other, as UN peacekeeping and mediation have done everything they can.

## **The role of U.S. Role in the Ethiopia-Eritrea Dispute: Humanitarian, Diplomatic and Security Roles**

The United States has been deeply involved in the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict, which has been molded by its strategic interests in the Horn of Africa, especially with regard to security, counterterrorism, and the general geopolitics of the region. The U.S. has been involved in the conflict in a number of ways, from diplomatic mediation to humanitarian aid, all the while continuing its relations with both Ethiopia and Eritrea. Let's look at below points the detailed look at how the U.S. has engaged the conflict:

### **U.S. Diplomatic Engagement and Mediation Efforts**

#### **Initial Position on the Conflict (1998-2000):**

With the war between Ethiopia and Eritrea in 1998, international actors including the United States raised concerns on increasing violence that had a prospect of destabilizing the region. Initially, the US government held its neutral stance on the situation while encouraging both sides to peacefully solve the dispute. Washington's concern then was that this war will be a destabilizing force within the Horn of Africa region, already politically unstable and economically weakened.

#### **Diplomatic Intervention**

##### **2000 Algiers Agreement:**

But in the year 2000, the U.S. played a very important role in helping facilitate the peace process between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Two years after the conflict broke out, both countries agreed upon the Algiers Agreement, which created the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission to settle the dispute on the border. But the U.S. would support the peace process with international partners, working to pressure both sides to accept the EEBC's ruling, and providing diplomatic support. Although the U.S. did not participate in direct mediation, it played an important role in ensuring that the two countries were at the negotiation table through United Nations and other international means.

### **Facilitating the Implementation of the EEBC Decision:**

The Algiers Agreement and the EEBC's decision giving Badme to Eritrea proved futile since Ethiopia refused to fully accept the ruling, leaving peace in limbo and relations still tense. The U.S. called upon Ethiopia to comply with the decision and urged Eritrea to stop relying on force. But it was not easy for Washington to pressure the government of Ethiopia, which had strong claims to the territory. The U.S. offered diplomatic leverage, such as backing UN sanctions against both nations for failing to comply with the border decisions, but the stalemate continued.

### **U.S. Role in Humanitarian and Development Aid**

#### **Humanitarian Support During and After the Conflict:**

The US has provided large amounts of humanitarian assistance during and after the conflict to both countries. The conflict internally displaced hundreds of thousands of people, and there were critical humanitarian and economic concerns in both the countries. The US government gave the refugees and the internally displaced persons of both countries emergency food aid and health care through USAID. In addition it provided reconstruction aid to the regions affected, and reconstruction efforts of restoring basic services, and stimulating economic development to ensure stability.

#### **Humanitarian Assistance and Development Projects in Post-War**

The United States continued humanitarian assistance in the years following the end of active conflict, mainly to alleviate the impacts of poverty, hunger, and disease in both Ethiopia and Eritrea. The United States channeled funds through USAID and other agencies to refugee camps to meet short-term needs and long-term development projects that focused on health care, education, and infrastructure improvement in the region. However, because of Eritrea's isolationist position and its strained relations with the West, the government's restrictive policies often prevented aid from reaching Eritrea.

### **Security and Counter-terrorism Cooperation**

#### **Cooperation with Ethiopia on Counter-terrorism:**

Following the September 11, 2001 attacks in the United States, the Horn of Africa became a region of growing strategic interest because of concerns over terrorism and the growing influence of extremist groups in the region. The United States, therefore, increased its engagement with Ethiopia, as it viewed this nation to be a vital strategic partner in the War on Terror. Ethiopian leaders, headed by Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, were cooperative about the U.S. efforts against terrorism, especially in the fight against the Somali conflict, like the activities of Al-Qaeda-linked militants. The U.S. provided military and financial assistance to Ethiopia, which allowed the country to carry out operations against insurgents and militant groups in Somalia. This security cooperation further deepened the U.S.-Ethiopia relationship, especially after Ethiopia's intervention in Somalia in 2006, which was supported by Washington. However, at times this cooperation brought the country into a point of friction with Eritrea. The U.S. termed the Eritrean government as one of the "Axis of Evil" in 2002, and charged it of providing funding for terrorist activities. Its support to insurgent groups of neighboring countries, as well as its poor relation with Ethiopia, forced the U.S. to put sanctions on Eritrea, which brought further distance in political and diplomatic relations between the U.S. and Eritrea.

#### **Greater Military Support for Ethiopia:**

After the war, the strategic value of Ethiopia as a strategic ally in the U.S. fight against terrorism in East Africa increased. Military aid from the U.S. to Ethiopia was mainly through training and funding that improved the capability of Ethiopia's military and security forces. The two nations collaborated on issues such as intelligence sharing, joint military exercises, and military equipment provision with the aim of improving Ethiopia's capability to fight terrorist threats and ensure regional security.

## **U.S. Policy Shift and Involvement with Eritrea after the 2018 Peace Accord**

### **Diplomatic Changes in the Wake of the 2018 Peace Accord:**

The 2018 peace accord between Ethiopia and Eritrea, brokered by Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, marked a milestone in the geopolitics of the region. The United States viewed this change favorably as an excellent step forward toward regional stability. But this step forward of normalization of relations between these two countries was welcomed by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and other high ranking U.S. officials. Once the nature of diplomatic relations changed, the U.S. was able to open up avenues for re-engagement with Eritrea given the degree to which Eritrea had been sharply cut off from western influence stemming from past government policies. In addition to the peace agreement, the U.S. said it would be willing to help with reconciliation and post conflict reconstruction. Although the Trump administration held back a few sanctions against Eritrea, it showed openness for further roll out and asked for more reform in Eritrea. In addition, the U.S. offered diplomatic assistance in order to help Eritrea and Ethiopia bring about their consolidation of peace and prevent reemergence.

### **U.S. Eritrea Relations Challenges:**

However, positive developments in its relationship with the U.S. did not make Eritrea's relationship simple. Consigned to irrelevance, Eritrea nonetheless continued to contest it, but left the U.S. to voice concerns about the country's human rights record and authoritarian governance. Things were further complicated by Eritrea's involvement in its northern neighbour's Tigray conflict (2020) as the U.S. condemned Eritrean forces' actions in northern Ethiopia and added the country to its sanctions list. The Tigray crisis has served to highlight a plight, balancing the imperative of the power in Washington for Central African stability with the real domestic political situation and the place of Eritrea in regional conflicts.

### **Peace and Security in the Horn of Africa: Strategic Recommendations**

A host of strategic ideas for breaking free of the cycle of violence and instability the Horn of Africa has been stuck in for decades can be borrowed, so that we can break free from the cycle of violence.

### **Strengthening Border Demarcation Mechanisms and International Oversight:**

The unsolved border dispute around the Ethiopia-Eritrea town of Badme has been one of the main issues in the Ethiopia-Eritrea war. Increased oversight of the implementation of border agreements should come from the international community as a whole through the United Nations and other international global organisations. This is a good way to ensure that if there was any future agreements that both parties will follow but a strong monitoring method helps ensure that. Preventing the recurrence of conflict in the region and long term peace calls for clear, mutually agreed upon boundaries. Diplomacy could also be further prevented by an international presence to encourage conversation, rather than hostility, at a time when many borders are being militarised..

### **Promoting Regional Economic Integration and Cooperation:**

The Horn of Africa could be integrated economically as a counterweight to the ongoing regional tensions and interdependence between Ethiopia, Eritrea and their neighbours. For all parties, tangible benefits from initiatives to boost trade, to stimulate infrastructure development and to forge cooperative ventures would reduce the incentive for conflict. Internal regional organisations, such as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the African Union (AU)

### **Strengthening the Role of Regional Organizations in Peace Mediation:**

A further empowerment of regional institutions, such as the African Union (AU) and IGAD, to negotiate peace agreements and implement the same must take place. Greater resources, authority and independence should be given to these organizations that can act without undue interference

from bigger powers. The capacity of these institutions would be improved to be able to mediate conflicts and implement its resolutions. Moreover, these institutions should take an inclusive approach in that they should bring on board representatives of civil society (including marginalized groups), local communities, in order to ensure that the needs of the entire population are viewed by peace processes.

### **Promoting Complete Control and Political Changes within Ethiopia region:**

For Ethiopia's long term development, as well as that of the region, the task at hand is to address internal disputes. While meant to encourage ethnic autonomy, the Ethiopian federal system has been troubled by the delicate balancing act needed among the various ethnic groups that compose it. In particular, there must be a real push to construct political inclusion and ensure just representation for all ethnic groups that have felt excluded by the government's policies. The object should be to achieve more inclusive political reform that will serve to unite the nation and lessen risks of ethnic conflict. A frustrated Ethiopia can offer a lesson in conflict prevention in the region, and by promoting inclusive governance can contribute to the maintenance of regional stability.

### **Encouraging Political and Economic Reforms in Eritrea:**

Instability in the Horn of Africa is a result of Eritrea's political isolation and economic exclusion. The reform path for Eritrea should have engaged the international community to encourage this country to make the necessary steps to address the country's authoritarian political system and stagnate economy. All such policies will encourage Eritrea to adopt policies to promote political freedoms, human rights and economic growth such as integrating Eritrea in the regional and the global community thereby reducing militarization and stabilizing the region. Among these reforms, Eritrea should be asked to invest in its human capital, improve governance and show by diplomatic engagement with neighbouring states.

### **Consequences and Outcomes of Ethiopia-Eritrea Conflict on Regional Security and Stability**

The Horn of Africa and the broader region's long term instability was left a legacy of the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict. Though it may involve only two countries starkly at cross purposes, its consequences and outcomes are far reaching, since it will affect not just the two countries directly involved, but their neighbors and the international community as a whole.

### **Impact on Ethiopia's Domestic Stability and Governance:**

The effects of the conflict have carried internally with it and continue to have lasting effects on how Ethiopia's political system and governance are carried out. The lengthy military straddle and heritage of ethnic and local divisions add to the difficulties confronting Ethiopia's top management. And the Tigray conflict, in particular, has stripped from the country deep internal fractures, sharpening ethnic tensions into deadly confrontations. These divisions have divided Ethiopia's federal system and made it extremely hard for the government to control its vast population. For Ethiopia to contribute to regional peace, its own stability, and ensure national reconciliation, inclusive governance and political reforms has become an urgent need than ever.

### **Eritrea's Continued Isolation and Authoritarianism:**

The conflict has helped give Eritrea's authoritarian political structure its own momentum, while for the rest of the world there has been little cause to interact with it. The conflict has instead been invoked by the country's leadership to continue militarizing the country and stifling political opposition. Because of isolation, Eritrea's economy has not developed to potential and its social environment is deeply repressive; people are vulnerable to economic hardships. Its relations with many of the other countries in the world, the victim of a prolonged state of war with that country over here, have deteriorated so much since, that the country has found it difficult to secure the money needed for outside aid and investment.



### **Regional Destabilization and Humanitarian Fallout:**

In fact, the conflict has spilled over into neighboring countries, including Somalia, Sudan and Djibouti. The ongoing crisis has boosted the regional instability due to war on the burden placed on neighboring states, including the most part, the conflict coupled with refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and famine. The militarization of Ethiopia and Eritrea, and the spread of arms into the area, have made it much more difficult to solve common regional challenges such as terrorism, piracy and cross-border insurgencies.

### **Obstacles to Regional Economic Integration and Cooperation:**

Economic integration and Stabilization in the regional cooperation have also has faced considerable impediments from the Ethiopia Eritrea conflict. Resources critical to development projects and efforts to develop regional trade links have been diverted to militarization of the region. Consequently, the Horn of Africa continues to be amongst the least economically integrated regions in Africa, preventing it's countries from fully exploiting the benefits of shared resources and collective growth opportunities. The on going rivalry and distrust between Ethiopia and Eritrea have instead undermined economic cooperation that could help to avert security concerns.

### **Conclusion:**

The Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict was built on a deep historic, geopolitical, and ethnic burden, that has deeply shaped the security dynamics of the Horn of Africa. The conflict, which has seen territorial disputes reported, military facing down, and an intractable peace process, has exposed the entire international relations, disrupted the economies very badly, not only this it also generated humanitarians crises. Returning just looks far off, despite the 2018 peace agreement that eventually promises the region will once again know normality, but unfortunately there are still differences over Tigray and other concerns which make for a tempered state of peace in the entire region. It has also been seen that the aggravation and attenuation of the conflict have been trained on the involvement of several players such as both Ethiopia and Eritrea, International bodies and United states. The AU and the UN have attempted to intervene in the peace with their participation — but it is easily disrupted by political problems and a lack of ability to enforce. However nostalgic those relations are, relations with Eritrea have had tension embedded in them as a result of the country's autocratic regime and its regional conduct even with the support it gets from the U.S through diplomatic recognition, humanitarian aid and security partnership. Therefore, Realism provides a stock of theoretical viewpoints about the incentives of the involved players that aim at the national interests such as territorial and power, security and stability of the region. In terms of the lens used here, this paper also explains why the sustained attainment of enduring peace in the Horn of Africa remains a pursuit of the impossible dream. According to the conclusion point of view, we concluded that the year 2018 peace agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea was good but the region as a whole remains prone to conflict. The process of maintaining long-term and firm peace is not a simple one and thus needs a more elaborate solution – one that should be acted at national, regional and International level. From the then on to sustain the long term stability of the Horn of Africa necessary measures will require boosting regional cooperation, integrating internal governance issues and boosting the integration of the economy.

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