

Strategic Engagement in Security Between Turkiye and Somalia: A Comprehensive Analysis of Bilateral Cooperation and Regional Implications

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Abstract

Somalia's issues in politics, the economy and the military have painted a negative picture to the rest of the world as a failed state making it miss out a lot on international trade and political participation. However, Turkiye has been a saving grace entering into a bilateral relationship with Somalia. The study was on the impact of Somalia-Turkiye cooperation on advancement of Somali international political and security representation. It was important to examine the significance of Somalia-Turkiye political cooperation on advancement of Somali international political representation, also the ramifications of the Somalia-Turkey bilateral trade cooperation on the advancement of Somali international political representation and the consequences of Somalia-Turkiye military cooperation on advancement of Somali international political representation. Somalia has a special place in the foreign policy of the Justice and Development Party (AK Party), which has been in power since 2002. Turkiye's relations with Somalia began to develop after the official visit of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to Somalia on 19 August 2011, who was the prime minister at that time, to support Somalis affected by severe drought and civil war. After 2011, Turkey launched one of the largest humanitarian aid campaigns to Somalia. Turkey has not only developed a soft power policy in Somalia but also started to implement a hard power policy. In this respect, Turkey has been training hundreds of Somali soldiers and police in both Ankara and Mogadishu since 2012. This research focuses on the security policy of Turkiye toward Somalia, employing a holistic approach based on concepts as well as theoretical foundations. The results of this research revealed that the collaborative efforts made by Somalia and Turkiye have improved Somalia's status in international politics, along with its security representation. The responses provided by the research subjects revealed that the continuous involvement of Turkiye in international politics has assisted Somalia in changing its status from a weak and secluded state to a genuine partner in international politics.

The study also revealed that the military cooperation efforts of the Republic of Turkiye, particularly in the area of Somali security forces' training, have improved the internal security capacities of Somalia. Consequently, the impact has been positive for the international community's confidence in the Somali state. The guests observed that the opening of the Turkish-backed learning institutions in both Mogadishu and the Republic of Turkiye has resulted in the professionalization of the Somali National Security Forces.

Moreover, the study indicated that the optimum combination of soft and hard powers by the Republic of Türkiye has resulted in a well-balanced relationship between the two countries that sets the Republic of Türkiye apart from the rest of the international players. In general, there are indicators suggesting that cooperation between Somalia and Türkiye has been important for Somalia in developing its political credibility, security, and involvement in international relations, hence improving its position in international society.

1. Introduction

In 1969, Somalia and Türkiye were among the founding members of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Turkey originally maintained an embassy in Mogadishu, Somalia's capital, until the outbreak of the Somali Civil War in 1991. It subsequently discontinued operations due to security reasons. Over the ensuing interim period, the Turkish authorities continued relations with Somalia's newly established Transitional National Government and its successor the Transitional Federal Government through their nonresident diplomatic mission in Addis Ababa.

Following a greatly improved security situation in Mogadishu in mid-2011, and a visit by then Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (the first by a non-African leader since George H. W. Bush's visit during New Year 1993), **several scholars and official reports identify this moment as a major turning point in Somalia's international re-engagement**. Özkan (2014) argues that the visit symbolized renewed global confidence in Somalia's improving security environment and governance capacity. Hansen (2013) further notes that Erdoğan's presence in Mogadishu encouraged other international actors to re-establish diplomatic and development engagements. Similarly, the Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2012) emphasizes that the 2011 visit laid the groundwork for sustained humanitarian, political, and security cooperation between Türkiye and Somalia.

The Turkish government re-opened its foreign embassy with the intention of more effectively assisting in the post-conflict development process. It was among the first foreign administrations to resume formal diplomatic relations with Somalia after the civil war.

The Federal Government of Somalia was later established on August 20, 2012, representing the first permanent central government in the country since the start of the conflict. The following month, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud was elected as the new government's first President. The Turkish authorities welcomed the election and reaffirmed Türkiye's steady support for Somalia's government, its territorial integrity, and sovereignty. On several occasions, Somalia's President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and newly elected President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan of the Republic of Türkiye inaugurated a range of Turkish-built development projects in Mogadishu in January 2015. According to Hansen (2016), such efforts demonstrate Türkiye's long-term commitment to Somalia's state-building and post-conflict recovery. In the same vein, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye (2015) declares that jointly inaugurated development projects reflect an increasing political partnership and enhance Somalia's international legitimacy and reconstruction process.

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Relations between the present-day territories of Somalia and Turkey date back to the middle Ages. The Ajuran Empire and Adal Sultanate maintained good trade and military relations with the Ottoman Empire. The Ajuran Empire received assistance from Ottomans, and with the import of firearms through the Muzzaffar port of Mogadishu, the army began acquiring muskets and cannons. The Ottomans would also remain a key ally during the Ajuran-Portuguese wars.

Over the course of the 16th century, Somali-Portuguese tensions would remain high and the increased contact between Somali sailors and Ottoman corsairs worried the Portuguese, who in 1542 sent a punitive expedition against Mogadishu led by João de Sepúlveda. The Portuguese fleet briefly attacked Mogadishu, capturing an Ottoman ship and firing upon the city, which compelled the sultan of Mogadishu to sign a peace treaty with the Portuguese. Ottoman-Somali cooperation against the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean reached a high point in the 1580s when Ajuran clients of the Somali coastal cities began to sympathize with the Arabs and Swahilis under Portuguese rule and sent an envoy to the Turkish corsair Mir Ali Beg for a joint expedition against the Portuguese. He agreed and was joined by a large Somali fleet, which began attacking Portuguese colonies in Southeast Africa.

The Somali-Ottoman offensive managed to drive out the Portuguese from several important cities such as Pate, Mombasa and Kilwa and remove the Portuguese influence within the Indian Ocean. The Ajuran's Somali forces would eventually militarily defeat the Portuguese. The Ottoman Empire would also remain an economic partner of the Somalis. Throughout the 16th and 17th centuries, successive Ajuran Empire defied the Portuguese economic monopoly in the Indian Ocean by employing a new coinage which followed the Ottoman pattern, thus proclaiming an attitude of economic independence in regard to the Portuguese.

The study shows the bilateral relations between Somalia and Turkey. The two nations are longstanding partners, engaging in close development cooperation. Somalia has an embassy in Ankara, and Turkey has an embassy in Mogadishu, which is the biggest Turkish embassy in the world.

Türkiye is not a stranger to the east African countries, having been involved in the affairs of the region over the past decade. This engagement has mostly taken place in Somalia, a unique partner for Ankara in the Horn of Africa and Gulf of Aden regions—a geography with evergrowing strategic significance, both for Türkiye and other regional powers. Ankara and Mogadishu have what can be coined a special relationship. For a decade, Türkiye and Somalia have developed a sound security-focused relationship. Türkiye's largest overseas military base, TURKSOM, is in Somalia's capital Mogadishu, doubling as both a location for Turkish military deployment abroad and a training center for the Somali military. The base boasts graduates of Somali security forces since 2019 and has become a solid manifestation of the burgeoning defense relationship between the two sides.

Somalia has evolved into a testing ground for Türkiye's ambitious foreign policy of expanding its influence in Africa. While military relations have added strategic depth to the relationship, Ankara's engagement with Mogadishu transcends a simple security transaction. Türkiye's largest diplomatic mission is also in Mogadishu. Scores of Somali military and political elites have been educated in Turkish establishments, thus strengthening institutional ties, while Ankara remains one of Somalia's key trading partners. Türkiye is exercising both soft and hard power in Somalia. Alongside robust strategic cooperation, Türkiye's cultural and language institutions have a significant presence in the East African

state. Thousands of Somalian students have either graduated from Turkish higher education institutions or are currently enrolled in one.

Ankara has successfully crowned a strategic-level partnership with common social capital, ensuring Türkiye's position as a prime partner for Somalia into the long term. Indeed,

Somalia now serves as a benchmark and a gateway for Türkiye's engagement across the African continent. Recently, Türkiye and Somalia moved their security cooperation to a new level. In February, the Somalian government granted exclusive rights to Türkiye to train, equip and modernize its navy, as well as patrol the Somalian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in the Indian Ocean. This builds on already excellent military relations and an existing Turkish security infrastructure in Mogadishu. The naval agreement is complemented by an economic one that grants Ankara the right to explore hydrocarbons in Somalia's EEZ. The economic component of naval cooperation, which was finalized in July by Türkiye's Energy Minister Alparslan Bayraktar, makes provisions for Türkiye to explore Somali territorial waters in three blocks. Each block corresponds to 5,000 km² of land as per the minister's statements, with exploration expected to commence in September. Türkiye's seismic exploration vessel *Oruç Reis* is expected to take the helm in these operations, complemented by an escort of support vessels as well. As part of this elaborate network of naval and energy cooperation, Türkiye's armed forces received a further two-year authorization from the parliament to continue their foreign deployment in Somalia, making explicit reference to naval activities.

Türkiye's growing presence in the Gulf of Aden proves a considerable diversification of its forward military engagement doctrine. The fact that this is happening in Somalia is no surprise, as Ankara's most successful model for its Africa opening policy is its ties to Mogadishu. As part of this diversification, Türkiye is branching into the naval sphere of military cooperation and extending its influence on an all-encompassing level in shaping the Somali military. This comes with benefits for both sides of the equation. Türkiye has a venue to showcase its military prowess and training expertise, and Mogadishu benefits from the second-largest army in NATO and a military power closely aligned and integrated into the U.S.-led security infrastructure.

While Ankara's forward military engagement has not always been well received by its

Western allies, the addition of Somalia to Türkiye's growing security outreach has positive implications for the Western alliance as well. Somalia sits at the nexus of brewing conflict in the wider Gulf of Aden and Red Sea regions. The spiralling insecurity in the region following Hamas's attack on Israel on 7 October 2023 and Israel's subsequent invasion of Gaza has flared tensions in areas of proximity to East Africa. Türkiye's growing naval ties to Somalia can therefore be viewed as a deterrent against further destabilization in the region.

Background of the study area

Türkiye, officially is the Republic of Türkiye, is a country mainly located in Anatolia in West Asia, with a relatively small part called East Thrace in Southeast Europe. It borders the Black Sea to the north; Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Iran to the east; Iraq, Syria, and the Mediterranean Sea to the south; and the Aegean Sea, Greece, and Bulgaria to the west. Turkey is home to over 85 million people; most are ethnic Turks, while ethnic Kurds are the largest ethnic minority. Officially a secular state, Turkey has a Muslim-majority population in the country. Ankara is Türkiye's capital and second-largest city. Istanbul is its largest city and economic center. Other major cities include İzmir, Bursa, and Antalya.

First inhabited by modern humans during the Late Paleolithic, present-day Turkey was home to various ancient peoples. The Hattians were assimilated by the Hittites and other Anatolian peoples. Classical Anatolia transitioned into cultural Hellenization after Alexander the Great's conquests, and later Romanization during the Roman and Byzantine eras. The Seljuk Turks began migrating into Anatolia in the 11th century, starting the Turkification process. The Seljuk Sultanate of Rum ruled Anatolia until the Mongol invasion in 1243, when it disintegrated into Turkish principalities. Beginning in 1299, the Ottomans united the principalities and expanded. Mehmed II conquered Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul) in 1453. During the reigns of Selim I and Suleiman the Magnificent, the Ottoman Empire became a global power. From 1789 onwards, the empire saw major changes, reforms, centralization, and rising nationalism while its territory declined.

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, persecution of Muslims during the Ottoman contraction and in the Russian Empire resulted in large-scale loss of life and mass migration into modern-day Turkey from the Balkans, Caucasus, and Crimea. Under the control of the Three Pashas, the Ottoman Empire entered World War I in 1914, during which the Ottoman government and some committed genocides against the Armenian, Greek, and Assyrian subjects.

Following Ottoman defeat, the Turkish War of Independence resulted in the abolition of the sultanate and the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne. Türkiye emerged as a more homogenous nation state. The Republic was proclaimed on 29 October 1923, modelled on the reforms initiated by the country's first president, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Turkey remained neutral during most of World War II, but was involved in the Korean War. Several military interventions interfered with the transition to a multi-party system.

Turkey is an upper-middle-income emerging market with a role that reflects its uniqueness in global settings. In terms of nominal GDP, its economy is ranked 17th, while in PPP terms, its rank is 12th. According to The World Bank (2022), "The country classification reflects its growing manufacturing sector and increasing trade ties around the world." Equally, according to The International Monetary Fund (2023), "The rise of Türkiye among leading emerging market economies reflects its increasing weight in global and regional economic affairs." As the 15th-largest electricity producer in the world, Turkey aims to become a hub for regional energy transportation. It is a unitary presidential republic. Turkey is a founding member of the OECD, G20, and Organization of Turkic States. With a geopolitically significant location, Turkey is a NATO member and has its second-largest military force. It may be recognized as an emerging, the middle, and a regional power. As an EU candidate, Türkiye is part of the EU Customs Union.

Somalia, officially the Federal Republic of Somalia, is the easternmost country in continental Africa. The country is located in the Horn of Africa and is bordered by Ethiopia to the west, Djibouti to the northwest, Kenya to the southwest, the Gulf of Aden to the north, and the Indian Ocean to the east.

Somalia, officially is the Federal Republic of Somalia, is the easternmost country in continental Africa. The country is located in the Horn of Africa and is bordered by Ethiopia to the west, Djibouti to the northwest, Kenya to the southwest, the Gulf of Aden to the north, and the Indian Ocean to the east. Somalia has the longest coastline on Africa's mainland. Somalia has an estimated population of 18.1 million, of which 2.7 million live in the capital and largest city, Mogadishu. Around 85% of Somalia's residents are ethnic Somalis. The official languages of the country are Somali and Arabic, though Somali is the primary language. Somalia has historic and religious ties to the Arab world. As such the people in Somalia are Muslims, the majority of them Sunni.

In antiquity, Somalia was an important commercial center, benefiting from its strategic location along key Indian Ocean and Red Sea trade routes (Lewis, 2002). During the Middle Ages, several powerful Somali empires dominated regional trade, including the Ajuran Sultanate, the Adal Sultanate, and the Sultanate of the Geledi, which played significant roles in commerce and political organization in the Horn of Africa (Abir, 1980; Mukhtar, 1995). In the late nineteenth century, Somali sultanates were colonized by the Italian and British Empires, who consolidated various clan-based territories into two colonial entities: Italian Somaliland and British Somaliland (Samatar, 1989). In 1960, these two territories united to form the independent Somali Republic under a civilian government (Lewis, 2002).

In 1969, Siad Barre and the Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC) seized power through a military coup, establishing the Somali Democratic Republic and implementing authoritarian policies, including violent suppression of opposition movements such as the Somaliland War of Independence in the north (Samatar, 1992). The collapse of the SRC in 1991 marked the onset of the Somali Civil War, leading to prolonged state fragmentation (Menkhaus, 2007). Efforts to restore governance resulted in the establishment of the Transitional National Government (TNG) in 2000, followed by the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in 2004, which initiated the reconstitution of state institutions, including the re-establishment of the Somali Armed Forces (UNDP, 2010).

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There is a dangerous level of criminal activity by armed militia throughout Somalia. There have been murders, armed robbery and criminal kidnaps. The humanitarian situation in Somalia has led to a large displacement of people, and a growth in refugee camps which are overpopulated.

Somalia has been labelled as a failed state for many years now. It has been marred by civil wars, poor governmental institutions and a lack of focus on national growth which have been on-going issues, (Horseid Media, 2015). Due to a negative international image, Somalia has experienced tough economic and political times that have not been helped much by the cases of civil wars and vibrant terrorism emanating from the Al-Shabaab group for long (Julia, 2012). Political cooperation has been a fleeting dream that Somalia has wished for with the West and other global states more so after the failure in trying to work with the United Arab Emirates (Andrew, 2014). The entrance of Turkey into the Horn of Africa for political relations with Somalia has been a very welcome venture given that Turkey has a good reputation as a state and is widely respected by the UN (Akgun & Mehmet, 2010).

There is political hope that the relationship with Türkiye will aid in Somalia's acceptance in the international community as a political and trading partner. There have been challenges in working with Somalia in bilateral agreements due to its corrupt history in the leadership and political instability that may drive away and destabilize foreign investments (Daniel, 2012).

1.3 AIMS OF THE STUDY

The main aim of study is to examine the recent developments in the Türkiye-Somalia relationship. Is a Strategic Engagement in Security between Türkiye and Somalia.

1.4 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Some of the objectives of the bilateral cooperation between the Türkiye and Somalia are as follows:

- To show the Turkey's Security Interests in Somalia
- To show their Economic relations and infrastructure projects
- To stand as Somalia's mediator to resolve conflict within the region.
- To understand the growing role of Türkiye as a security actor for Somalia.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions are as follow:

- Does Turkey's has any Security Interests in Somalia?
- What is the economic relations and infrastructure projects between Turkey and Somalia?
- Did Turkey stand as Somalia's mediator to resolve conflict within the region?
- Did Turkey play any role as a security actor for Somalia?

1.6 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

The number of academic writings on Turkey-Africa relations has increased among the Turkish and non-Turkish academics as a result of the AK Party governments' active involvement in Africa since 2005 but the most articles on Turkey-Somalia generally deal with Turkey-Somalia relations from one dimension and ignore the other dimensions. This research aims to explore the new dimensions and the dynamics driving Turkey's security policy in Somalia. The study also argues that Turkey's security policy in Somalia has evolved as a part of its wider humanitarian aid policy toward Somalia.

Constructivists allege that international politics is socially and historically constructed. International politics is shaped by shared ideas, values, history, and culture. Power politics is not given by nature, and it is not static. The states can change static relations through social interactions and communication. However, structural realists believe that power politics is given by nature and is fixed. According to the structural realists, the global actors act and live in the self-help system and anarchic world that pushes the states to militarize them.

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significant of the study shows that, Türkiye has strengthened its economic presence in Somalia through development and infrastructure projects, significantly contributing to the country's economic development and stability.

Türkiye is strengthening its security cooperation through its military presence in Somalia. In this regard, the TURKSOM military training base, established in Mogadishu in 2017, plays a crucial role in training and equipping Somali security forces (Kavas, 2018).

Turkey's engagement includes humanitarian aid, development projects, contributions to statebuilding, counter-terrorism efforts, and military training, which collectively promote norms of peace and

cooperation. However, these actions are also shaped by the perceptions of Somali actors, underscoring that they are not merely acts of power projection.

This could see more comprehensive developments in overcoming the political fray, and potentially aiding in Ankara's endeavour of security as economic interests come to the forefront.

Türkiye's forward engagement in the Horn of Africa does not come without risks. Türkiye has positioned itself as a mediator of conflicting sides and a dispenser of security in the region. A swift destabilization of the region's security environment would be consequential for Turkish interests, particularly as Ankara is now moving to invest in the area of hydrocarbons through its agreement with Somalia. The eventual fruition of Türkiye's goals in the Horn relies on a stable security environment and the reduction of hostilities between the region's states.

1.8 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Relations between Turkey and Somalia have a history dating back to the Ottoman Empire. Turkish Embassy in Mogadishu was inaugurated in 1979, closed in 1991 due to civil war and reopened on 1 November 2011. On 1 June 2014, Turkish Consulate General in Hargeisa started its operations.

Although Turkish Embassy in Mogadishu was closed in 1991, Turkey did not remain indifferent to the developments in the country, and tried to contribute to the establishment of peace and stability in Somalia. In order to draw the attention of the international community to the great drought disaster in 2011 and to show our solidarity with the Somali people,

President of the Republic of Turkey H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, then Prime Minister, made a historic visit to Somalia in August 2011.

Development cooperation between Somalia and Turkey is multi-tiered, and includes military, social, economic and infrastructural partnerships. During the drought of 2011, Turkey contributed over \$201 million to the humanitarian relief efforts in the impacted parts of Somalia. In partnership with the Somali government, Turkish officials have also launched various development and infrastructure projects in Somalia. They have assisted in the building of several hospitals, and helped renovate and rehabilitate the Aden Adde International Airport and the National Assembly building, among other initiatives.

Turkish Airlines became the first long-distance international commercial airline in two decades to resume flights to and from Mogadishu's Aden Adde International Airport. In September 2013, the Turkish company Favori LLC also began operations at the airport. The firm announced plans to renovate the aviation building and construct a new one, as well as upgrade other modern service structures. A \$10 million project, it will increase the airport's existing 15 aircraft capacity to 60.

Understanding the main dynamics affecting Somalia's security is vital for building lasting peace and security in Somalia. Somalia has multiple and complex security problems. After the collapse of the Siad Barre regime in 1991, the civil war began in Somalia. There was not a functioning central government in Somalia from 1991 to 2011. Though the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) was established in 2012, security still remains a massive problem in the country.

1.9 SCOPE AND DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The research study analyses the strategic engagement in security between Türkiye and Somalia, as a comprehensive analysis of bilateral cooperation and regional implications. The scope of the study is to investigate the role of the government of Türkiye to the security sector of Somalia, with a special focus

on the bilateral ties in the Somalia development and security aspect. The research time frame is from the mid 60's to 2024 inclusively.

The researcher randomly selects twenty (20) people as the respondents of the study, from both countries embassies; that is ten from the Somalian and ten from the Turkish.

1.10 DISSERTATION STRUCTURE

Chapter One – Contains the introduction, which lays out the intent of the study as well as setting out the aim of the study and give out its significance. It also rationalizes and formally states the problems, while also highlighting the research questions with the objectives, with general background of the study and the study area, the hypothesis where given in the study, the scope and limitations and it was given out how the research study was organized and definition of terms where given.

Chapter Two – Consist of the literature review and appraises an array of bilateral ties between the two countries (Türkiye and Somalia) and academic research studies which elaborate and assess the strategic engagement in security between Türkiye and Somalia, , evaluating their impact on developmental bilateral ties. It also evaluates various agreements in international policies and economic engagement between the two countries, theories of bilateral relationships between the Türkiye and Somalia and their application in the context of this research.

Chapter Three – This chapter contains the research methodology, which indicates the chosen research methods. This chapter further outlines the specific research viewpoint and the design methods, as well as the approaches to be used to solicit information on the subject matter. It then gives a brief description of the (qualitative) instruments used to collect and analyses the data as well as the quantitative methods. It gives the instruments use to collect the data, also gives the analysis and presentation of the study. Lastly, this chapter discusses the importance of data validity and deals the ethical considerations observed.

Chapter Four – This chapter presents data analysis and the primary research findings, as well as setting out the analysis of the research results. It will highlight the various links to the theories discussed in the literature review.

Chapter Five – This provides the conclusion and recommendations. It answers the research question taking into consideration the primary and secondary research. This chapter also explains the findings of the study, as well as identifying the scope for further research.

1.11 DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

Government - A government is the system or group of people governing an organized community, generally a state. In the case of its broad associative definition, government normally consists of legislature, executive, and judiciary. Government is a means by which organizational policies are enforced, as well as a mechanism for determining policy.

International community - The international community is a term used in geopolitics and international relations to refer to a broad group of people and governments of the world.

Humanitarian relief - Also known as humanitarian aid, refers to the material and logistic assistance provided to people in need, especially during and after disasters, conflicts, or other crises. Its primary goal is to save lives, alleviate suffering, and maintain human dignity. This assistance can include food, water, shelter, medical care, and protection.

Bilateral agreements - Bilateral agreements are treaties or contracts made between two parties, typically countries or international organizations, to establish specific terms and conditions for cooperation or exchange. They are legally binding and outline the rights and obligations of each party. These agreements can cover a wide range of issues, including trade, labour migration, environmental protection, and more.

Development Cooperation - Also known as development aid, refers to the assistance provided by governments and other agencies to support the economic, social, environmental, and political development of developing countries. It's a long-term process aiming to reduce poverty and foster sustainable development. This can include financial, technical, and other forms of assistance.

Security Environment - A secure environment, in the context of computer science, refers to a system that prioritizes controlled storage and access of information. It's crucial for protecting sensitive data and ensuring the integrity of information systems. This includes measures to prevent unauthorized access, data loss, and other security threats.

Development Projects - Development projects encompass a wide range of initiatives focused on improving the well-being of individuals, communities, or nations. They can be time-bound, involving specific outputs, and contribute to broader development outcomes.

Constructivists - Constructivists are individuals who believe in and practice the theory of constructivism, which suggests that knowledge is actively built by learners rather than passively received.

Strategic Engagement - Strategic engagement involves connecting various stakeholders to achieve specific goals through meaningful interactions. It's a method of building relationships, fostering communication, and aligning efforts to achieve desired outcomes, whether in business, government, or other contexts.

Political Cooperation - Political cooperation broadly denotes the governments of differing states working together toward a common goal. This cooperation can occur in areas like military alliances, economic affairs, and the deciding of territorial boundaries.

Transitional - It's involving, providing, or consisting of a passage, movement, or change from one state, condition, subject, place, etc., to another.

2. RELATED LITERATURES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The relationship between Somalia and Türkiye dates back to the 16th century when the Ottoman Empire was engaged with the Muslim Somali states in the Horn of Africa. The main aim of that relation seemed purely based on security and economic interest.

However, Türkiye's relations with Somalia declined with the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the establishment of the Republic of Türkiye in 1923. The newly established Republic of Turkey's pursuit of a western oriented foreign policy (Tepecikoğlu, 2012) and the partition of Somalia by the colonial powers were some of the reasons that changed the relationship. Later in the 1960s, Türkiye foreign policy started to engage with African states and pursued an open policy towards the African continent, thus, paved the way for Somalia-Türkiye relations to resume. Somalia opened its embassy in Ankara in 1976, whereas Türkiye also established its embassy in Mogadishu only after three years in 1979. Yet, this relationship did not last long as Somalia state collapsed in 1991 and the country went into a harsh civil war.

Türkiye's foreign policy has been going under transformation since the rise of the AK Party (Justice and Development Party) in the early 2000s. AK Party pursued an open foreign policy towards Africa and underlined that Africa is crucial for Türkiye in terms of diplomacy, foreign policy, economy etc. The Africa Action Plan of 1998, the declaration of 2005 as the

'year of Africa' articulated Türkiye's interest in the continent.

2.2 THEORETICAL REVIEW OF THE STUDY

As stated in the introduction section, modern Türkiye's relationship with Somalia started in the mid-1970s due to the open policy pursued in Türkiye's foreign policy. This relationship did not last long as Somalia state collapsed in 1991. There were international efforts to stabilize Somalia in the early stages of the Somali conflict. Türkiye, as a NATO member, joined the peace stabilization efforts led by the United Nations in 1992 (Sönmezoglu, 2016: 740). It contributed around 900 forces to UN-led UNOSOM I and II missions in Somalia (Koçer, 2006). On the other hand, Turkish humanitarian aid agencies contributed to the international humanitarian efforts in the country to alleviate the crisis since the early 1990s.

Trade relations between the two countries have been under scratch in recent years.

Along with Türkiye's Africa Action Plan of 1998 and Year of Africa in 2005, Türkiye was granted an observer seat in the African Union (AU) in 2005. The first time Türkiye and Somalia held bilateral official talks was in 2007 when Somalia president Abdullah Yusuf Ahmed met with then Türkiye's Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan at the sidelines of the AU meeting in Addis Ababa (Siradag, 2017).

On August 2011, the then Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan visited Mogadishu amid severe drought and famine in the country, thus, making Erdogan the first highest non-African leader to visit Somalia in two decades (Shinn, 2016). The main objective of the visit was considered to draw the world attention to famine-hit Somalia and to contribute to alleviating that humanitarian crisis. This visit marks a turning point in Türkiye's relations with Somalia. The following reopening of Türkiye's Mogadishu embassy in November 2011, hosting the Istanbul Somalia Conference in May 2012 and spearheading the OIC's aid projects to

Somalia were among the initiatives Türkiye has taken to materialize its relation with Somalia.

The popular visit of the then Türkiye prime minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan to Somalia in 2011 was a breakthrough in the relations between the two countries. Following that visit, Türkiye has been labelled as an active actor and partner in Somalia.

This study explores Türkiye-Somalia bilateral relationship and concentrates on Türkiye's economic and security engagement in Somalia. It also seeks to analyse recent Turkish foreign direct investments (FDI) in Somalia. The opportunities and challenges surrounding this security relation are also examined. It seeks to find an answer for Turkish security interests in Somalia and the future of the relationship between the two states.

On April 13, 2013, Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud resumed reconciliation talks between the central government in Mogadishu and the regional authorities in Hargeisa. Mediated by the government of Turkey in Ankara, the meeting ended with a signed agreement between Mohamud and Ahmed Mahamoud Silanyo, President of the northwestern Somaliland region, agreeing to allocate fairly to the Somaliland region its portion of the development aid earmarked for Somalia as a whole and to cooperate on security.

Making sense of Turkey's Somalia policy

Turkey's engagement in Somalia has been undertaken through a multifaceted approach encompassing political, developmental, humanitarian, and economic assistance and with the strong presence of many Turkish state and non-state actors (i.e. government institutions and agencies, non-governmental organisations, private sector companies, security and military officials, and local municipalities). As a result, Ankara's development and diplomatic initiatives in the country have been met with a positive reception inside and outside Somalia. After successfully mitigating the impact of the devastating famine in 2010-12, the Turkish government realised that humanitarian assistance alone would not address the collapse of the Somali state nor would it bring about sustainable peace and stability. Consequently, Ankara expanded its operations in the country to include state-building and trade characterised by a strong deployment of staff despite security risks. Soon after Erdogan's visit, the Turkish embassy and a TIKA office were opened in Mogadishu, followed by a general consulate in Hargeisa. The Turkish flag carrier, Turkish Airlines, began daily flights to Mogadishu, and trade activities commenced as well as mediation initiatives between the Somali government and the breakaway Somaliland.

During Erdogan's second and third visit to Somalia in 2015 and 2016 respectively, several bilateral agreements were signed and new projects were inaugurated, such as Turkey's largest diplomatic premises in Mogadishu as well as a large research and training hospital. Turkish companies secured contracts for the management and maintenance of the Somali government's largest sources of revenue: the Mogadishu airport and seaport. In 2017, Turkey opened its largest overseas base, a US \$50 million military facility to support the rebuilding of the Somali security forces, in the Somali capital.

Additionally, Turkey became a popular destination for Somalis seeking education, health tourism, and business opportunities. There are currently an estimated 80,000-100,000 Somalis in Turkey with the majority of the students studying at different Turkish institutions, businessmen as well as Somali diaspora families relocating from the West, Middle East, and some parts of Africa. The following table summarises Turkey's multifaceted engagement in Somalia.

Another essential feature of Turkish assistance to Somalia is that the majority of the projects remain inclusive. At the national level, Turkish actors engage and consult with Somalia's national authorities while seeking the support of locals (e.g. regional governments, traditional elders, the private sector and local NGOs) during the implementation phase of projects. This inclusivity helps to increase local participation and ensures that certain communities are not excluded. Turkey's involvement in Somalia has been also praised for its development effectiveness in terms of the ability to adapt to local dynamics, complementarity with local priorities and plans, cost and time efficiency and policy coherence. All these factors have contributed to Turkey's Somalia engagement policy becoming a unique paradigm of statebuilding and have increased the agency of Somali actors.

However, the Turkish approach is not immune to challenges. In fact, Turkish activities in Somalia have been targeted by the Somalia-based Al Shabab terror group. The latter has previously called the Turkish government an enemy of Somalia because the NATO member allegedly supported the Western alliance's operations. Over the past decade, Al Shabab has targeted Turkish projects and killed several Turkish nationals.

In 2015, for instance, Al Shabab attacked a hotel where the Turkish delegation stayed in Mogadishu a day before a visit by President Erdogan to the Somali capital. Although Al Shabab opposes the international community support for the Somali government, this group seems particularly irritated by the Turkish projects. By providing multiple services to the population, these projects affect Al Shabab's conspiratorial worldview and the group's ability to recruit the most disaffected fringes of society. For these reasons, Al Shabab would continue to pose a principal security challenge to the Turkish involvement in Somalia in the foreseeable future.

2.3 AGREEMENT BETWEEN TÜRKİYE AND SOMALIA

In May 2010, the Somali and Turkish governments signed a military training agreement, in keeping with the provisions outlined in the Djibouti Peace Process. Enforcement of the pact officially began in November 2012. Outlining training, technical and scientific cooperation, the treaty includes joint-service exercises between both national militaries and exchanges of delegations and personnel. It also encompasses training by the Turkish Military Medical Academy and Mapping General Command, between the gendarmerie and coast guard, as well as in-field training and education at national military installations and institutions. Additionally, the agreement includes provisions for the mutual exchange of information visa-vis military history, publications and museology.

In October 2013, Somalia's federal Cabinet endorsed an agreement with the Turkish firm AlBayrak to manage the Port of Mogadishu for a 20-year period. According to the Prime Minister's Office, the deal was secured by the Ministry of Ports and Public Works, and also assigns Al-Bayrak responsibility for rebuilding and modernizing the port. In September 2014, the Federal Government of Somalia officially delegated management of the Mogadishu Port to Al-Bayrak. The Turkish company's head Ahmed Salim indicated that under the terms of the agreement, 55% of revenue generated at the seaport will go to the Somali authorities and the remaining 45% is earmarked for the firm. The majority of Al-Bayrak's revenue share will in turn be re-invested in the seaport through additional port-based trade and new docks, construction materials and machinery. According to Somalia's Minister for Transports and Seaport Yussuf Maolim Amin, the management transfer is expected to double the federal authorities' income from the Port. Al-Bayrak's modernization project will cost \$80 million.

In February 2014, Somali Army Chief of Staff Brigadier General Dahir Adan Elmi signed a follow-up military agreement in Mogadishu with a delegation from the Turkish Ministry of Defense. The pact stipulates that the government of Turkey will soon launch a training regimen in Somalia for a portion of the Somali National Army. Some SNA soldiers will also receive training in Turkey.

In January 2015, Foreign Affairs Minister of Somalia Abdirahman Duale Beyle and a Turkish delegation signed a bilateral treaty on new development projects that are scheduled to be implemented in Somalia. Among the agreements was a protocol stating that the new Digfer Hospital in Mogadishu would be jointly operated. The accord stipulates that the institution will be funded for its first five years by the Turkish Ministry of Health, which will likewise provide professional specialists. Per the protocol, the hospital will thereafter be fully managed by the Somali authorities. Further development agreements were signed pertaining to military and security cooperation, police support and coordination, marine transportation, youth, and sports projects, and cooperation between Somali National Television and Turkish National Radio.

In May 2015, the Ministry of Commerce and Industrialization of Somalia signed an agreement with the Turkish company PGM Inspection. The treaty delegates management of the ministry's new quality assurance system on imported and exported products to the firm.

2.4 TÜRKİYE – SOMALIA MILITARY COOPERATION

In September 2017, a Turkish military base was formally inaugurated in Mogadishu. Over 10,000 Somali soldiers were to be trained at the facility. At the date of its construction, it was the largest overseas military facility built and managed by Turkey.

On February 22, Ankara and Mogadishu signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) establishing the Turkish Armed Forces as a partner in Somalia's maritime security and law enforcement for the next ten years. Per reports about the MOU, Turkey will reconstruct, equip, and train the Somali Navy while receiving 30 percent of the revenue from Somalia's exclusive economic zone.

For a decade, Türkiye and Somalia have developed a sound security-focused relationship.

Türkiye's largest overseas military base, TURKSOM, is in Somalia's capital Mogadishu, doubling as both a location for Turkish military deployment abroad and a training center for the Somali military. The base boasts graduates of Somali security forces since 2019 and has become a solid manifestation of the burgeoning defense relationship between the two sides.

Somalia has evolved into a testing ground for Türkiye's ambitious foreign policy of expanding its influence in Africa.

While military relations have added strategic depth to the relationship, Ankara's engagement with Mogadishu transcends a simple security transaction. Türkiye's largest diplomatic mission is also in Mogadishu. Scores of Somali military and political elites have been educated in Turkish establishments, thus strengthening institutional ties, while Ankara remains one of Somalia's key trading partners.

Türkiye is exercising both soft and hard power in Somalia. Alongside robust strategic cooperation, Türkiye's cultural and language institutions have a significant presence in the East African state. Thousands of Somalian students have either graduated from Turkish higher education institutions or are currently enrolled in one.

Forward Engagement in the Horn of Africa

Recently, Türkiye and Somalia moved their security cooperation to a new level. In February, the Somalian government granted exclusive rights to Türkiye to train, equip and modernize its navy, as well as patrol the Somalian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in the Indian Ocean. This builds on already excellent military relations and an existing Turkish security infrastructure in Mogadishu. The naval agreement is complemented by an economic one that grants Ankara the right to explore hydrocarbons in Somalia's EEZ.

The economic component of naval cooperation, which was finalized in July by Türkiye's Energy Minister Alparslan Bayraktar, makes provisions for Türkiye to explore Somali territorial waters in three blocks. Each block corresponds to 5,000 km² of land as per the minister's statements, with exploration expected to commence in September. Türkiye's seismic exploration vessel *Oruç Reis* is expected to take the helm in these operations, complemented by an escort of support vessels as well. As part of this elaborate network of naval and energy cooperation, Türkiye's armed forces received a further two-year authorization from the parliament to continue their foreign deployment in Somalia, making explicit reference to naval activities.

Türkiye's growing presence in the Gulf of Aden proves a considerable diversification of its forward military engagement doctrine. The fact that this is happening in Somalia is no surprise, as Ankara's most successful model for its Africa opening policy is its ties to Mogadishu. As part of this diversification, Türkiye is branching into the naval sphere of military cooperation and extending its influence on an all-encompassing level in shaping the Somali military. This comes with benefits for both sides of the equation. Türkiye has a venue to showcase its military prowess and training expertise, and Mogadishu benefits from the second-largest army in NATO and a military power closely aligned and integrated into the U.S.-led security infrastructure.

While Ankara's forward military engagement has not always been well received by its Western allies, the addition of Somalia to Türkiye's growing security outreach has positive implications for the Western alliance as well. Somalia sits at the nexus of brewing conflict in the wider Gulf of Aden and Red Sea regions. The spiralling insecurity in the region following

Hamas's attack on Israel on 7 October 2023 and Israel's subsequent invasion of Gaza has flared tensions in areas of proximity to East Africa. Türkiye's growing naval ties to Somalia can therefore be viewed as a deterrent against further destabilization in the region.

Indeed, as part of the naval accords, Ankara and Mogadishu have agreed to cooperate on issues related to fisheries, piracy, and illicit movements in Somali territorial waters as well. This again signifies Ankara as a force for security in the region, benefiting the wider

Transatlantic alliance and the Somali government. Türkiye's diverse security outreach to the Gulf of Aden comes at a critical stage for the region, where both regional and bilateral tensions could possibly result in the erosion of the security environment. The naval accords between Somalia and Türkiye are therefore timed both strategically from a bilateral point of view and also within the wider context of the region. Türkiye is now positioned to aid Somalia in building its naval capacity and to function as an arbiter of security in the region.

2.5 TÜRKIYE AS A MEDIATOR

As part of Ankara's diversification of ties with Somalia, the relationship now includes a novel mediation element in Mogadishu's tense relationship with Addis Ababa. Early in the year, Ethiopia agreed to recognize the breakaway region of Somaliland in exchange for access to the Red Sea through Somaliland's Berbera Port. Naturally, the move was contested by Mogadishu, which seeks to block any diplomatic recognition for the breakaway region. Türkiye has become party to the diplomatic impasse between Ethiopia and Somalia, offering to mediate between the two countries. While indeed Somalia is a unique partner for Ankara in Africa, relations with Ethiopia have also been strong. Ethiopia is a customer of Türkiye's successful TB-2 UAV program, with the Addis Ababa government utilizing Turkish-made UAVs in the country's civil conflict with Tigray.

With security relations to both Somalia and Ethiopia, Türkiye naturally emerged as a mediator between the two sides. To that respect, talks have been held in Ankara to come to an arrangement that sees Somalian territorial integrity secured, and Ethiopia's desire to have access to the Red Sea fulfilled. While parties have met under the aegis of Türkiye's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a conclusive outcome has not yet been attained. Regardless, mediation is expedited to continue, with Türkiye showcasing significant executive interest in that regard.

Ankara would like to see Ethiopia's recognition of Somaliland withdrawn in exchange for an alternative agreement that would allow Addis Ababa access to the Red Sea basin.

Türkiye's objectives here are multifaceted. Primarily, Ankara is honouring its unique partnership with Mogadishu in prioritizing the country's territorial integrity. Türkiye's role as a mediator is indicative of the depth of strategic and military ties to Somalia. Secondly, Türkiye is adopting an agenda of furthering regional calm before the inception of its economic exploration activities in the region. When Türkiye begins exploring hydrocarbons in Somalian maritime zones, a conflict between Somalia and Ethiopia would be highly undesirable. Indeed, Somaliland has already issued a statement denouncing Türkiye's deployment of naval assets to Somalian territorial waters, arguing that areas of deployment coincide with Somaliland's sovereign waters. With the potential of conflict between the sides alive, it is natural that Türkiye is seeking some regional cohesion before it begins research with its naval forces.

A successful mediation effort would establish Türkiye not only as a military power in the Horn of Africa but also as a reliable partner for all East African states. Türkiye's sale of defense goods to the likes of Somalia and Ethiopia has already established Ankara as a key partner. The overcoming of this diplomatic crisis will further Türkiye's role in the region and will cement Ankara's strategy of diversifying its proactive foreign policy.

Prospects for Further Engagement

Türkiye's forward engagement in the Horn of Africa does not come without risks. Türkiye has positioned itself as a mediator of conflicting sides and a dispenser of security in the region. A swift destabilization of the region's security environment would be consequential for Turkish interests, particularly as Ankara is now moving to invest in the area of hydrocarbons through its agreement with Somalia. The eventual fruition of Türkiye's goals in the Horn relies on a stable security environment and the reduction of hostilities between the region's states. Turkish mediation efforts between Somalia and Ethiopia will therefore be of paramount interest moving forward.

These talks could further expand as well. Türkiye already maintains ties to the breakaway Somaliland region. Türkiye is one of the few countries in the world that have diplomatic representation in Somaliland's de facto capital Hargeisa in the form of a consulate general. Ankara has been pushing for diplomatic ties between Somalia and Somaliland for the past decade. Such talks could see a revived interest in the next months as part of Türkiye's newfound role as a mediator in the region. This could see more comprehensive developments in overcoming the political fray, and potentially aiding in Ankara's endeavour of security as economic interests come to the forefront.

Türkiye is also likely to see more cohesion with its Western allies in East Africa. Türkiye's growing role as a stabilizing force in Somalian territorial waters can act as a deterrent amidst the on-going insecurity in the region, potentially aiding U.S. endeavours. Efforts to aid Somalia in overcoming issues of piracy and illicit movement are again aligned with the Transatlantic security agenda. The securitization of Somalia's territorial waters can reverse adverse trends of migration and terrorism, immensely improving the security environment of a crucial region in Africa with proximity to the Middle East and Europe. The growing Türkiye-Somalia relationship looks to have consequences beyond bilateral ties, impacting regional and global trends because of Türkiye's wider position in the Middle East as a member of the NATO alliance.

2.6 SOMALIA'S DEVELOPMENT AND SECURITY (A Strategic Role of Türkiye)

Türkiye's contributions to strengthening state institutions, as well as stability and defense, have grown at an ever-increasing pace. Acting with an understanding of joint growth and development, Türkiye has advanced its relations with Somalia within this framework. Indeed, contributions to the formation of a strong and inclusive governance system have been made by increasing the capacities of public institutions in Somalia through technical support programs and training. In addition, with its health, education and infrastructure projects, Türkiye has contributed to the development of state-society relations in Somalia by increasing the access of the Somali people to basic services and fostering trust. On the other hand, Türkiye has always supported Somali society and prioritized institutional relationships over individual ties while exclusively cooperating with legitimate governments and supporting democratization.

However, one of the most obvious areas of Türkiye's contributions to Somalia is the defense sector. Indeed, in 2017, a comprehensive program was launched to enhance the Somali National Army's operational capacity by establishing the TURKSOM Military Training Base in Somalia. In order to shape the Somali security forces in accordance with local conditions and to protect the territorial integrity of Somalia, a wide range of assistance is provided, from military training to operative support in the conflict area. Türkiye also provides training for the Somali Police Force, including the Haramcad public order units.

Türkiye also makes significant contributions to Somalia's infrastructure and economic development. In this context, the modernization of Mogadishu Airport and Mogadishu Port, the rehabilitation of main roads and the improvement of public services are concrete indicators of Türkiye's interest in the development of Somalia. Having also started the construction of a new airport in Mogadishu, Türkiye continues to take steps to support sustainable development in Somalia.

Additionally, humanitarian aid and health support in newly established districts in regions liberated from the Al-Shabaab terrorist group in Somalia continue through organizations like the Turkish Red Crescent, Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA), and civil society groups, thus, the contributions of soft power play a crucial role in preventing these regions from falling under terrorist group Al-

Shabaab's control. Therefore, it is understood that humanitarian aid aimed at improving the quality of people's daily living conditions also contributes to sustainable stability in Somalia.

Development of bilateral relations

Relations between Türkiye and Somalia have developed and continue to develop in many areas over time. These ties have turned into a strategic partnership encompassing both diplomatic and emotional ties. Türkiye's large-scale humanitarian aid operation in Mogadishu in 2011 helped gain the trust of the Somali people. Following this start, Türkiye continued its humanitarian aid and has continued to support Somalia, which it sees as a brotherly partner, in almost every field. Economically, Turkish companies have contributed to the revival of Somalia's local economy by undertaking infrastructure projects. Türkiye's establishment of its largest embassy in Mogadishu and Turkish Airlines' regular flights to the city have contributed to boosting trade and facilitating travel between the two countries.

At this point, Türkiye's educational partnerships have become more prominent. Thousands of Somali students have studied in Türkiye through scholarships provided by the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB). Upon their return, these students have actively contributed to Somalia's development, including roles in state administration. In addition, the hospitals and health services Türkiye has established in Somalia have significantly improved the quality of life of the Somali people.

Later, Türkiye also shared its expertise in enhancing security in Somalia and provided support to counter-terrorism efforts within the framework of international law. These efforts elevated Turkish-Somali relations to the level of brotherhood and strategic partnership. Turkey has ramped up its partnership with Somalia in recent months. It is helping Somalia defend its waters, and has signed a deal to explore for oil and gas off the east African nation's coast. There have also been reports of advanced discussions to have Turkey set up a missile and rocket testing site in Somalia. These agreements underscore Turkey's strategic and economic aspirations in the broader Horn of Africa region.

Over the past four years, there has been a steady increase in Turkish partnerships and agreements for the export of defence-related products to the region. This has included the use of Turkish drones in conflict zones, such as Libya and Ethiopia.

I have studied Turkey's historical and current involvement in Somalia to understand what's driving Ankara's policy in the Horn of Africa. In my view, Turkey's involvement is driven by multiple factors. These include international status-seeking, regional balance and strategic concerns.

The opening of a training facility in Mogadishu has increased Turkey's strategic depth in the Horn of Africa, projecting the country towards both sub-Saharan Africa and the Indian Ocean. And the use of Turkish drones in Ethiopia's Tigray conflict has shown Turkish defence arrangements have become a factor in local dynamics.

Turkey's interest in Somalia dates back to 2010-2011. At the time, Somalia was grappling with the devastating effects of 20 years of civil war, failed international interventions and the emergence of the al-Qaeda-linked al-Shabaab terror group. In addition, the country was devastated by a famine that claimed more than 250,000 lives.

Somalia presented Turkey with several opportunities to establish a footprint in a region of high geostrategic value, and to enhance its image in Africa and globally.

First, there was a lack of interest in the country from major international players. Apart from anti-piracy initiatives in the Gulf of Aden and the US focus on the war on terror, international players watched Somalia with a certain detachment. Turkey saw an opportunity to benefit from taking a leading role in an international crisis scenario.

Second, the world's attention focused on the Arab world. The region was facing a wave of pro-democracy protests dubbed the Arab Spring. Somalia and the suffering of the Somali people were quickly forgotten by the international community. Turkish policymakers saw the country's isolation as an opportunity to gain international popularity and visibility on the continent.

2.7 TÜRKİYE'S ECONOMIC ENGAGEMENTS IN SOMALIA

The economic and trade relation between Türkiye and Somalia has been at a low level since the 2000s. Despite the fact that this relationship has been continuing, but it has grown tremendously since 2011, soon after, "Türkiye positioned itself as a key humanitarian actor, other interests [including economic interests] came into play" (Wasuge, 2016). Türkiye seemed to have the intention of investing in the long-term of its economic relations with Somalia (Abdulle, 2019).

Moreover, Türkiye moved from being an economic footnote in Somalia to its fifth biggest source of imports within the six years spanning 2011-2017 (Rossiter and Cannon, 2018).

Furthermore, Somalia was considered "in the close radar" of Türkiye, not only in politics but also in terms of trade, economy, and culture (DEİK, 2017).

Somalia's economy has been transforming from the wrecked condition since the collapse of the central government in the 1990s. Despite all the odds in the country, the private sector proved the possibility of economic development without a state. Somalia's economy performed more effectively and more efficiently during the civil war than the pre-anarchy period, and the private sector has proved to be a relatively effective provider of key social services (Leeson, 2007).

Somalia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is estimated 7.3 billion USD, GDP per capita is 500 dollars, and the expected economic growth rate in 2021 was 3.3% (The World Bank, 2022). Livestock trade is the main economic activity in the country, and it accounts for 40% of the GDP and 65% of the exports (Leeson, 2007). Furthermore, according to The Global Economy (2018), Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) composes 5.21% of the total GDP. Almost 70% of the economic growth is generated in urban areas (Hassan, Mohamed, & Isak, 2018). Additionally, the effectively functioning private sector and assistance from the diaspora contributed efficiently to the economic growth in the country (Webersik, Hansen, & Egal, 2018).

The role of FDI, remittances from the Somali diaspora, and the informal trade with neighbouring countries are also critical factors in the Somali economy. The FDI in Somalia has recently been increasing as the country's political and security situations are heaving to be stable. The economic and financial reforms in recent years may have also contributed to the course. According to the Global Somalia Diaspora (2019), the country receives about 1.3 billion dollars annually from the diaspora all around the world. In 2014, remittances from the Somali diaspora accounted for 35% of the total GDP (UNOCHA, 2014).

Based on the economic figures listed in the above paragraph, it is easier to recognize how important is the FDI flow to a country which suffered the absence of the role of the state in the economy. The status of the country's economy, i.e. lack of economic infrastructure, lack of industries, and informal businesses has sparked a negative trade balance in the country.

Somalia's exports are mainly agriculture, livestock and fishery related products.

Somalia's imports from Türkiye have recently increased tremendously. Türkiye became the 6th exporter to Somalia in the very same year (2011) due to its open-door policy to Somalia.

Türkiye's share in Somalia's imports has been steadily increasing from 2% in 2011 to 7.1% in 2019 (CBS, 2019).

2.8 TÜRKİYE - SOMALIA DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Development cooperation between Somalia and Turkey is multi-tiered, and includes military, social, economic and infrastructural partnerships.

During the drought of 2011, Turkey contributed over \$201 million to the humanitarian relief efforts in the impacted parts of Somalia. In partnership with the Somali government, Turkish officials have also launched various development and infrastructure projects in Somalia. They have assisted in the building of several hospitals, and helped renovate and rehabilitate the Aden Adde International Airport and the National Assembly building, among other initiatives.

Turkish Airlines became the first long-distance international commercial airline in two decades to resume flights to and from Mogadishu's Aden Adde International Airport. In September 2013, the Turkish company FAVORI LLC also began operations at the airport. The firm announced plans to renovate the aviation building and construct a new one, as well as upgrade other modern service structures. A \$10 million project, it will increase the airport's existing 15 aircraft capacity to 60.

In May 2013, the 1st Turkish-Somali Business Forum was launched in Istanbul to highlight commercial opportunities in both Somalia and Turkey for Somali and Turkish businesses. Organized by the Somali Council in conjunction with Somali and Turkish government ministries, the event included roundtable discussions on potential commercial ventures in both countries as well as business-to-business meetings between Somali and Turkish firms.

In January 2015, Mohamud and Erdoğan concurrently inaugurated a number of new Turkish-built development projects in Somalia, including the Digfer Hospital in the capital. It was concurrently renamed Erdoğan Hospital in honour of Erdoğan. The new 200-bed Somalia-Turkey Training and Research Hospital was constructed by Turkey's international development body, the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA), in accordance with an earlier Somalia-Turkey bilateral agreement.

It has a \$135.7 million operating budget, \$85.6 million of which is slated to be covered by the Turkish authorities over the next five years. The 13,500 square-meter indoor premises includes 20 incubators, 14 new-born intensive care beds, 12 intensive care beds, 4 operating rooms, a delivery room, and laboratory and radiology units, with general surgery, neurosurgery, plastic surgery, children, maternity, urology, internal medicine, anaesthesia, dental and ocular departments. It will be staffed by 91 Somali and 52 Turkish hospital administrators, head doctors, administrative directors or financial directors, as well as 40 Somali and 5 Turkish security personnel. Around 36 Somali assistants are also scheduled to participate in the facility's annual training program.

The Somalia-Turkey Bilateral Cooperation on the Advancement of Somali International Political Representation

In the guise of bilateral trade, Turkey has realized that Somalia has been side-lined by the West due to terrorism related issues and that the IMF and many other global partners that are pro USA and UK (Gullo,

2014). In this, it has easily worked its way to Somalia and managed to set up itself as a business partner but in essences having ulterior motives, (Akpinar, 2013). Turkey has managed to use the bilateral trade relations with Somalia to exploit the valuable resources in Somalia including cheap labour to further its own national interests (Daniel, 2012). This has been done in various ways such as, the offering of low pay jobs and the invitation of Turkish MNEs to operate in Somalia (Ahmed, 2021). Perhaps a major consequence in the bilateral trade between Turkey and Somalia has been in the ever increasing exports of Turkish goods to Somalia, (Sucuoglu & Stearns, 2016). The two scholars, further hold that, among the most exported products from Turkey to Somalia include: Wheat flour, pasta, other oatmeal and raw iron bars. This has greatly increased the

GDP of Turkey at the expense of the also seemingly growing GDP of Somalia (Siradag, 2013). In short, Somalia has been given the short end of the bilateral trade.

Turkey has had many products exported to Somalia but quite noticeably has not exported much of services that would help the Somalis mutually benefit in the bilateral trade (Rossiter & Cannon, 2019). At the end of the day, Turkey has been using Somalia to advance its economic agenda back in the European Union while using soft power to get its way into Somalia (Melvin, 2019).

As regards international political representation, which has been what Somalia has been expecting Turkey to help with, Somalia is losing out on making trade with Turkey's biggest business partners (Ipek, 2014). Turkey's greatest export partners as of 2019, included: Germany, Somalia, UK and Iraq (OEC, 2021). By the same business research platform, Somalia hardly had the opportunity to ride on the advantages it could have had being in a bilateral relationship with Turkey. It made exports to none of these countries based on its international cooperation with Turkey.

Somalia-Turkey Military Cooperation on the Advancement of Somalia's International Political Representation

Turkey's military cooperation with Somalia raises issues with any other state that has vested military interests in the Horn of Africa but none more so than the conflicting interests with the USA and the UK (Melvin, 2019). Since China's interests lay more on trade and control of foreign markets against the West, military interests are more of a national interest of the West (Benjamin, 2007).

Turkey got closer to Africa by joining the IGAD in 2008 (Daniel, 2012). This brought it closer to the EAC and ECOWAS giving it an opportunity to work with Kenya, Tanzania, Djibouti, Ethiopia and Somalia (Siradag, 2013). Turkey decided to invest its military position in Mogadishu, Somalia on 30th September, 2017 (Asiedu, 2017). What Turkey failed to account for was the opposition in foreign policy that it would have to face from states that had earlier invested military capacities in Somalia such as, the USA, the UK, the UAE and France. Mostly, the UK and the US had the most done in Somalia as regards the military, helping to fend off the Al-Shabaab and strengthen maritime and land security across Somalia (Rossiter & Cannon, 2019).

The USA and the UK planned to annex Somalia as a strategic military point in their Western military battle stands and also in a fierce competition with China (Benjamin, 2007). Turkey on the other hand planned to have an oversight over more in Somalia than just a military base but it would further acclaim a position to train the Somali army into a better military movement (Brittany, 2014).

2.9 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

Türkiye's engagement in Somalia started with a wide humanitarian aid campaign in 2011. The effectiveness of the aid campaign and the wide public support achieved has created a positive image of Türkiye. Türkiye's engagement in Somalia has been motivated by economic, political and security interests (Yukleyen and Zulkarnain, 2015) though humanitarian and development aid has played a crucial role in strengthening such relations. Since the beginning, Türkiye intended to deal with Somalia not on a donor beneficiary basis, but as mutual win-win relations with reciprocal economic and political interests. Such policy perceptions from the Turkish side and the wide public acceptance from the Somali side have speeded strengthening the relations on sustainable foundations.

In 2011, Turkey undertook the largest humanitarian operation in the history of the Turkish Republic. Following the initial humanitarian intervention to alleviate the impacts of the devastating 2011 famine, Turkey channelled its aid programmes into development and statebuilding projects. It has established a strong diplomatic presence on the ground, increased bilateral trade ties, mediated between the Somali government and the breakaway Somaliland, and trained and equipped Somali security forces. Turkish engagement in Somalia has been multi-faceted, encompassing Turkish state institutions, NGOs and the private sector.

Turkey's reaching out to Somalia has been in the making for nearly two decades, though then

Turkish Prime Minister (and current president) Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's visit to Somalia during a devastating famine in 2011 was the watershed moment. The first non-African head of state to visit Somalia in twenty years, Erdoğan toured refugee camps and hospitals, pledging aid and drawing international attention to the crisis. His visit was warmly received by the Somali people, many of whom felt abandoned by the global community.

In the years since Erdoğan's visit, Turkey has integrated deeply into Somali affairs, in everything from its security to its garbage collection and wastewater treatment to its management of seaports and airports. According to Erdoğan, Turkey provided more than one billion dollars in aid to Somalia between 2011 and 2022. Though Turkey's presence has not been entirely without controversy, evidence of its popularity is widespread, whether through popular fundraising efforts for Turkish earthquake relief in 2023 or in day-to-day life—

“Istanbul” is now a common girl's name in Somalia.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

This section describes the research methodology used in undertaking the study. This study is sought to investigate the Strategic Engagement in Security between Türkiye and Somalia, as a comprehensive analysis of bilateral cooperation and regional implications.

The research employs a mixed methodology in order to provide a multidimensional insight into the strategic security partnership of Türkiye and Somalia, their mutual partnership, and the wider effects within the regions. The employment of a mixed research methodology is applicable in the research as it combines the merits of quality and quantity data, enhancing its validity and reliability.

In the qualitative tradition, the study will employ in-depth interviews of key stakeholders such as government representatives, security specialists, and policymakers. In addition, the research will conduct focus group discussions to seek divergent perspectives on the significance of the security relationship between Türkiye and Somalia. Both techniques will allow the researcher to tap into the subtlety of experiences and perceptions that defy measurement by numbers.

For the quasi-quantitative part, the research involves the use of structured exercises with selected focus group research. The research seeks the evaluation of various aspects of the Türkiye-Somalia security engagement by the research participants. It involves the evaluation of military cooperation, capacity-building efforts, and the implications for the region from the security engagement between the two parties. The method allows the development of measurable findings despite the involvement of the qualitative research approach.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

Mixed research design is employed because the research utilizes various approaches in the data collection processes. These techniques involve the use of questionnaires to gather data that will be analyzed using the quantitative approach to establish trends, frequencies, and patterns in regards to perception on the cooperation between Türkiye and Somalia. As mentioned above:

"The primary source of data will be questionnaires that will be disseminated to diplomats because these provide an appropriate

At the same time, document analysis, and social media interviews find their significance through qualitative analysis. Here, official documents regarding policies, related reports, agreements, and relevant expert talks, concerning the relationship between Türkiye and Somalia, are evaluated. Hence, bringing both methods together has helped achieve data triangulation, which has increased the accuracy and authenticity of the results. The descriptive case study was favoured because, the study looked at a real life case, which was, the cooperation between Somalia and Turkey and also, no variables were changed in the course of the study, (Aggarwal & Ranganathan, 2019). The Turkish Embassy was chosen because; the institution featured a rich source of information to answer the research questions posed and also the Somalia Embassy was also chosen.

Since the study featured different respondents with varying characteristics, the most appropriate sampling technique was the stratified random sampling approach, (Kumar 2005). The respondents were placed in clusters based on the characteristics of their ranks. The top officials from the Turkish Embassy, purposively selected to be 3 top officials.

3.2 POPULATION AND SAMPLE SIZE

The total numbers of the security sectors and the embassies workers of both Governments were the population use in this research study. The Governments clearly says over 2000 workers from both embassies (Türkiye and Somalia) are using these facilities; everything about this research work was carried out at the embassies of both countries

The researcher decided to select twenty (20) people from both sides, were chosen for the purpose of the research survey.

3.3 SAMPLING SELECTION PROCEDURE

The study basically targeted the security sector and the embassies workers of both countries, because they are the most concern individuals. Accordingly, senior security personnel were targeted as respondent; however, greater emphasis was laid on capturing workers of the embassies. The objective was to interview at least 10% of the heads and stakeholders of both countries. The researcher therefore used purposive sampling heads, and stakeholders. Techniques in selecting Interviewees with an option of replacing those who didn't wish to respond to the researcher's plea as a focus group.

Purposive sampling is where the researcher consciously decides who to include in the sample. The researcher used this simply because the study was targeting basically custodians of the security sector of both countries in the bilateral ties. It also ensured that only people with relevant information are sampled.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

In this study primary data were mainly collected through questionnaires; from the concern individuals from the two counties, with personal interview and direct observations. Secondary data was also included in the study through references to authoritative books and web pages, from various websites on the internet, text books of their bilateral cooperation, records of past researchers, empirical research and also their security engagement report of the two countries.

3.5 SOURCES OF DATA

There are two sources of data collection in this research and these are the primary and secondary sources of data collection.

Primary Sources

This source includes data derived directly from personal interview and the administration of questionnaires for the concern security sectors and the workers from both embassies (Türkiye and Somalia). This data is decisive, in that, it is directly from the concern security personals and the embassy workers. This is first-hand information that the researcher receives directly from the main source, the concern individuals were contacted.

Secondary Sources

This includes data from published sources such as journals, newspapers, text books, annual reports of both embassies (Türkiye and Somalia) and related researches. This source of data are indirect sources of information, which involves the third parties aspects, secondary data, also come from internet and published report, and some from office records.

Data collected were of two types, these were the qualitative and quantitative types of data.

➤ Qualitative data

The qualitative data is non-descriptive types of data collection; it helps the researcher to evaluate effectively the theoretical aspect of the bilateral ties between Türkiye and Somalia knowledge on the strategic engagement in security between Türkiye and Somalia. The researcher reveals this information by a thorough survey of the administrative and financial departments.

➤ Quantitative data

This type of data is the numerical data collected in due process to present arithmetically the strategic engagement in security between Türkiye and Somalia. It gives out the mathematical setting of it data collection, analysis and presentation.

3.6 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

These are the tools used to collect data. To bring out the necessary data required the researcher used the following research instruments. (i) Personal interview (ii) Questionnaires (iii) Observation and (vi) Focus group.

Questionnaire

This is the layout of questions in such a way that they are easily seen and their associated responses are easily matched to the questions. It must be well designed and attractive so that the respondents are not put off simply by the look of it form. The principal concern in the designing of a questionnaire is clarity. Therefore, the questions must be clear, simple and easy to read and understand and as short as possible. In this research, the instrument applied was the Customer Satisfaction Survey for the research.

Personal interviews

There is a common method of collecting data, from the general public. With a personal interview, great reliance is placed on the integrity and skill of the interviewer. This is a type of data collection in which more information is usually collected from them with other methods, as generally more time will be devoted by an interviewer.

One of the main advantages of a personal interview is that the interviewer can check the answer to some questions. He can make a visual check of age for example. He may also be tempted not to stick to the sample selected.

Observations

Observation refers to the systematic act of watching, noting, and recording events, behaviors, actors, and interactions that occur in a natural setting rather than those that are self-reported. The use of observation helps the observer systematically record events that actually occur. This helps reduce the possibility of biases on the part of the respondents.

In this research, non-participatory observation was adopted. The researcher did not take part in what was observed but remained impartial to ensure objectivity and did not affect what the participants did. Observation took place in formal interactions, meetings, and events related to Türkiye-Somalia cooperation for enhanced security, especially in those events conducted in a diplomatic context, which were easily accessible to this study.

The process of observation is aided by a structured checklist that is designed to ensure alignment with research goals. The checklist is focused on core variables, which include patterns of interaction, mechanisms of coordination, decision-making, and the actual implementation of cooperation for security

goals. The observations are documented in a structured way immediately after the completion of the process.

To increase the validity and limit the bias on the observations, the research applied triangulation techniques. Triangulation was carried out through the combination of the information obtained through interviews, questionnaires, and document analysis. While the research methodology could not provide direct information on past and future events, the observation method was valuable for checking the existing practices and functioning process in the Türkiye-Somalia security relationship.

Despite the shortcomings, observation played an important role in the study by offering first-hand proof of the institutional actions and interactions, hence increasing the validity of the results.

3.7 ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF DATA RESULTS

Data collected for this research are presented using written, tables and chats in order to ease comparison among variables.

Reports

In the reports, voluminous or lengthy theories emphasis and interpretation to be use allowed, it is the simplest method of data presentation.

Use of tables

Tables for this research are arranged in rows and columns. Each table includes all that is relevant but excludes unnecessary data. All tables are clearly labelled in frequencies and percentages and the source specified when necessary.

Use of chats/ graphs

Specifically, the charts use for this study is the bar charts and the pie charts since they provide better picture in presenting the data.

3.8 VALIDITY OF INSTRUMENTS USED

The validity of the instruments used in this research work was highly controlled by the researcher. There was clear information and an instruction on how to complete/fill the questionnaires to the respondents, and the researcher was personally administering and collect them to ensure high rate of turn. Also the questions in the questionnaires were clear to ensure right information obtained on it. Also the sampling of respondents had been done carefully, so as to cover relevant areas.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS IN THIS STUDY

Research ethics refers to the kind of agreement that the researcher enters with the research participants. Before conducting the study, research permission was secured from the academic Institution. Institutional consent also was sought from the security sector of both embassies (Türkiye and Somalia), in the case of the strategic engagement in security between Türkiye and Somalia bilateral ties.

3.10 CONCLUSION

While Turkey mainly focused on developing relations with the West at the highest level after 1923, it ignored maintaining its connections with Africa keeping the relationship at the lowest level until the 1990s. Turkish governments took significant steps to improve relations with Africa at different times and periods such as in 1979 and 1998, but these efforts and initiatives could not develop relations with Africa as desired due to the structural economic and political crises in the country.

This study shows the different sections of the importance of the bilateral relationship between Türkiye and Somalia. The study is significance to the following sections:

- Its show the importance of Turkey's Foreign and Security Policy
- Security in Somalia
- Türkiye's Opening Up to Africa
- Averting a humanitarian crisis in Somalia
- Engaging in close development cooperation
- Signing of Agreements (On security and economic development).

4. ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF DATA

INTRODUCTION

To analyse Türkiye-Somalia relations effectively, it is essential to consider the context of East African geopolitics and realpolitik. This is because the region's dynamics, shaped by both global and regional multi-actor competition, significantly impact the foreign policy balances of countries within the region, particularly Somalia. In this context, Türkiye's bilateral relations with Somalia extend beyond humanitarian aid and security cooperation to encompass large-scale, long-term investments in economic collaboration and state-building initiatives.

4.1 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The conceptual framework of this study, based on constructivist theory, is clearly linked to the practical aspects of Turkey policies in Somalia. Constructivism emphasizes that state behaviour is shaped by social identities, norms, and perceptions rather than material interests. In this regard, this theoretical framework can be directly applied to compare Turkey engagement in the political, security, and normative domains. For example, Türkiye's emphasis on humanitarian aid, development projects, and military training in Somalia is deeply connected to its identity as a Muslim-majority nation with historical ties to the region, which is a central element of the constructivist approach. These considerations stem from Turkey's normative goal of promoting peace and development, which it leverages to shape its image as a cooperative regional power.

The evaluation in the previous paragraphs demonstrates that the findings from this study reveal a multidimensional understanding of the Türkiye-UAE rivalry in Somalia and its broader implications for regional dynamics. By applying constructivist theory, it becomes evident that the rivalry between these

two regional powers is not solely about material interests or strategic dominance; it also has deep bilateral roots in the region's identity, norms, and social perceptions.

As noted earlier, the competition between Türkiye and the UAE in Somalia exemplifies how international relations are shaped by factors beyond mere power politics. Another significant aspect of this example is that it encompasses cultural, historical, and ideological factors that influence the behaviour and decision-making of the actors involved, within the framework of the conceptual approach presented above. One of the key findings is the identification of how Türkiye's engagement in Somalia, rooted in its historical ties to the Ottoman Empire and its Muslim identity, has evolved into strong mutual relations through humanitarian aid, infrastructure projects, and soft power diplomacy.

4.2 DISCUSSION OF RESULT Identity and perceptions

Türkiye seeks to cultivate a strong perception of Somalia by emphasizing its historical ties to the Ottoman Empire and its Muslim identity (Kavas, 2018). Within this framework, as Aras and Akpinar (2017) argue, Türkiye aims to build a partnership grounded in a shared Muslim identity by leveraging these historical ties, especially in Somalia (137-158). Similarly, Doğan (2020), notes that one of the main elements of Türkiye's soft power strategy in Somalia is to evoke the Ottoman period and highlight its Muslim identity (87-108).

These strategies are seen as part of Türkiye's efforts to present itself as a friendly and allied Muslim nation in the region. Furthermore, the Ottoman Empire's interest in East Africa in the 16th century and its influence in the region provide historical depth to Türkiye's relationship with Somalia, playing a significant role in Turkey's current foreign policy and legitimizing its presence in Somalia.

Norms and values

Turkey promotes democratic values and norms of good governance in Somalia (Kurt, 2023). In this context, Türkiye's foreign policy toward Somalia aims to enhance stability and strengthen democratic governance systems in the region. Turkey's diplomatic presence in Somalia, including its embassy in Mogadishu, represents important steps toward realizing this goal. As one of the 44 Turkish embassies in Africa, the embassy in Mogadishu institutionalizes Türkiye's presence in Somalia and strengthens political ties between the two countries (Özkan, 2021). Moreover, the Turkish government's political support for the Somali government has significantly contributed to the democratization process in the country, particularly during Somalia's transition from a transitional government to a federal structure. Turkey has provided technical assistance for electoral processes in Somalia and, through election observation missions, has helped ensure that elections are conducted transparently and fairly. These Türkiye's efforts to promote good governance norms in Somalia have been supported by institutional capacity building projects. These projects, primarily implemented through the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA), aim not only to strengthen public administration and law enforcement but also to establish norms of transparency, accountability, and effective governance in Somalia (Kurt, 2023).

Additionally, Türkiye's diplomatic presence in Somalia plays a key role in reinforcing political relations between the two countries, as previously mentioned, the Turkish embassy in Mogadishu, serves as an important center for conducting diplomatic relations, and coordinating development and humanitarian aid projects in the region. This diplomatic presence is a crucial tool for Turkey to achieve its long-term strategic goals in Somalia (Özkan, 2021).

In light of this information, it can be argued that Türkiye's efforts to promote democratic values and good governance norms in Somalia contribute to peace and stability in the region. Turkey supports peace-building and counter-terrorism efforts within Somalia and collaborates with the Somali government in these processes. Undoubtedly, Türkiye's support for peace initiatives in Somalia enhances political stability and strengthens democratic governance systems (Kavas, 2018).

Furthermore, Türkiye's training and capacity building projects also contribute to the dissemination and entrenchment of democratic norms by increasing the capacity of local governments and civil society organizations.

Military relations

Analysing the military relations between Türkiye and Somalia is crucial for understanding the depth, scope, and impact of strategic cooperation between the two countries. Türkiye's military support and training in Somalia have a direct effect on regional security dynamics and enhance Somalia's national security capacity. These relations are viewed as part of

Türkiye's strategy to increase its influence in Africa; they also play a critical role in shaping regional and international politics.

Security cooperation

Turkey is strengthening its security cooperation through its military presence in Somalia. In this regard, the TURKSOM military training base, established in Mogadishu in 2017, plays a crucial role in training and equipping Somali security forces (Kavas, 2018). TURKSOM is one of Turkey's largest military training facilities abroad and was created to enhance the capacity and professionalism of the Somali army. The base is vital in bolstering Somalia's counter-terrorism capabilities, particularly in the fight against al-Shabaab, which presents serious challenges to the country. International support is essential for Somalia's battle against terrorism, and Turkey provides comprehensive training to Somali security forces through TURKSOM, enhancing their counter-terrorism skills (Görmez, 2023).

These comprehensive programs enable Somalia's security forces to operate more effectively and in a coordinated manner. Furthermore, Türkiye's military training assistance contributes to achieving Somalia's long-term security and stability goals (Kavas, 2018). Turkey collaborates with other international actors to create a comprehensive security network, effectively addressing Somalia's security needs (Smith and Ahmed, 2021).

Türkiye's military presence in Somalia reinforces the relationship of trust between the two countries and enhances the Somali people's positive perception of Turkey (Özkan, 2021).

Defense and security agreements

The Maritime Security Agreement between Türkiye and Somalia, signed in February 2024 for duration of ten years, aims to significantly strengthen defense and economic cooperation between the two countries. The agreement grants Türkiye full authority to control and secure Somalia's territorial waters and enables it to undertake tasks such as monitoring maritime security operations, assisting in rebuilding Somalia's navy, and combating illegal fishing activities.

Under the agreement, Turkish naval forces will contribute to regional security by patrolling the region's territorial waters and coastline to help Somalia combat terrorism, piracy, and illegal fishing. This comprehensive security assistance seeks to enhance the country's coastal security, develop its maritime resources, and contribute to the protection of Somalia's national independence and border security.

Under the Maritime Security Agreement, Turkey and Somalia have agreed to organize joint naval exercises and exchange information and experiences related to maritime security. Another significant aspect of the agreement is the cooperation in rebuilding and modernizing the Somali navy by the Turkish Naval Forces Command. By strengthening the Somali navy through training and equipment, Turkey is helping Somalia ensure its maritime security. Additionally, the agreement aims to ensure the security of maritime trade routes in the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea region while increasing the economic benefits derived from Somalia's marine resources. In this way, Turkey promotes the sustainable use of Somalia's maritime resources and provides technical and logistical support to Somalia in this respect (Yılmaz, 2024).

Economic relations and infrastructure projects

Türkiye has strengthened its economic presence in Somalia through development and infrastructure projects, significantly contributing to the country's economic development and stability. These projects provide not only short-term humanitarian aid but also support the long-term sustainable development goals of the Somali population. The modernization of

Mogadishu Airport is one of the most tangible examples of Türkiye's development initiatives in Somalia. Other significant Turkish development projects in Somalia include the construction of hospitals, schools, and roads. Türkiye aims to improve the quality of health services by establishing modern hospitals and health centers in the country.

These educational projects positively influence the young population's perception of Türkiye and strengthen the cultural ties between the two countries (Smith and Ahmed, 2021). As part of developing commercial relations between the two countries, Turkish construction companies are undertaking important infrastructure projects in Somalia, including roads, bridges, ports, and other critical elements. Türkiye and Somalia have signed several agreements to enhance mutual economic cooperation. The first initiative was the Türkiye-Somalia Business Forum organized by Deik within the framework of the "Friends of Somalia Conference," which has fostered mutual economic relations since that period (Deik, 2024).

These agreements facilitate the flow of trade and investment between the two countries and ensure the development of economic relations within an institutional framework. The trade agreements provide opportunities for Turkish companies to invest in Somalia and support economic development projects, thereby strengthening economic ties and helping Somalia achieve its sustainable development goals (Kaya, 2024).

4.3 DYNAMICS AND MOTIVATIONS BEHIND TURKIYE'S SECURITY POLICY IN SOMALIA

Türkiye has very strong historical relations with Somalia dating back to the 16th century. At the same time, there are common religious and socio-cultural similarities between the people of the two countries.

Turkey's comprehensive humanitarian and development aid policy toward Somalia, which has been initiated in 2011, makes a significant contribution to the deepening of Türkiye-Somalia relations (Ozkan – Orakci, 2015). All these factors paved the way for Turkey to develop strategic security cooperation with this country.

In addition, the lack of colonial history of Türkiye in Africa, and the newly evolving Afro-

Eurasian identity of Türkiye are contributing factors to the development of Turkey's security policy toward Somalia.

Even though the Western powers and institutions have provided financial and military support to Somalia since 1993, they have not achieved establishing permanent peace and security in the country.

Somalia has a unique place in world politics which is very close to strategically important points in the region including Bab al-Mandeb Strait, the Gulf of Aden, the Indian Ocean, and the Red Sea. Somalia is located at the oil transit point of the Middle East countries.

4.4 DEMOGRAPHIC SITUATION

The following are demographic variables that were considered during the research. They include gender distribution, age distribution, education, marital status, religion, and level of income and the socio economic exposure of the respondents.

4.5 GENDER DISTRIBUTION

The table below present the sex distribution of respondent in the sample size.

Table 1: Shows the gender distribution of respondent in the study area

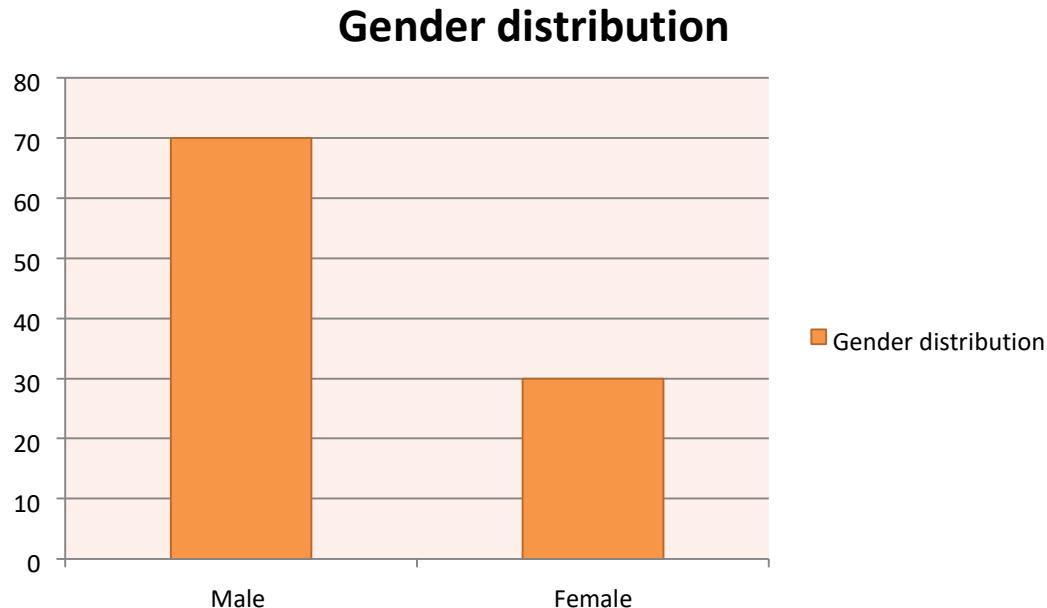
Sex	No. of Respondents	Percentages
Male	14	70 %
Female	6	30 %
Total	20	100%

Source: Survey Result, April 2025

From the above table, it is true that male respondents dominated the female respondents. Few women were seen and interviewed in the study area in the sample area. It can also be noticed that more men were interviewed in the office headquarter than the branch offices. Only 30% were women and all the 70% were men.

The above information is interpreted below in the form of a bar chart.

Figure 1: show the gender percentage distribution of respondent in the study area



Source: Survey Result, April 2025

4.6 AGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

The table below shows the age distribution of the respondent in the form of age bracket, from 18 years onto 60 years.

Table 2: Show the Age Distribution of Respondents in the study area

Age Bracket	No. Of Respondents	Percentage (%)
18 ----- 30	4	20%
31----- 40	8	40%
41----- 50	6	30%
51----- 60	2	10%
Total	20	100%

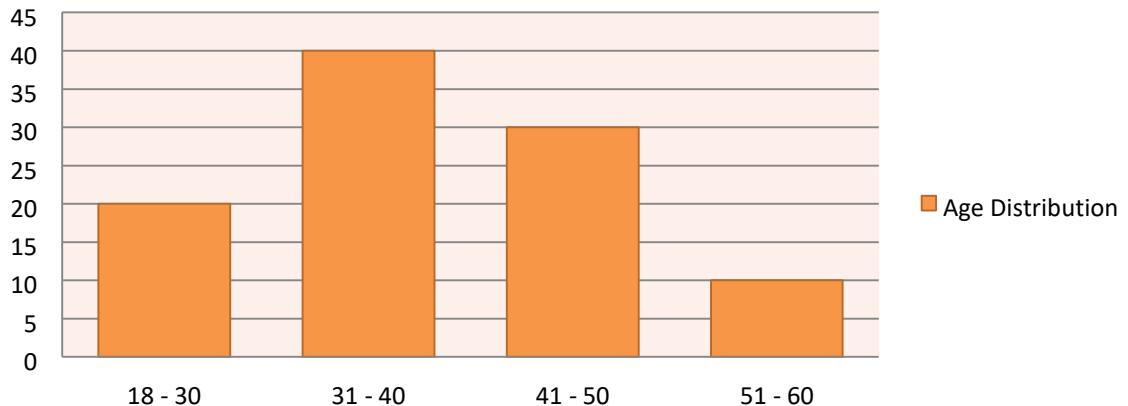
Source: Survey Result, April 2025

The table above shows that 40% of the respondents fall within the age ranges from 31 to 40 years, while 30% respondents are in the age range of 41 to 50 years. 20% of the respondents fall within the age range of 18 to 30 years, also 10% of the respondents were found within the age range from 51 to 60 years.

The information above is interpreted below in the form of a bar chart

Figure 2: Show the Age Distribution of Respondents in the study area

Age Distribution



Source: Survey Result, April 2025

4.7 RELIGIOUS DISTRIBUTION

The table below shows the distribution of respondent's religion in the study area of the sample size.

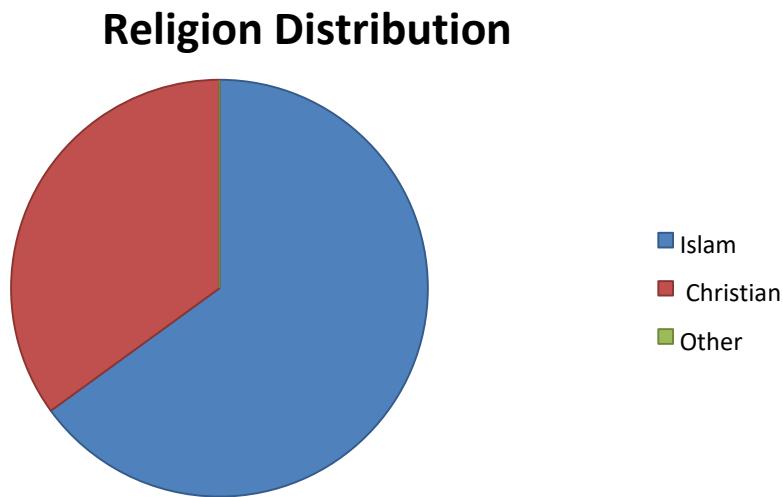
Table 3: Show the percentage distribution of respondent religion

Religion	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
Islam	16	80%
Christian	4	20%
Other	0	0%
Total	20	100%

Source: Survey Result, April 2025

From the table above, the reader can see that, majority of the respondents were Muslims. 80% of the respondents were Muslims and the remaining 20 % were Christians. One can able to know that respondents don't recognize other religion. As typical example for any Suwannee or Turkish, they believe in just Islam and Christianity.

The following information is shown in a pie chart below

Figure 3: Show the percentage distribution of respondent religion

Source: Survey Result, April 2025

4.8 TIES AND AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES

In May 2010, the Somali and Turkish governments signed a military training agreement, in keeping with the provisions outlined in the Djibouti Peace Process. Enforcement of the pact officially began in November 2012. Outlining training, technical and scientific cooperation, the treaty includes joint-service exercises between both national militaries and exchanges of delegations and personnel. Additionally, the agreement includes provisions for the mutual exchange of information vis-a-vis military history, publications and museology.

In October 2013, Somalia's federal Cabinet endorsed an agreement with the Turkish firm AlBayrak to manage the Port of Mogadishu for a 20-year period. According to the Prime Minister's Office, the deal was secured by the Ministry of Ports and Public Works, and also assigns Al-Bayrak responsibility for rebuilding and modernizing the port. In September 2014, the Federal Government of Somalia officially delegated management of the Mogadishu Port to Al-Bayrak.

In February 2014, Somali Army Chief of Staff Brigadier General Dahir Adan Elmi signed a follow-up military agreement in Mogadishu with a delegation from the Turkish Ministry of Defense. The pact stipulates that the government of Turkey will soon launch a training regimen in Somalia for a portion of the Somali National Army. Some SNA soldiers will also receive training in Turkey.

In January 2015, Foreign Affairs Minister of Somalia Abdirahman Duale Beyle and a Turkish delegation signed a bilateral treaty on new development projects that are scheduled to be implemented in Somalia. Among the agreements was a protocol stating that the new Digfer Hospital in Mogadishu would be jointly operated. The accord stipulates that the institution will be funded for its first five years by the Turkish Ministry of Health, which will likewise provide professional specialists.

In May 2015, the Ministry of Commerce and Industrialization of Somalia signed an agreement with the Turkish company PGM Inspection. The treaty delegates management of the ministry's new quality assurance system on imported and exported products to the firm. In September 2017, a Turkish military base was formally inaugurated in Mogadishu. Over 10,000 Somali soldiers were to be trained at the

facility. At the date of its construction, it was the largest overseas military facility built and managed by Turkey.

4.9 THE BENEFIT OF SOMALIA IN THE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP WITH TÜRKİYE

Turkish FDI in Somalia does not only contribute to economic growth but also creates new job opportunities. According to Nor and Masron (2018), Türkiye's investments in Somalia are expected to create new jobs, bring new technologies to the country, teach new skills to the domestic workers, enrich the private sector, develop the economic infrastructure of the country and provide adequate corporate social responsibility. Furthermore, they revealed that Turkish FDI in Somalia possibly would lead to conflict reduction and peace building. Somali government's recent economic reforms are considerably aimed at creating an environment which supports and attracts foreign investments.

Accordingly, Türkiye might be interested in Somalia's non-processed natural resources. This may currently seem as a shallow idea due to Türkiye's humanitarian aid championship in Somalia. Yet, the economy is considered, even by Turkish officials, central to Türkiye policy in Somalia. From there, it can be emphasized that Türkiye is strategically interested in Somalia's natural gas and oil reserves in the future.

Türkiye's economic engagement in Somalia is motivated by three main interests. Firstly, finding an expanded export market for Turkish products is considered one of the main foreign policy objectives of Türkiye. Secondly, as Türkiye is now considered the 19th largest economy in the world (WordData, 2022), it utilizes its relations with Somalia to orient itself as a regional economic power. This is reflected by its sustained focus on expanding its trade ties with Somalia.

Türkiye's Economic Interests in Somalia

Economic growth is favorably impacted by export expansion to foreign markets (Beckerman, 1997). Additionally, it is argued that trade openness has positive effects on economic growth (Yucel, 2009).

Based on these conclusions, it is easier to underline that the growth Türkiye's economy has been making for the last two decades created the need to find new export markets. Thus, Africa has been generally considered a favorable destination for Turkish exporters and investors. In East Africa, Somalia strategically represented the best market for its exports due to the economy which was underdeveloped and nonindustrialized. The general fact that Tepeciklioglu (2017) argued about Türkiye's economic interests in Africa applies to Turkish interests in Somalia. She argued that Turkish exporters, in their search for alternative export markets, are considering Africa to have the potential to meet their economic interests. The economy played an equally important role in Türkiye's developing relationship with Somalia (Cannon, 2019). Yet, it cannot be ignored that the regional power rivalry between Türkiye and Gulf states in the Horn of Africa has also been critical, in some way, in

Türkiye's Somalia economic policies. Additionally, Türkiye's ambition to re-orient itself in global politics is one of the factors that drive its substantial engagement in Africa (Ozkan 2012). Türkiye, in its huge economic investments in Somalia, formulated its policy to compete with the rival regional powers like the UAE and Saudi Arabia.

4.10 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER

The Federal Government of Somalia was later established on August 20, 2012, representing the first permanent central government in the country since the start of the conflict. The following month, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud was elected as the new government's first President. The election was welcomed by the Turkish authorities, who re-affirmed Turkey's continued support for Somalia's government, its territorial integrity and sovereignty.

The relations between the present-day territories of Somalia and Turkey date back to the Middle Ages. The Ajuran Empire and Adal Sultanate maintained good trade and military relations with the Ottoman Empire.

The growing economic relations, together with the security partnership, and the expectations from the fruits of the last decade's efforts will necessitate moving the current cooperative relationship to a new level of strategic partnership. Turkey's economic-focused foreign policy towards Africa will, and should, never overlook the geopolitically and strategically important state of Somalia which might complement its interests in the wider Horn of Africa region and Africa in general as well.

On the other hand, Somalia should build its expectations from this partnership on the foundations of good faith, mutual interest and its potential to craft strategically better relations and fulfil the responsibility towards Türkiye; but the dynamic political and security developments in the country and the Horn of Africa region require very cautious planning of the kind of partnership required to move to the strategic partnership level.

5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Though Turkey's first diplomatic mission in Somalia was opened in 1979 it was closed in 1991 due to the beginning of the civil war. The diplomatic mission was reopened in

November 2011 but the largest complex of Turkey's diplomatic mission abroad was opened in 2016 in Mogadishu with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's participation.

After Turkish President Erdoğan's first visit to Somalia with a large delegation from the political, business, and art circles in 2011, the AK Party government initiated the biggest humanitarian aid campaign along with the Turkish non-governmental organizations to help the victims who were deeply affected by famine and drought in Somalia. Turkey has spent more than 1 billion dollars on its humanitarian activities. Turkey's humanitarian policy toward Somalia has broader dimensions including establishing schools, hospitals, government buildings, supporting the local peoples' business initiatives, providing scholarships, and training police and soldiers.

5.1 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

From the research findings, Turkey has very strong historical relations with Somalia dating back to the 16th century. At the same time, there are common religious and socio-cultural similarities between the people of the two countries. Turkey's comprehensive humanitarian and development aid policy toward Somalia, which has been initiated in 2011, makes a significant contribution to the deepening of Turkey-Somalia relations.

According to the research findings, Somalia has a unique place in world politics which is very close to strategically important points in the region including Bab al-Mandeb Strait, the Gulf of Aden, the Indian Ocean, and the Red Sea. Somalia is located at the oil transit point of the Middle East countries. Moreover, it lies at a very important geographical point for world trade. Due to its geopolitical importance in the world, global and regional actors have been actively involved in politics in the Horn of Africa. For instance, the US, France, Italy, and Japan, have military bases in Djibouti. China also has a logistical base in Djibouti. Moreover, the UAE has a military base in Eritrea and actively supports Somaliland financially and militarily.

The findings as explain how Turkey's security involvement in Somalia has increased its global visibility and prestige and also it have led to the emergence of an important geopolitical actor in African politics. In this regard, the regional actors including the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt have been more actively engaging with the region and working against Turkey in the Horn of Africa. Turkey's defense industry has been growing significantly. While Turkey was highly dependent on the West until 2005 in the fields of defense and security, it today manufactures most of its weapons including drones, helicopters, naval vessels, rocket missiles, etc.

It also shows how Turkey has been developing and implementing its security policy rather than a Western-oriented security policy. Looking for new markets, selling its new defense industrial products in non-Western markets, and cooperating with non-western actors in different fields have become among the most important strategic objectives of the ruling AK Party governments.

The findings also shows that, there are four important forces and dynamics driving Turkey's foreign and security policy, namely the legacy of the Ottoman State, the geographical position of Turkey, the geopolitical challenges, and the official ideology of Turkey (Oğuzlu, 2015, 228). First, the legacy of the Ottoman State has been influencing Turkey's foreign and security policy. The Ottoman State had a multi-ethnic identity and its borders extended to very vast swathes of geography including the Balkans, Eastern Europe, Caucasus, the Middle East, and Africa. Whenever there is a potential conflict or security crisis in the former territories of the Ottoman State, Turkey plays a proactive role in preventing the conflicts to sustain peace and security in these regions and help the civilians who have been affected by conflicts.

5.2 CONCLUSION

Türkiye has shown a commitment to its Somalia policy. Its economic relation with Somalia has been stipulated by its humanitarian and development aid efforts. Since 2011, Türkiye has been actively involved in Somalia's economic and political arena. It has strived to increase its trade and investments in Somalia. Moreover, the trade volume between the two countries has been increasing tremendously.

Turkish investments are widely seen in the construction, health, education, finance and service sectors. Plans and agendas to widen investments in financial services are in place, and this will create a breakthrough in Somalia's finance sector.

Due to its geopolitical and geostrategic importance, the Horn of Africa has recently become a focal point for international actors and a field of competition. Somalia is undoubtedly one of the regional countries most affected by this international competition. The main reason for this situation is that Somalia has not yet completed its social recovery and state-building processes due to the disintegration and civil war that began in 1991. Geographically located in the Horn of Africa, Somalia occupies a strategic position controlling the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, boasting an approximately 3,000 km coastline. Given its

geographical location and strategic characteristics, it is one of the primary countries in the region where regional and international actors seek to establish partnerships.

This study explains that Turkey has implemented a wider humanitarian aid policy that aims to sustain long-lasting peace and security in Somalia. Also, Turkey's security policy has been a component of Turkey's broader humanitarian and development aid policy in Somalia. This research emphasizes that Turkey's historical identity and its sociocultural identity have been determining factors in establishing a long-term-strategic security partnership with Somalia. At the same time, Turkey's economic and geopolitical interests in Somalia and the East African region can be shown among the important factors shaping Turkey's Somali security policy. This inquiry also argues that Turkey's soft and hard power policies in Somalia prove that Turkey has long-term strategic plans to stay in Africa.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The relationship between Türkiye and Somalia dates to the 16th century when the Ottoman Empire used to support and cooperate with Muslim states against the Portuguese and Abyssinian Empires. The aim of that relation seemed defending Ottoman Empire's security and economic interests in both Horn of Africa and the Arabian Peninsula.

The Türkiye - Somalia bilateral relation has been resumed when then Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan visited Mogadishu in August 2011. Turkey has recently opened a military training facility in Mogadishu. Since then, Turkey's security engagement in Somalia created some sort of concern for the former actors in Mogadishu's political arena. Almost all studies about this relation explore Turkey's economic and humanitarian contributions to Somalia.

Below are some recommendations of the study:

- As Somalia has multiple and complex security problems, the Government and the security sector of Türkiye should understand the main dynamics affecting Somalia's security is vital for building lasting peace and security in Somalia. As there are several major reasons and dynamics destabilizing security in Somalia.
- In order for Türkiye to become a permanent and effective actor in Somalia, the factors affecting the security of that country must be carefully analysed. Due to the country's very important geopolitical position both in the region and in world politics, as many international and regional actors are in competition to the same country.
- Turkey should take active steps to strengthen its strategic relations with regional and sub-regional organizations in the continent. Turkey should try hard to be accredited to regional African organizations such as the Economic Community of Western African States (ECOWAS), and the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) and not only Somalia.
- The government of Türkiye should put in place new diplomatic strategies as Türkiye's modern engagement in Somalia has started since 1979, the bilateral relation between the two countries should be deepened to a good level. Turkish domestic policy and the traditional western oriented foreign policy should be key factors in boosting Türkiye's Africa policy.
- Turkey's should broaden its humanitarian aid policy in Somalia not only to provide emergency aid but also implemented developmental aid in the country which will pave the way for emerging lasting peace and security.

- The shape of the future economic relationship should be built upon the potential of the Somali market. The Somali side should use this potential in its favour to develop cooperation mechanisms and better future prospects.
- The current challenges faced by Turkish business communities in Somalia are described as security, political instability, and legal challenges. This triangle of challenges should be mitigated and resolved in order to look forward to further bilateral mutual economic engagements.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

I am a post graduate student of the Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone, in Masters of Education and Leadership. I am carrying out this research as part of the requirement for the award of a Masters of Education and Leadership.

This questionnaire is aimed at evaluating the implementation of the free quality school education in Freetown.

This questionnaire is purely for academic work and I therefore ask for your maximum cooperation with assurance that information provided here will be treated with outmost confidentiality and anonymity.

SECTION A: Demographic Information

Name:

Gender: Male [] , Female []

Educational Background: Illiterate []. Primary []. Secondary []. Tertiary [].

Marital Status: Single []. Marriage []. Divorce [].

Age Bracket: 20 - 30 years [], 31 - 40 years [], 41 – 50 years [], 51 – 60 years []

Religious status: Muslim []. Christian []. Other [].

Occupation of the Respondents Years of working

SECTION B: Research Questions

Does Türkiye's have any Security Interests in Somalia?

What is the economic relations and infrastructure projects between Turkey and Somalia?

Did Turkey stand as Somalia's mediator to resolve conflict within the region?

Did Turkey play any role as a security actor for Somalia?