

Puntland's Path to Durable Democracy and the Challenges of Having Inclusive Dialogue and Gun Control

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Abstract

In the mid of 2023, the State of Puntland witnessed a historic landmark of holding democratic elections since in 1969. Puntland is a state in northeastern the Federal Republic of Somalia, and occupies one-third of the country, is a home to almost four million people. Since its founding in 1998, there has been four peacefully transferring of power in 2005, 2009, 2014 and 2019, and none of those elections were in a form of popular elections. Hitherto, Puntland has upheld democracy as a fundamental principle. However, its democratic process seems to be at a halt, even though the local council elections were held in thirty-three districts out of fifty districts including the capital city—Garoowe due to different circumstances. Hence, this paper seeks to explore Puntland's Path to Durable Democracy and the Challenges of having Inclusive Dialogue and Gun Control. The study uses descriptive qualitative research methods through data generation techniques to analyze literature and relevant secondary sources—reports, executive orders, declarations to obtain information and detailed understanding of the topic as a method of data collection. The result indicates that Puntland's democratic process can be endured if the heavy weapons in the hands of ordinary people are strictly regulated and controlled and the government embraces a positive attitude towards the acceptance of constructive criticism by opening doors for politicians, intellectuals, civil society, media and marginalized groups to ensure inclusivity leaving no one behind.

Keywords

Inclusivity, Dialogue, Democratization, Elections, Gun Control

1. Introduction

In this contemporary world, the politicians' criticism in public and/or on social

media platforms is associated with their inappropriate vacillations. Such act of criticism is referred as a corrective action and it's a kind of constitutional rights exercise. Democracy is a process relating to the protection of constitutional values; and therefore, in post-colonial Africa, most political rulers have sought to establish political systems inspired by the Western model of Democracy aimed at achieving national integration, unity and development for their peoples. (Mazadou, 2022). Its essence as a process is not much different from the Islamic concept of consultation (Shura) and the Somali word of "Wadatashi" (Abdullahi, 2007). Democracy involves popular control over decision making and equality between citizens in the exercise of that control. Popular control over decision making is achieved through inclusive political participation and representation in democratic institutions (International IDEA, 2013).

Somalia is more comparable with that of many other African countries: colonial administration, de-colonization and independence, one-party and multiparty politics, civilian and military governments and dramatic social, political and economic transformations (Ssereo, 2003). The country has embarked upon a parliamentary civilian political system as the country has experienced the first African democracy and four general elections were held based on a clan multi-party system in the first decade (Ylonen & Zahorik, 2017). Unfortunately, in 1969, the military overthrew the elected government and ruled the country for 21 years, followed by a 10-year statelessness era between the 1990s and 2000, and since then Somalia has not conducted one-person, one-vote elections (Elmi, 2021). These events have contributed to the deterioration of the political climate, the accentuation of personal, political, gave way to lies, despotism, slander, and hateful or even tribal discourse or divisions, and the maintenance and radicalization of the dictatorial regimes that emerged from the single parties with no national scope (Mazadou, 2022).

Puntland, locates in northeast of Somalia, was established in 1998 at a clan conference held in Garowe city through locally organized consultative assemblies led by prominent elites after experiencing eight years of turmoil and protracted civil unrest in the Republic of Somalia. Its formation moved from a peace agreement signed after a grand clan conference, to a transitional charter, a social contract—to a constitution, a referendum and elections (Accord, 2010). Puntland is parliamentary state with sixty-six (66) members of parliaments selected by traditional clan elders known as Isimoh upon a regional basis, for example, 21 seats for Bari, 11 seats for Sanaag, 10 seats for Mudug, 10 for Sool, 9 for Nugal and 5 for Bohodle District. In 2001, the Parliament approved a draft constitution to replace the national charter. The new constitution reaffirmed that Puntland is a democratic state where people elect their leaders through direct elections (Musa, Horst, & Aden, 2023). Instead of putting the agenda into forward during the first government's timespan, Puntland sailed out to other direction—a clan-based electoral system, of which the clan-chiefdoms are the key elite players for the political landscape.

Generally, Puntland's agenda for multiparty political system and free elections has been a major but elusive objective since 1998. The first experiment of de-

mocratization was initiated in 2012 by the Faroole government but was quickly impeded by a perception of lack of fair and transparent election process, which resulted in violent confrontations (Jibrell, 2015). The second attempt coxed by Mr. Said Abdullahi Deni, the current President of Puntland, in the mid of 2023, the State of Puntland witnessed a historic landmark of holding democratic elections in thirty-three districts out of fifty districts across Puntland since 1969, despite politically perceived as one-party programme. As a result, this was coupled with violent Election Day attempts to prevent the election from going forward, standoffs with opposition militia in Garowe that resulted in the delay, and eventual cancellation, of local elections in three districts of Nugaal region namely, Garowe, Dangorayo, and Godob Jiraan, and clashes that resulted in the deaths of 30 people (Somali Public Agenda, SABIBI Institute, & PDRRC, 2023). The major factor contributing to Puntland's inability to transition to direct elections is lacking political commitment which produces suspicion as a ploy to extend their time in power (Musa, Horst, & Aden, 2023).

All most, the aforementioned obstacles could merely be attributed to outright rejection and trivialization of constructive criticism of the opponents, turning a deaf air to the advices, in a good faith, from the prominent and elite people: elders and CSOs and public in general. On the other hand, if the people who were thought to be traitors were dealt with harshly, they would probably have access to plenty of weapons and be well-armed. If so, how Puntland's delicate democratic values would be upheld? Hence, this study aims to explore Puntland's path to durable democracy and the Challenges of having Inclusive Dialogue and Gun Control serving as indispensable safeguards for the long-term viability of the political system.

1.1. Puntland's Path to Durable Democracy and Theoretical Background

This study is based with the framework of theory of participation and cultural system theory which helps in shedding light in understanding how inclusivity is fundamental in democratization process and political institutions legitimacy. In the maximalist model, democracy is seen as a more balanced combination of representation and participation, where attempts are made to maximize participation (Dufasne & Patriarche, 2011). Subsequently, among the legal frameworks in place including *Universal Declaration on Human Rights (1948)* states that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights". According to Elmi (2016) as cited in (*Somali Constitution, 1960*), states that in terms of rights, at least in theory, Somalia's first constitution, enacted in 1960, guaranteed civil, political and social/economic rights to all citizens. In part two of the constitution, citizens have the right to vote, the right to public office, the right to reside and travel freely in any part of the territory of the state, and the right to political association. In addition, citizens have the "freedom of religion, thought and to own property". the Article 12 of Puntland constitution 2009 declares the equality of the people: 1) Everyone is equal before the law; 2) No person shall be discriminated against on the basis of color, religion, birth, nationality, property,

belief, political affiliation, language, or race; 3) The Constitution shall safeguard the rights of minorities. Likewise, the law no. 65 of Puntland labor, Article Thirty-One: “Employment Procedure” ascertains that every business corporation, agency or industrial establishment to which this Code is applicable is required to make sure that at least one of every fifteen employees working for him/it, of whatever level, is a member of the underprivileged groups such as Gabooye or Tumaal in Puntland. Because the Somalia political system is based on a formula known as 4.5 (Four main clans and a clan perceived as minority) and guided by the clan elders who has the power to nominate MPs for their respective inner-circle of the clan in cyclic model of power-sharing.

1.2. Overview of Puntland’s Democratization Process

Puntland, a semi-autonomous state, established in 1998, through a community conference that gathered the elites in Garowe, political system traces back to that of 1960s of the Republic of Somalia: clan-based parliamentary multiparty democratic system. A political system that clan-democracy acted as a framework for dialogue and non-violent conflict management and resolution (Ssereo, 2003). The elders select representatives who in turn elect officials who are not accountable to the public (Crisis Group, 2024).

One of the noteworthy results from the conference established with Puntland was that the delegates agreed to formulate and adopt a three-years charter with three key objectives: living in peace and stability, being a part of a future federal government for Somalia and instituting a democratic system in Puntland within the tenure of the first government, with 9 ministries and para-ministerial agencies.

By 2001, the legislature tried to extend the government’s term by three years, infuriating the public and igniting a political crisis that led to chaos, civil strife, displacement, and armed clashes (PDRC, 2015). After years of unrest, a political census reached by the conflicting parties, and General Mohamoud Mussa Hersi aka “Adde”, was elected for president in 2005 who commenced drafting a new constitution replacing the Charter of 1998. During Adde’s reign, Puntland Democratization made no progress and stagnated because of military leadership and the deficiency of politics (SIDRA, 2016).

On January 8, 2009 was elected the third president for Puntland, Dr. Abdu-rahman Sheikh Mohamed Mohamoud (Faroole). Within that year, the government stepped into a new policy: creating a flag, national anthem and emblem for the State of Puntland, the first even a party of greater Somalia possesses a symbol after Somaliland, the secessionist region, and nominated an ad hoc committee of five people from the government and civil society namely, 1) Dr. Jimale¹; 2) Mr. Gaashan²; 3) Jama Kadiye³; 4) Kalakaan⁴ and Halimo⁵; establishing the first

¹Hon.Dr. Abdi Hassan Jimale (Ph.D.), State Minister of Puntland Presidency for Democratization and Federal Affairs.

²Hon. Mohamed Farah Hersi Gaashan, State Minister of Puntland Presidency for Good Governance.

³Mr. Jama Kadiye Elmi, Iconic Poet in Somalia.

⁴Mohamed Musse Mohamed Kalakaan, Youth Groups (MUDAN Youth Network) Representative.

⁵Mrs. Halimo Ali Biyood, Women Groups Representative.

Transitional Puntland Electoral Committee, the constitution (2012) and other key ordinary laws, including Puntland Local Elections Law (June, 2012), Political Associations Acts (July, 2012) and Districts Electoral Law (August, 2012) followed by the registration of political associations in the same year.

Consequently, on July 14, 2013, Puntland was due to elect local councilors in its first democratic election since the 1969 elections across Somalia. However, the first serious attempt by President Faroole in 2012 was met with armed resistance (Musa, Horst, & Aden, 2023). Just one day before people went to the polls, the election was indefinitely postponed in the face of violence, protests, and attacks in towns, including Qardho and Galkayo, which reportedly resulted in the deaths of at least three people (WardheerNews, 2014).

On January 8, 2014, the Fourth President, Dr. Abdiweli Mohamed Ali Gaas was elected through the traditional election. He resumed the democratic process nominating TPEC-II with new commissioners and has not contributed much to the process (Warsame, 2023).

The fifth president, Mr. Saed Abdullahi Deni was elected on January 8, 2019, and he renominated TPEC-III, and that, in October 2021, successfully conducted elections in three districts namely, Eyl, Ufeyn, and Qardho districts. Subsequently, on 25 May, 2022, voters went to the polls to elect their district councils, in what were the first state-wide direct elections since Puntland's establishment in 1998. Of the seven political parties that participated, the ruling Kaah party won the largest number of seats (286 out of 774). Seventeen per cent of seats were won by female candidates, down from the 26 per cent of women who won seats in the 2021 local elections (GSoD, 2023).

However, the period before and after Puntland's local government elections on May 25, 2023, was marked by controversies and disputes over a range of issues, including constitutional amendments, and the expansion of the number of recognized political parties from three to eight. Followed by absence of readiness for dialogue and worsening security situation when oppositions deployed clan militias at the vicinity of Puntland's State palace in Garoowe, the capital city. Due to an anger at the proposed change turned violent in June 2023, when clashes between an opposition militia and government forces in the state capital, Garowe, killed more than 25 people (Crisis Group, 2024). After On June 16, 2023, a para-military named Danab Puntland Commando Force issued a dictum letter, posted on their Facebook page, entitled "warning", "We, Danab, informing the members of parliament that they cannot sit for the amendment of the constitution, supporting a term extension for the outgoing president". Consequently, regional forces and fighters (Danab Commando Force) loyal to the opposition fought fierce street battles in Garowe, Puntland's capital, because Deni sought to make changes to the constitution (Hassan, 2023). Because of clan ties supersede loyalties to the government, government trained armies might pose a threat to the government during political unrest.

Following strikes maneuver of the politicians, CSOs, elites, entitled elders, and even the grassroot society like mothers who came out protesting against the

constitutional amendments and wide-ranging changes to electoral laws without any form of public consultation and transparent process. Then, the two major opposition political associations, namely Horseed⁶ and Mideeye⁷ and other political figures filed challenges to this amendment with Puntland's Constitutional Court, but the court declined to hear the cases before the vote, without providing a reason why. The opposition's distrust deepened as the government forged ahead without pausing to hear out its critics (Crisis Group, 2024). According to Garoweonline reports that the President Deni came under scathing criticism from President Hasan Shiekh Mohamed of the Federal Republic of Somalia calling for "Urgent dialogue and consensus" to solve "outstanding differences". Subsequently, according to Aljazeera English (2023), Somalia's Prime Minister Hamza Abdi Barre issued an urgent appeal for the rivals to reconcile their differences through dialogue "rather than the barrel of a gun". Likewise, the Sharmake, posted on his twitter, saying that "Puntland appears to be poised between the threat of impasse & the promise of a genuine roadmap towards 8 January. The practice of blending election & extension has been a highly combustible mixture. Without dilemma a conference to reach consensus must be held for all stakeholders"⁸. "Puntland's CSOs platform underscores that, PUNSAA strongly condemns the violence witnessed in the city and urges the intellectuals, traditional leaders and all the people of Puntland to join forces in resolving the security crisis in the capital"⁹.

In several times, the oppositions along with prominent people and CSOs proposed to the government of State of Puntland to come back to the table for political dialogue during and before the constitutional crisis and deadlocks on election schedule to reach a mutually acceptable political agreement. On contrary, TPEC announced that citizens will elect the president and parliamentarians directly in a one-person, one-vote election on February 25, 2024, thus, that it needs more time to register voters, conduct public awareness, and allow campaigning by the respective candidates. This is a change from the original plan for non-direct voting process scheduled to take place on January 8, but the opposition politicians have criticized the delay in the election date, saying that it is a threat to the stability of Puntland (SomaliSignal, 2023).

2. Methodology

This paper seeks to explore Puntland's Path to Durable Democracy and the Challenges of Having Inclusive Dialogue and Gun Control. In the first section focuses on the process of inclusive dialogue that would provide long-lasting democracy

⁶Horseed is member of Puntland Political Associations led by Mr. Mohamed Abdirahman Mohamed Faroole, the Current Minister of Ministry of Environment, the Former Director of Puntland's Maritime Police Force (son of former Puntland President, Dr. Abdirhaman Faroole).

⁷Mideeye is a one of the Political Associations of Puntland led by Gen. Asad Osman Abdullahi Daino, the former Puntland Security Force and the son of late Daino, Former PSF.

⁸Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke (June 17, 2023). A Twitter post quoted @OmarSharmake, Former Prime Minister of Federal Republic of Somalia in two times.

⁹Press release issued by Puntland Non-State Actors Associations (PUNSAA) on June 20, 2023).

since Puntland is unique from the rest of Somalia in terms of the engagement of the traditional elder and community at large. The second part's central axis is the existence of robust institutions and thirdly, the study casts light on how the weaponries dispersed in the hands ordinary citizens are catastrophically could sabotages the dilute democracy unless controlled and finally, to reflect the lessons learned from the local councils' elections that can be applied to other contexts of greater Somalia, in relation to the subjects of inclusivity, institution that can enforce rule of law and make the ordinary people disarmed and demilitarized to secure smoothly administering of government affairs. Hence, the study uses descriptive qualitative research methods as an approach in the form of written data from the object of research (Moleong, 2016). The data collected through data generation techniques to analyze literature and relevant secondary sources—reports, executive orders, declarations to obtain information and detailed understanding of the topic as a method of secondary data collection. Then, the researcher used the data analyzing technique known as pad referential method (metode padan referensial) in which the researcher to deal directly with the problems contained in the data to analyze (Sudaryanto, 2015). Lastly, this study adhered to ethical considerations and fully acknowledges the ethical issues as it involves human subjects. By virtue of that the researchers are in search of realizing public belief and scientific truth intending to generate innovations from the objects carried out and advance science.

3. Major Findings of the Study

This research paper discusses the Puntland's election paradigm shift and the risks associated with it, which should be critically addressed by taking an inclusive approach, reenforcing institutions and making the government the only with access to weapons holder.

3.1. Puntland's Democratic Legitimacy at Risk

After several months of public uproar and political unrest across the regions, President Deni's One-man-show politics led to unilaterally decide the cancellation of one-man, one-vote election for the parliamentarians and returned into the traditional way of Puntland electoral system, but minimized the political leeway of clan elders in choosing their respective member of parliament. In Somalia, and particularly, Puntland the clan elders are considered the most influential elites in culture and political life. Because, traditional elders have significant influence in the governance circles since they choose the members of Puntland's 66-member of parliaments (Yusuf, 2024). However, depriving the Puntland's entitled clan chiefdoms of their political prestige without paradigm shift into popular election, in somehow critiques with counter argument to the theoretical perspectives put forwarded by the political science scholars like, Parry (1977) who explained that "elites" could be regarded as "decision makers of the society whose power is not subject to control by any other body in the society". Where Robert Putman states that: "elite political culture may be defined as the

set of politically relevant beliefs, values, and habits of the most highly involved and influential participants in a political system.”

Such action shattered the citizens’ limited sense of faith in the inexperienced system and harmed the accountability and transparency mechanisms that had been steadily accumulating over time. Besides, the long-awaited dream of casting their votes by their will to elect a leader of their choice ended up with the re-election of the incumbent President, Mr. Deni, on January 8 who secured his second term election for the office, winning overwhelmingly vote of 45 out of 66 votes of Puntland’s House of the People in the third round. This makes the highest number of votes ever gained in Puntland’s elections. In this regard, it infers that Puntland’s democratic process seems to be at a halt, even though the local council elections held in thirty-three districts except some districts including the capital city—Garoowe. The reason for this is that the leaders of the so-called political parties neither motivated to mobilize the people for seeking votes because their political associations already inaugurated as political parties by the amended constitution, replacing the article 46—political parties (3) stipulates “In the first District Council election, of all the political associations participating, the three (3) who receive the majority of the votes shall be authorized as official political parties. After every second election, electoral competition shall be open for political associations”. Meaning that the top three political associations would become official political parties and eligible to contest the parliamentary election or any other future election. However, the amended constitution gives all the registered political associations the rights to be political parties. Besides, the political parties are beset by financial difficulties, lacking of public enthusiasms, with whom is to run for local councilor member because most mayoral positions of the districts’ local councilors tremendously taken by the Kaah—the incumbent President’s party. In addition, the government interventions are a major obstacle to the creation of vigorous atmosphere because some of the most influential people of political parties were nominated to top positions, such as ministers, director generals and so forth. For example, Mr. Junior Faroole, who was one the most obstinate oppositions prior to his nomination as a minister, in a PUNSAA-organized forum, stated that: “it is necessary to revise the election regulations and guarantee the transparency of the election because the political parties, not the Ministry of Interior, can decide how elections are conducted.” He added that re-registering voters would enable the government to reach a larger audience. On contrary, the Minister of Interior, Federal Affairs and Democratization, Mr. Abdi Farah Said, Aka Juha underlined that, “there is no need to re-register voters, if so, the people of Nugal must paid.” This is also elucidated that there is a budget limitation and donor fatigue.

3.2. Inclusive Political Dialogue

Inclusivity can be categorized as process and outcome inclusivity. “Process inclusivity” relates to the level of societal and political representation both in the preparatory and actual dialogue phases. Whereas “outcome inclusivity” refers to

the level of inclusiveness created by the national dialogue's outputs in the implementation phase (Planta et al., 2015). National dialogues are: "nationally owned political processes aimed at generating consensus among a broad range of national stakeholders in times of deep political crisis, in post-war situations or during far-reaching political transitions (Blunck et al., 2017)."

During the political impasse in Puntland, the government locked the doors for discussion, outrightly trivialized the constructive criticisms from civil society. As the result of such awkward behavior, PUNSAA released a Press Statement, stressing that, "the need for inclusivity, open dialogue, and collaboration among stakeholders to ensure the well-being and stability of Puntland" (GaroweOnline, 2023). Puntland leaders should consult widely with political parties and civil society to make sure they are on board addressing pressing problems before any future effort to adjust the electoral model (Crisis Group, 2024). For instance, the political parties demanded the government to solve number of issues including the reduction of number of local councilors per district, in which the Puntland local government act (Law no.7) categorize the local governments into three levels; grade A districts are the administrative centers of regions with 33 local council, grade B are categorized the medium towns with 27 councilors while small districts are graded into C with 21 members of councilors (Somali Dialogue Platform & PDRC, 2023).

In the light of above arguments, inclusive political dialogue could be considered as the best strategy to be made to revitalizing the Puntland's democratization process, build the trustworthiness and integrity in the system and sprit de-corps amongst the political parties, and of the government institutions: the judiciary and law enforcement agencies. Because, Puntland's relative peace is attributed to that deeply rooted open discussion and community dialogue, and to referencing such model whenever a political dispute emerges, with the help of experienced local facilitators from inside or outside of national dialogues to bring parties together to a position of consensus. Otherwise, if the participants are excluded from the process, the credibility and legitimacy of the process will be weakened. The establishment of social and political institutions and their normal functioning should promote civic values and civil society, tolerance and state-civil-military relations of co-operation. Because, inclusion is an ongoing process, and broad-based consultations are necessary if people are to feel they are represented in both the process and the outcomes of the dialogue (Emebet, Mehari, & Yohannes, 2021).

3.3. Weapon Diffusion and Security Threatens in Puntland

The problem of the uncontrolled spread of light weapons could be considered as major causes for instability and disorder in large parts of the developing world. The primary problem has been that the issue of light weapons cannot be completely delinked from an understanding of armed conflicts and terrorism (Behera, 2001). The public possession of weapons, and the presence of extremist groups are making Puntland's security breakable which made the holding of dem-

ocratic elections protracted (Warsame, 2023). It is frequently asserted that effective disarmament demobilization and reintegration (DDR) in conflict-afflicted states can help reduce the chances of conflicts resuming and act as a platform for economic, political and social development (Solomon & Ginifer, 2008). Yet there is no a single policy and/or act introduced to control the guns and explosive devices by Federal Republic of Somalia nor the State of Puntland, meaning that the peoples of Puntland could have all kinds of weapons. Despite the Federal Republic of Somalia has been UN arms embargo since the collapse of the central government in 1990 to the present, as shown below **Table 1** in summary by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute:

Table 1. Summary of UN arms embargo.

Year	SCR No.	Remarks
January 1992	733	Established an arms embargo in reaction to the ongoing conflict and deteriorating humanitarian situation.
July 2002	1425	Clarified the scope of the arms embargo, making clear that it prohibited the financing of arms acquisitions as well as the direct or indirect sale or supply of technical advice or military training.
December 2006	1725	Partially lifted the UN arms embargo.
November 2008	1844	Target entities that have violated the arms embargo or obstructed the delivery of humanitarian assistance to or in Somalia.
December 2009		Imposed an arms embargo on Eritrea, partly in response to reports that Eritrea had violated the arms embargo on Somalia.
March 2013	2093	Amended the restrictions and procedures related to arms supplies to the Somali Government while maintaining the embargo on arms supplies to non-state actors in the country.
	2111	Introduced an annex listing several categories of military equipment the supply. Such as Surface to Air Missiles; guns, howitzers and cannons with a caliber greater than 12.7 mm and their ammunition and components; mortars with a caliber greater than 82 mm; anti-tank guided weapons; charges and devices intended for military use containing energetic materials and weapons sights with a night vision capability.
March 2014	2142	Extended the provisions related to arms supplies to the Somali government until 25 October 2014.
October 2015	2182	Extended annually, until 17 Nov. 2023.

Thus, the State of Puntland is to understand the changed nature of conflicts as the country sails to democratization, a process that allows the people to act upon their will and exercise their constitutional rights to secure public choice, and hence, how would be possible to hold elections whilst the people are armed with heavy machine guns, sometimes powerful of those guns the state government possess?

Knowing that Puntland's security and law enforcement bodies have a low capacity for order-making, particularly when political differences arise. Because of the existence of ununified army units, notably, the three security forces recognized Puntland Constitution, namely: the military police known as Darvish; Puntland Police Forces, and, Puntland Custodial Corps as well as the other two internationally financed forces: Puntland Security Force (PSF) financed and trained by the USA and Puntland Marine Police Force (PMPF) Trained and financed by the UAE (Warsame, 2023).

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

Puntland's democracy would only be sustained in the sphere of inclusivity and absence of weaponry. Because, inclusivity is referred as the source of harmony, solidarity, and fraternity that helps the people to live in peace and love. On the other hand, the government could use inclusivity as a strategy to revitalize the democratization process by fostering the citizenries' confidence in the judiciary system, law enforcement agencies and electoral commission.

4.1. Conclusion

Despite Puntland being a democratic state remains a core value for every government, hitherto the findings elucidate the democratization process seems is at risk to fail not because the people do not want democracy but because lacking the mechanisms that characterize inclusivity, transparency and leadership stewardship. It appeared that the government is operating as authoritarian regime with an absolute power over state's momentous political decision. Besides, the president gives the impression that he is living in Ivory Towers taking unilateral decisions that may jeopardize ownership, and sow discord among the three organs of the government and alienate to oppositions. Additionally, the findings unearthed that the fragility and weakness of so-called opposition parties typifies that their political associations leaders ended up with dispute that led to dismantle of party structure, intruded and mixed into the government in lieu of positions such as ministers, directors and so forth. The findings also unveiled that the weapons are dispersed in the hands of society whose majority are unschooled pastoralist young people, having an access to procure every weapon regardless its detrimental effect and therefore, easily triggered to cause outbreak of violence and instability.

4.2. Recommendation

Based on the findings and conclusions, the study recommends the following key points for policy and for practice:

Puntland government should maintain political commitment of creating conducive environment. Such effort can be done by means of taking the lead to launch an all-inclusive state-wide dialogue to bring all prominent political and non-political elites to seek to solve any critical political issues on consensus such as amendments on the constitution and election laws, governing January 8 Elec-

tions, the allocation of local councilor seats per district and so forth.

The government should be ready to make genuine political outreach cultivating trust in public institutions: the judiciary system, and particularly Constitutional Court in political, disputes resolution that may arise during and after the elections.

Recognizing the need of regulatory legal frameworks on firearms to reduce easy access to heavy weapons, armed vehicles and machine guns mounted on vehicles.

To create a culture of gun safety through strengthened security and disarmament agenda and establishment of Agency for Alcohol, Firearms, and Explosives-AAFE as well as Puntland State House Office of Alcohol, Tobacco and Gun Violence Prevention.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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