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Greed, Grievances and Anarchy at Sea: *Human Security and Somali Piracy*

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Aaron Rees

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Abstract

In recent years there has been a dramatic upsurge in piracy off the Somali coast. In 2009 alone, there were 217 reported incidences of Somali piracy, with 857 seafarers being held hostage. This piracy clearly has significant ramifications for global security and development, and must therefore be addressed. It is often stated that piracy is little more than a 'symptom' of greater problems on land. However, current counter-piracy measures have largely been dominated by naval fixes, while failing to address the underlying issues driving piracy. This thesis adopts a human security framework to analyze the underlying economic, social, cultural, political and environmental conditions on land that are contributing to the causation of Somali piracy. This analysis is intended to evaluate economic rationalist (greed) and grievance-based understandings of piracy, and thus shed light on the root causes of Somali piracy, revealing possible avenues to address these causes. To achieve this aim, a qualitative analysis of media interviews with Somali pirates, and other key actors, has been conducted in combination with a critical review of available information on Somali piracy and human security in Somalia. Overall, this study finds that weak human security and external violations of human security in Somalia underpin many of the factors driving piracy off the Somali coast, suggesting that Somali piracy is a human security issue, which requires integrated development and security solutions. Therefore, this thesis proposes that ensuring human freedoms in Somalia is the only sustainable means of addressing Somali piracy.

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List of abbreviations

ADB	African Development Bank
AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
CHS	Commission on Human Security
CTF 151	Combined Task Force 151
DFID	United Kingdom's Department for International Development
EU NAVFOR	European Union Naval Force
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICC-IMB	International Chamber of Commerce's Maritime Bureau
ICU	Islamic Courts Union
IUU	Illegal, unregulated, unlicensed foreign fishing
MSPA	Maritime Security Patrol Area
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
RPGs	Rocket propelled grenades
SNM	Somali National Movement
SSCS	Sea Shepherd Conservation Society
SSDF	Somali Salvation Democratic Front
TNG	Transitional National Government
TFG	Transitional Federal Government
UN	United Nations
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNITAF	Unified Task Force
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNOSOM I	United Nations Operation in Somalia
UNOSOM II	United Nations Operation in Somalia II
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
US	United States of America
VLCCs	Very Large Crude Carriers
WFP	World Food Programme

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

From 2008, there has been an unprecedented rise in pirate attacks off the Somali coast, with gangs of heavily armed pirates in small skiffs hijacking ships, seemingly at will, and holding the ships along with their crew and cargo for ransom. In 2009 alone, 47 ships with 857 crewmembers were taken hostage by Somali pirates (ICC-IMB, 2010). These hijacked ships have included some of the largest vessels ever built, such as the supertankers *Sirius Star* and *Maran Centaurus*, which were eventually released for ransoms estimated at US\$3 million and US\$5-7 million respectively (New York Times, 2009, 9 January; BBC, 2010, 10 January). The audacity and scale of such attacks has captured international news headlines and public interest, with many in disbelief over how individuals from Somalia, one of the poorest countries in the world, have been able to disrupt traffic in one of global commerce's most important shipping lanes.

In response to this issue, much attention has been centered on *how* these acts of piracy are taking place, *how* they affect international shipping interests, and *how* to stop them. In contrast, very little attention has been focused on the key question of *why* these acts are taking place. It is often stated that piracy is a symptom of greater problems on land (Menkhaus, 2009: 22; Onuoha, 2009: 43; Tiffany Basciano, 2009: 7). Yet, relatively little academic attention has been paid to the underlying factors that are causing this 'symptom'. This study intends to redress this imbalance, by critically examining the underlying issues of underdevelopment and insecurity that are likely contributing to the causation of Somali piracy. A greater understanding of

these issues should reveal valuable insights on how to address Somali piracy through a human security approach.

This study will be conducted through the lens of a human security framework (Commission on Human Security, 2003). A human security perspective is a people-centered approach, which recognizes that development and security are interconnected issues that must be treated holistically (Faust and Messner, 2005; Tadjbakhsh, 2005). According to the Commission on Human Security (CHS), the objective of a human security approach is “to protect the vital core of *all* human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfillment” (CHS, 2003: 4, emphasis added). Such an approach, therefore, advocates protecting the human security of not only the victims of Somali piracy, but also of Somalis who are suffering from severe underdevelopment and insecurity. Thus, a human security approach provides the international community with both a moral obligation and a pragmatic motivation for addressing the issues of human insecurity in Somalia that are likely driving piracy off the Somali coast.

A human security analysis entails a people-centered focus. Such an analysis of Somali piracy will therefore require an examination of the factors driving *people* to commit acts of piracy. Thus, the motives and justifications of these individuals must be investigated. Due to the personal safety, ethical and logistical concerns involved in interviewing Somali pirates directly, an indirect methodology for obtaining interview data has instead been adopted for the purpose of this study. As mentioned above, there has been significant media coverage on the issue of Somali piracy. Within this coverage there has been an increasing number of interviews conducted with Somali pirates and their spokesmen. This study intends to mine this rich source of data, and analyze it qualitatively in order to gain greater insights on the motives of Somali pirates, and help evaluate the existing literature on the subject.

In the literature on Somali piracy, there appears to be two general schools of thought regarding the motives of pirates: economic rationalist (greed) understandings, which claim that pirates are simply driven by a profit motive (Sörenson, 2008; Chalk, 2009; Gilpin, 2009; Ross and Ben-David, 2009); and grievances-based understandings,

which argue that pirates are motivated by a sense of injustice (see Hari, 2009, 11 January; Sauvageot, 2009; Waldo, 2009; Aiyer *et al.*, 2010; Panjabi, 2010). This study aims to critically evaluate these greed and grievance-based explanations of piracy, by crosschecking their claims with: background information on the human security situation in Somalia; information regarding the nature of Somali piracy; and research findings from a qualitative analysis of preexisting media interviews with Somali pirates. Overall, this analysis aims to contribute to a better understanding of the issues driving Somali piracy, and thus shed light on potential means of addressing these issues.

To introduce this thesis, this chapter begins by providing a brief background to the issue of Somali piracy. The chapter then goes on to discuss the significance and rationale of a human security analysis of this issue. Finally, the chapter concludes by stating the research aim and questions that are guiding this study, and outlining how these will be addressed in each of the chapters in this thesis.

1.2 The issue of Somali piracy

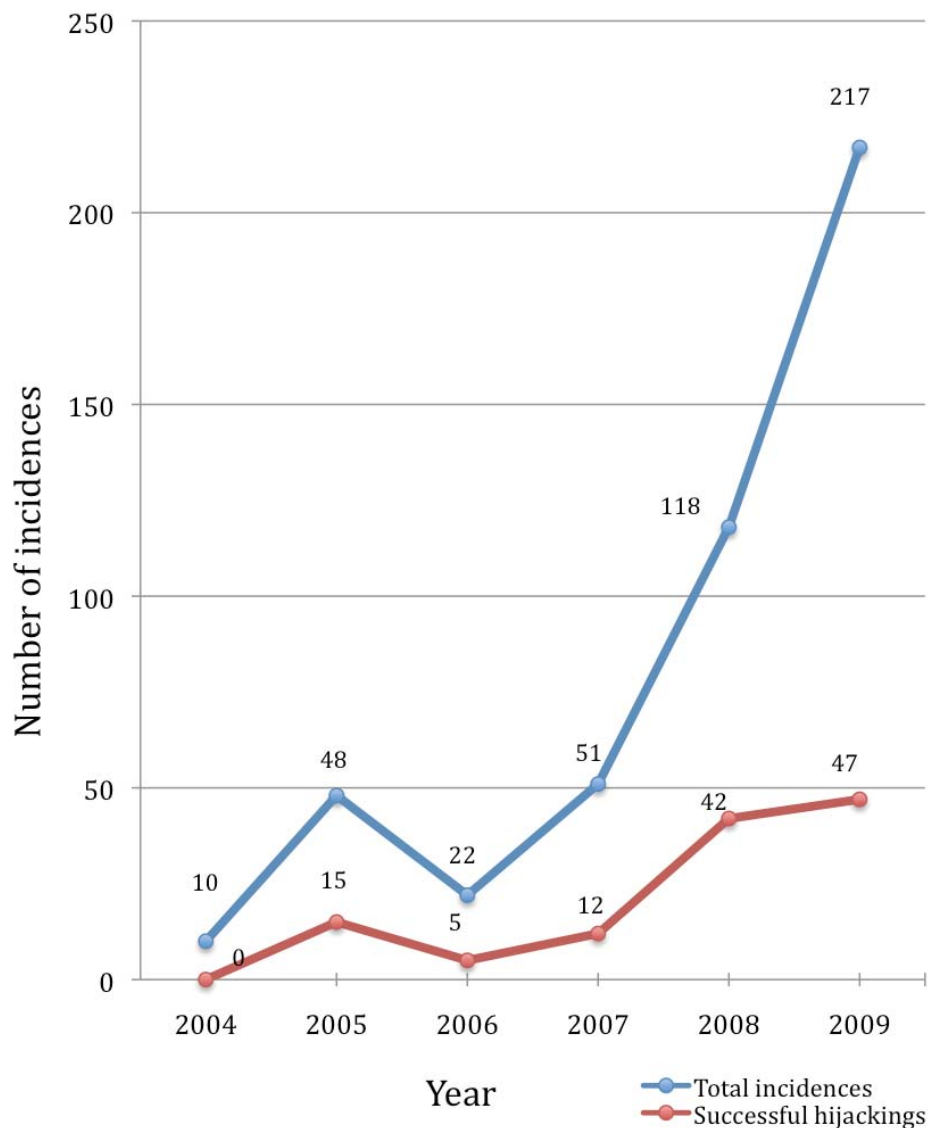
Piracy off the Somali coast is not a new phenomenon. However, until recently the frequency of these attacks has been quite limited. Since 1992, the International Chamber of Commerce's Maritime Bureau (ICC-IMB) has been issuing annual reports on the global incidence of piracy. For statistical purposes, the ICC-IMB defines piracy as:

An act of boarding or attempting to board any ship with the apparent intent to commit theft or any other crime and with the apparent intent or capability to use force in the furtherance of that act (ICC-IMB, 2010: 3).

The first incidence of piracy off the Somali coast was not recorded by the ICC-IMB until 1994. From then the frequency of Somali piracy remained relatively low until it jumped significantly from ten reported cases in 2004 to 48 in 2005. In 2006, it declined to 22 cases, only to grow in 2007 to 51. While in 2008, the problem virtually exploded with an unprecedented rise in piratical attacks, with 118 reported cases of

ships being attacked by Somali pirates. This trend continued in 2009, where the number of incidences leaped yet again, with 217 reported cases (see Figure 1.1). What makes Somali piracy relatively unique is that the pirates generally do not steal the ship or cargo, or rob the crew. Instead, the pirates typically aim to hijack ships and hold them, along with the crew and cargo for ransom (Hastings, 2009). This tactic resulted in 42 vessels being successfully hijacked by Somali pirates in 2008, and 47 in 2009 (see Figure 1.1). These staggering figures show that in a short space of time Somali piracy has become a major issue that, as will be discussed in Chapter Five, has significant implications for human security globally.

Figure 1.1: Reported incidences of piracy attributed to Somali pirates



Source: adapted from ICC-IMB (2005-2010)

Because of the threat Somali piracy poses, considerable amounts of money and effort have been spent by a variety of international actors on counter-piracy measures (Knott, 2009). However, these measures have largely been focused on deterring and disrupting piracy through legislative and naval fixes, and have done little to address the underlying factors driving Somali piracy (Ghosh, 2010: 1). For counter-piracy measures to be effective and sustainable they *must* address the underlying causes of piracy. To achieve this objective the root causes of Somali piracy must first be better understood, herein lies the rationale of this study.

1.3 Rationale and significance of the study

Effective counter-piracy measures must be built on a sound understanding of the underlying causes of piracy. At present, it appears this understanding is lacking in the literature on contemporary piracy. In recent years, there has been an ever-expanding body of literature on this subject, largely in response to the upsurge of piracy off the Somali coast. Yet, despite this increase in attention, the study of contemporary piracy remains a “relatively narrow field” (Johnson and Pladdet, 2003: 2) on “the fringes of academic research interests” (Hansen, 2008). Much of the existing literature is overly focused on outlining incidences and implications of piracy, and proposing possible legal and naval responses to the issue, while sadly “there has been little systematic attempt to explore the root causes of piracy” (Nincic, 2008: 5; also see Warby, 2010: 2). This is a significant weakness in the literature, as without a good understanding of the root causes of piracy it will be difficult to develop effective counter-piracy measures, which as discussed above, are much-needed in the current climate.

Moreover, the study of contemporary piracy requires an interdisciplinary approach, due to the wide variety of factors that may contribute to the causation of piracy (Johnson and Pladdet, 2003; Hansen, 2008). Thus, it appears there is an important niche to be filled in the piracy literature through an interdisciplinary analysis of the multiple and complex causes of Somali piracy. The field of development studies provides a useful launching pad for filling this niche, as this interdisciplinary field deals with the complex processes of economic, social, cultural, political and environmental transformation taking place in developing countries, which this thesis

will demonstrate underpin many of the factors contributing to the causation of Somali piracy.

Overall, this study intends to fill some of the major gaps in the piracy literature by providing a development perspective on Somali piracy through a human security analysis of the issue. The information gathered in this study will be of value to policy makers involved in designing counter-piracy measures, particularly with regards to formulating holistic approaches, which address the underlying issues of underdevelopment and insecurity that are driving Somali piracy. It is based on these intentions that the research aim and questions for this study have been devised.

1.4 Research aim and questions

The principle objective of this study is to contribute to an understanding of the effectiveness of a human security approach at addressing the issue of Somali piracy. To achieve this aim it is necessary to examine the following questions:

1. What underlying factors are contributing to the causation of Somali piracy?
2. How does human (in)security affect these underlying factors?
3. Will a human security approach be able to appropriately address these factors?

This thesis is divided into eight chapters that address these questions, as will be demonstrated in the following section.

1.5 Thesis outline

This chapter has so far provided a brief overview of the research topic, highlighting how Somali piracy has become a serious global issue that must be addressed. The failure of current counter-piracy measures to eliminate Somali piracy stems in part from a lack of understanding of the underlying factors that are driving these piratical acts, which is evident in the literature. Thus, the research aim and questions presented in this chapter are of great significance for filling this gap in the literature, as they will advance our understanding of the causes of Somali piracy, which will

ultimately lead to a better understanding on how to address these causes through a human security approach.

Chapter Two outlines the human security approach that has been adopted as an overarching theoretical framework for this study. The chapter presents an overview of the notion of human security, and its guiding assumption that development and security are highly interlinked and mutually reinforcing. The chapter then examines the relevance of a human security framework for analyzing the issue of Somali piracy, arguing that such a framework encourages a much-needed focus on the underlying issues of underdevelopment and insecurity that are contributing to the causation of piracy, while also providing pragmatic and moral rationales for the international community to actively address these issues.

Although a human security framework provides an important impetus to address the root causes of piracy, it does not in itself shed any light on what specific factors are contributing to the causation of Somali piracy. Thus, *Chapter Three* provides a critical review of the literature on the underlying causes of piracy, by threading together relevant work from the disciplines of piracy studies, conflict studies, criminology, and development studies. The chapter demonstrates that there are two main schools of thought regarding the root causes of piracy: economic rationalist understandings and grievance-based understandings. Overall, this chapter sets an important context for the rest of this thesis, which will critically examine whether greed and/or grievance-based explanations can contribute to an understanding of Somali piracy.

Chapter Four presents a background to the human security context in Somalia. This chapter commences by discussing how the country's volatile history has contributed to the dismal levels of human security, development and human rights that are currently afflicting the country. The chapter then focuses on some significant threats that have impacted on the human security of individuals living in coastal areas of Somalia, such as illegal fishing and hazardous waste dumping by foreign vessels. Overall, this chapter aims to provide a context from which the underlying factors driving Somali piracy can be better understood.

Chapter Five provides an overview of the issue of Somali piracy. This chapter begins by outlining the history of Somali piracy, and then examines the current nature of the pirates. The chapter highlights how the current *modus operandi* of the pirates has made Somali piracy become a serious human security threat, which affects a range of actors both locally and globally. Next, the measures that have been taken in Somalia and internationally to address piracy off the Somali coast are critically examined. The chapter concludes by arguing that the international community's counter-piracy measures have largely been unsuccessful, as they have failed to address the underlying factors driving Somali piracy.

To better understand the underlying factors driving Somali piracy, a qualitative media content analysis has been conducted to collect and thematically analyze preexisting interviews with Somali pirates and other key actors in Somalia. *Chapter Six* intends to make the methodology used in this process transparent and open to discussion, by outlining *how* and *why* this analysis was conducted.

Chapter Seven aims to give voice to Somali pirates, and other key actors, by presenting what they claim are the motives driving people to commit piracy off the Somali coast. The key findings from the media content analysis are outlined thematically, based on motives stemming from economic rationalism and grievances.

Finally, *Chapter Eight* presents an in-depth discussion, which examines the findings from Chapter Seven in relation to the information presented in earlier chapters, in order to evaluate whether economic rationalist and/or grievance-based explanations of piracy can advance our understanding of Somali piracy. The chapter argues that while a profit motive can enable piracy, individuals may still require further ideological factors, such as grievances, to motivate them to commit acts of piracy. Although there are no one-size-fits-all explanations of piracy, the chapter demonstrates that weak human security and external violations of human security in Somalia underpin many of the factors driving Somali piracy. Therefore, Somali piracy can be viewed as a human security issue, which requires integrated development and security responses. The chapter concludes the study by proposing some possible

steps that the international community could take to ensure human security in Somalia.

Chapter 2

Human security and piracy

2.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to examine whether a human security approach will provide a useful theoretical framework for analyzing the issue of Somali piracy. The first part of the chapter discusses the concept of human security; firstly by outlining how this idea has emerged out of a recognition that development and security are highly interlinked issues that must be treated holistically, and secondly by critically examining the Commission on Human Security's (2003) definition of human security, which has been adopted as a theoretical framework for this study. The second part of the chapter discusses the relevance of this framework for analyzing the issue of Somali piracy; firstly by arguing that such a framework encourages a much-needed focus on the underlying development and security issues that are likely contributing to the causation of piracy, and secondly by highlighting how this framework can provide both pragmatic and morale rationales for the international community to actively address the underlying issues causing Somali piracy. Overall, the chapter argues that a human security approach provides a useful overarching theoretical framework for analyzing the root causes of Somali piracy, and devising strategies to appropriately address these causes.

2.2 The concept of 'human security'

The concept of 'human security' has come about largely due to a convergence between security and development thought. The idea of security has traditionally been associated with threats directed against the state, such as the ability of states to defend themselves against encroachments on their territorial integrity and political sovereignty (Newman, 2001: 240; King and Murray, 2002: 588). Similarly, within

mainstream development thought and practice, the idea of development has traditionally been viewed one-dimensionally. Under modernization approaches, development has been associated with state-led economic growth (Binns, 2008), while under neoliberalism it has been associated with market-led economic growth (Simon, 2008). However, over time understandings of security and development have, for some, evolved and become intertwined under the notion of 'human security', which takes a holistic view of security and development (Krause and Jütersonke, 2005: 455; Hettne, 2010: 34). The first part of this section briefly outlines the origins of this notion, while the second part critically examines the particular definition of human security that will be used as a framework for this study.

2.2.1 *The convergence of security and development thought*

From the 1970s onwards, there has been considerable debate across the Western world regarding issues of security and development (Bajpai, 2000: 4). This debate has largely stemmed from dissatisfaction with state-centered approaches to security, as well as discontent with development approaches focused solely on economic growth. According to Falk (1999), it was increasingly apparent that the state-focus of traditional security approaches in combination with the economic-focus of development approaches was failing to address the security and wellbeing of *individuals*. This failure left much of the so-called 'developing world' in a state of underdevelopment, which in turn worsened their security situation (see Schuurman, 2008; Hettne, 2010).

In this climate a number of commissions, comprising prominent leaders, intellectuals and academics, were set up to examine issues of development and security (for example: Meadows *et al.*, 1972; Independent Commission on International Development Issues, 1980; Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues, 1982; and Stockholm Initiative on Global Security and Governance, 1991). These commissions produced influential reports that have contributed significantly to changing the way in which the relationship between development and security has been viewed (Falk, 1999: 8; Bajpai, 2000: 5). The reports challenged conventional notions of security, by arguing that threats to security comprise not only direct

military threats to the state, but also threats to individuals stemming from underdevelopment, which was also beginning to be viewed in a new light.

In the 1990s, in reaction to the economic-focus of previous development approaches, a so-called 'human development' perspective emerged, emphasizing a more multidimensional understanding of development. This emergence was dramatically signaled with the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) *Human Development Report* (1990). According to this report, human beings, not economic growth, are identified as the focus of development:

... people are the real wealth of a nation. The basic objective of development is to create an enabling environment for people to live long, healthy and creative lives (UNDP, 1990: 17).

Heavily influenced by the work of Amartya Sen (see 1983; 1990; 1999), the UNDP's approach views economic growth as a means and not an ends of development. Instead, development is viewed as a process of expanding people's choices, not only in terms of incomes, but also in key areas such as health, education and general standards of living (UNDP, 1990: 18). Thus, in contrast to the economic conceptions of development presented by modernization and neoliberal theorists, this perspective proposes that development policies should focus on the wellbeing of people. For the remainder of this thesis the term 'development', unless otherwise stated, will be used to refer to the UNDP's notion of 'human development'. In addition to having a significant impact on development thought and practice, this multidimensional notion of development has also influenced theories relating to security.

The idea of 'human security' emerged in the early 1990s, in an attempt to broaden understandings of security to include development issues. In 1994, the UNDP published the *Human Development Report*, which included a section on human security titled "Redefining security: the human dimension". According to the UNDP (1994: 229), traditional notions of security "related more to nation-states than to people", as a result they overlooked "the legitimate concerns of ordinary people who sought security in their daily lives". In response to this perceived shortcoming, the

UNDP presented human security as a people-centered approach to security (Henk, 2005). In some respects this people-centered approach shares similarities with neoliberalism and its belief that the security of individuals' liberties is paramount for achieving economic development (see Hayek, 1944, 1976; Nozick, 1974; Bauer, 1976, 1984). However, whereas neoliberal theorists believe liberties should be protected to promote 'free' trade in the market economy, the UNDP's human security approach instead believes human freedoms should be protected to ensure "human life and dignity" (UNDP, 1994: 22). Thus, the UNDP's report presented an alternative to traditional state-centered conceptions of security with a people-centered security approach heavily linked to a multidimensional understanding of development.

According to Duffield (2001: 7), the conception of human security presented by the UNDP was radical in the sense that it challenged the adequacy of traditional approaches to security by advocating the need to include development issues into security measures. As discussed above, the UNDP viewed development as the widening of people's choices so that they can have greater freedom to achieve the things they value, while it was argued that human security is necessary to ensure that "people can exercise these choices safely and freely" (UNDP, 1994: 22-23). Human security was therefore viewed by the UNDP as a necessary condition for development, while development was seen as a means of strengthening human security. Thus, the notion of human security presented by the UNDP highlights that security and development are highly interlinked and mutually reinforcing.

The inclusion of development issues into security measures, led the UNDP (1994: 23) to argue that human security is comprised of not only "freedom from fear" (of violence, abuse and persecution), but also "freedom from want" (of gainful employment, food and health). To be free from both *fear* and *want* the UNDP stated that people need security in the following interdependent elements:

- *Economic security*: an individual's enjoyment of a basic income, either through gainful employment or from a social safety net;
- *Food security*: an individual's access to food via assets, employment, or income;

-
- *Health security*: an individual's freedom from various diseases and debilitating illnesses and access to health care;
 - *Environmental security*: the integrity of land, air, and water, which make human habitation possible;
 - *Personal security*: an individual's freedom from crime and violence;
 - *Community security*: cultural dignity and inter-community peace; and
 - *Political security*: protection against human rights violations (UNDP, 1994: 230-234).

The report argues that these interdependent elements are universal concerns for both economically rich and poor nations. Thus, the UNDP's approach places a high moral priority on the human security of *all* individuals (Tadjbakhsh, 2005: 23). In this respect, the UNDP's human security approach provides a moral imperative for the international community to play a role in ensuring the human security of individuals in states that are unable, or unwilling to provide this security. Overall, the notion of human security outlined by the UNDP signaled a major advance in development and security thought, highlighting that these two strands of foreign policy theory are heavily interconnected.

2.2.2 Working definition of human security

The UNDP's conceptualization of human security is, arguably, the "most authoritative" formulation of the term (Cockell, 2000: 21). However, it is far from being the only definition of human security. In the literature a variety of definitions of human security have been proposed (for an overview see Alkire, 2003; Mack, 2005). It is beyond the scope of this thesis to provide an extensive review of the various formulations of the term. Instead, this section aims to critically examine the working definition of human security that will be used as a theoretical framework for this study – namely that proposed by the Commission on Human Security (CHS, 2003). The CHS is an independent commission that was launched at the 2000 UN Millennium summit, chaired by Sadako Ogata and Amartya Sen. The CHS defines the objective of human security as:

... to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfillment. (...) It means protecting people from critical (severe) and pervasive (widespread) threats and situations. (...) It means creating political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity (CHS, 2003: 4).

According to the CHS (2003: 11), a human security analysis should seek to address the underlying causes and long-term implications of security threats. To address these causes, the CHS advocates tackling some basic issues, including the following:

- Protecting people in violent conflict.
- Protecting people from the proliferation of arms.
- Encouraging fair trade and markets to benefit the extreme poor.
- Provide minimum living standards everywhere.
- According high priority to universal access to basic health care.
- Clarifying the need for a global human identity while respecting the freedom of individuals to have diverse identities and affiliations (Commission on Human Security, 2003: 133).

The CHS (2003: 6) builds on the UNDP's conception of human security by arguing that in addition to "freedom from fear" and "freedom from want", human security also requires "freedom to take action on one's own behalf". This additional freedom provides a much-needed advance on previous understandings of human security, by acknowledging that on top of protecting people, individuals must also be empowered to fend for themselves (CHS, 2003: 4). Based on these freedoms, the CHS (2003: 10-12) proposes that human security can be realized by joint strategies of protection and empowerment.

This conception of human security recognizes that people and communities often require external protection, as they can be severely threatened by events largely

beyond their control. The CHS (2003: 131) advocates integrated efforts between a variety of actors, such as governments, international organizations and civil societies, in order to prevent violations of human security, thus promoting human rights and development globally.

In addition to the role of external actors, the CHS appreciates that local people must also participate in formulating and implementing their own human security strategies. This definition of human security recognizes that individuals may hold differing understandings on what constitutes “human fulfillment” and “dignity”, while stressing that people are the most active participants in determining their *own* wellbeing (CHS, 2003: 4). Therefore, in theory, this definition does not impose rigid external notions of security and development, which may be inappropriate and have no meaning for certain individuals and groups. Instead, the CHS (2003: 11) emphasizes that strengthening peoples’ ability to act on their own behalf is instrumental to achieving human security, as empowered people can: demand respect for their own dignity when it is violated; create new opportunities for themselves; and address many problems locally. Thus, this conception of human security strongly advocates empowering individuals to advance their own freedoms.

The broad nature of this definition, like that of the UNDP’s (1994), allows a holistic approach to security that goes beyond a mere focus on “freedom from fear” to also include development-related issues. Critics of development approaches to security, such as these, argue that they set the parameters of security too wide, which could result in an unmanageable array of issues being labeled as threats (Freedman, 1998: 53; King and Murray, 2002: 591; Khong, 2001: 233). In rebuttal, Newman (2007: 6) argues that this broad nature should not be viewed as a weakness as the most critical and pervasive threats to individuals’ security and wellbeing are typically found in development-related issues such as: exclusion; poverty; weak governance; poor infrastructure; preventable disease; and environmental catastrophes. Faust and Messner (2005: 426) and von Feigenblatt, (2009: 60) assert that the expansive nature of such definitions acknowledge, quite rightly, that security and development are inextricably connected, as development can promote security, while security in turn is necessary for development to take place.

The CHS's formulation of human security has been adopted as an overarching theoretical framework for this study due to its recognition that development and empowerment are keys to achieving security. For the purpose of this thesis, the term 'human security' will be used to refer to the CHS's conceptualization of the term. As will be discussed below, this notion of human security will provide a valuable theoretical framework for analyzing the issue of piracy off the Somali coast.

2.3 The relevance of a human security framework for piracy

No one would dispute that piracy is a threat to human security, as it clearly constitutes a direct and brutal affront to the safety and wellbeing of its victims (see Chapter Five). However, we can and should question whether a human security framework is able to help us better understand, and address, the issue of piracy. The purpose of this section is to demonstrate that a human security framework can in fact bring added value to the study of contemporary piracy, as it stresses the importance of understanding the underlying factors driving individuals to commit piracy, while also providing both pragmatic and moral rationales for the international community to actively address these factors in an appropriate manner.

2.3.1 The importance of understanding the root causes of piracy

It is widely stated in academic and policy circles that human insecurity can be both a cause and a consequence of violence (see UNDP, 1994; Thomas, 2000; Commission on Human Security, 2003; Kaldor, 2007). For instance, Stewart (2004: 1) asserts that human insecurity is often an underlying issue contributing to the causation of violent conflicts, while these conflicts in turn contribute to further insecurity. Somali piracy is a good example of a violent threat to global security that a human security analysis may be able to help us better understand.

The counter-piracy measures that are currently being implemented in Somali waters have been largely centered on protecting national shipping interests by deterring and disrupting potential pirate attacks through the deployment of warships in the region (see Chapter Five). The failure of these measures to eliminate Somali piracy

gives credence to the argument that piracy is little more than a symptom of greater problems on land (Menkhaus, 2009: 22; Onuoha, 2009: 43; Tiffany Basciano, 2009: 7). Based on this point-of-view, to effectively address the ‘symptom’ of piracy it is first necessary to understand the underlying political, social, environmental, economic and cultural conditions on land that are giving rise to this ‘symptom’. A human security perspective advocates a holistic approach, which stresses the importance of understanding how individuals perceive, and respond to, these underlying conditions.

While a human security framework encourages a much-needed focus on the root causes of security threats, it does not in itself provide any practical methods on how to gain a greater understanding of the underlying factors driving individuals to commit acts of piracy. To counter this shortcoming, Chapter Three will provide an interdisciplinary review of literature that may be pertinent for increasing our understanding of these causes. This literature will be interwoven into a systematic analysis of the causes of piracy, which will be conducted through the lens of a human security approach. But next we will look at how a human security approach can provide a rationale for addressing piracy.

2.3.2 Rationale for addressing piracy

In addition to encouraging a greater understanding of the factors driving individuals to commit piracy, a human security analysis also demonstrates that the international community has both a vested interest and a moral obligation to address these factors in an appropriate manner. The world we live in is highly interconnected through the flow of goods, services, finance, people and images (CHS, 2003: 2). In this interconnected global system, a lack of human security in one area can have serious global ramifications. According to the UNDP (1994: 34), “[f]amines, ethnic conflicts, social disintegration, terrorism, pollution and drug trafficking can no longer be confined within national borders”. Thus, borders are no longer obstacles for human insecurity.

Insecurity in any one state or region can have grave consequences for human security globally. This point is reinforced by Kaldor (2007: 196) who states “violence

has a tendency to cross borders not in the form of attacks by foreign enemies but through terrorism, organized crime or extreme ideologies". As will be discussed in Chapter Five, Somali piracy provides a clear example of how an organized criminal activity can transcend national borders to affect global actors. The global impact of borderless human security threats, such as Somali piracy, suggests it is in the interest of international actors to actively address the underlying issues causing these threats. A human security perspective therefore provides international actors with a pragmatic motive for addressing issues of insecurity beyond their own borders (CHS, 2003: 12), such as those that are likely driving Somali piracy.

On top of this pragmatic motive, the idea of human security also raises serious moral questions regarding duties beyond our own borders. According to Newman (2007: 8), "[t]he moral boundary of the state has been challenged by the human security concept". A human security perspective seeks to universalize the right to human security, suggesting that governments, international organizations, civil society actors and individuals have a duty to care about, and take action on behalf of victims of insecurity in societies other than their own (Tadjbakhsh, 2005: 25). Newman (2007: 8) argues that the notion of human security goes beyond charity, instead it expands "our moral universe beyond borders". Therefore, a human security framework provides the international community with a moral obligation to address human security threats regardless of the nationality of the victims, whether they are seafarers from developing countries victimized by Somali pirates, or Somalis whose human security is being violated.

2.4 Chapter summary

To summarize, this chapter has examined the usefulness of a human security approach as a theoretical framework for analyzing the issue of Somali piracy. The notion of human security has emerged over time due to a convergence between security and development thinking. This convergence has resulted in a holistic people-centered understanding of security and development, which is reflected in the CHS's (2003) conceptualization of human security. This particular formulation of human security has been adopted as an overarching theoretical framework for this study, because it stresses the importance of understanding and addressing the root

causes of piracy, while also providing pragmatic and moral imperatives for doing so. These factors make this approach highly relevant for addressing the objectives of this study. However, to be able to address the root causes of Somali piracy, it is first necessary to increase our understanding of these causes. Therefore, the following chapter provides an interdisciplinary literature review on the underlying causes of Somali piracy, conducted through the lens of a human security approach.

Chapter 3

Understanding the root causes of piracy

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to examine how the underlying causes of Somali piracy can be better understood through a human security analysis. To gain a greater understanding of these causes, it is useful to take a people-centered approach and examine the factors motivating individuals to commit acts of piracy. Unfortunately, the existing literature dealing with the motives of contemporary pirates has, according to Warby (2010: 2), typically been written in a speculative manner. Much of this work appears to present little more than its author's unsubstantiated opinion on what the pirates' motives may be. In contrast, the fields of criminology and conflict studies are rich in both theoretical and empirical work relating to the underlying motives of actors involved in organized crimes and violent conflicts, while the discipline of development studies has a wealth of literature that focuses on how to address the underlying causes of these issues. Much of this literature may be germane for advancing our understanding of the root causes of Somali piracy, and how to address these causes.

This chapter draws together relevant literature from the fields of development studies, conflict studies, piracy studies and criminology to shed light on possible factors that may contribute to an individual's willingness to commit acts of piracy. However, it is important to note, in reality the motives of actors involved in particular conflicts and organized crimes may not necessarily be universal, as individuals may have different motivations for engaging in the same acts (Mac Ginty

and Williams, 2009: 27). Moreover, it is possible that individuals may be motivated by multiple factors, which overlap and change with time. Nevertheless, for the purpose of theoretical clarity it is useful to categorize the possible motives presented in the literature into two general schools of thought: *economic rationalist understandings*, the claim that individuals are simply driven by a profit motive; and *grievances-based understandings*, the belief that individuals are motivated by a sense of injustice. The remainder of this chapter provides a review of these two schools of thought, and through the lens of a human security approach critically examines whether they can help advance our understanding of the underlying causes of Somali piracy.

3.2 Economic rationalism as a motivating factor

Economic rationalism (also known as greed) is often cited in the literature as a major factor motivating actors to engage in violent conflicts and organized crimes, including piracy. This perspective makes the assumption that individuals choose to engage in such activities after calculating whether the potential rewards of doing so outweigh the potential risks (Akers and Sellers, 2004). These calculations are believed to be unique to the individual, reflecting their capabilities and the specific dynamics of the context they are in. This perspective assumes ‘rational’ individuals will always act in such a way as to maximize their own benefit (Clarke and Cornish, 2001: 24; White and Haines, 2004: 148). Overall, economic rationalism views individuals engaging in particular activities as conscious decision makers, driven by profit motives. Economic rationalism therefore reduces individuals to simple economic agents (*homo economicus*) who are motivated merely by economic self-interest (Murshed and Tadjoeeddin, 2009: 90).

This economic reductionism is similar to that which underpins neoliberalism. Neoliberal theorists believe that the ‘rational’ actions of economic agents in deregulated markets will result in the most efficient economic outcomes (see Hayek, 1944, 1976; Nozick, 1974; Bauer, 1976, 1984; Simon, 2008). In general, neoliberalism advocates minimal state intervention, but it concedes there is a major role for the state to play in protecting the liberties of individuals through the rule of law. For instance, Nozick (1974: 10) argues that the role of the state should be

“limited to the narrow functions of protection against force, theft, fraud, enforcement of contracts, and so on”. Economic rationalism proposes that the causation of violent conflicts and organized crimes is essentially the result of *homo economicus* left to its own device, without the rule of law to constrain the drive for a profit motive. The following sections critically examine how this perspective has been used in a variety of disciplines to try and explain the causation of violent conflicts and organized crimes, with a specific focus on economic rationalist explanations of piracy.

3.2.1 *Economic rationalist explanations of conflicts and crimes*

In the conflict literature, Paul Collier and a number of collaborators have produced a significant body of work that links the onset of contemporary civil wars with economic rationalism (see Collier, 2000; Collier and Hoeffler, 2002; Collier and Hoeffler, 2004; Collier *et al.*, 2003). Drawing on statistical data of civil wars from the mid-1960s, they argue that the profit motive (greed) is more likely to cause violent conflicts than any other factor. According to Collier (2000: 2), “civil wars occur where rebel organizations are financially viable”. Collier (2000) identifies particular characteristics of the state, which he claims are conducive to the causation of civil wars. He argues civil wars are most likely to be financially viable in poverty stricken, failed states, which have corrupt and inept regimes, and a significant population of unemployed males. This view is reinforced by commentators, such as Hirschleifer (1995) and Münkler (2005), who argue that civil war is “downright cheap” and “highly lucrative” in economically underdeveloped countries, due to the availability of untrained young men who lack attractive alternative livelihood options. From this point-of-view, it is argued that the choice to participate in violent activities, like civil wars, may be perceived as the most economically rational option for certain individuals in such contexts.

On top of being used to understand conflicts, economic rationalism has also been employed to analyze the root causes of crimes. In the field of criminology, a significant amount of empirical research has been conducted on economic rationalism in relation to a variety of criminal activities. According to Reid (2006: 79), this body of research is relatively inconclusive on whether the underlying motives of *all* criminal acts can be explained through economic rationalism. It

appears certain types of crimes are typically conducted in a rational manner where the criminals carefully calculate their behavior, whereas other more emotional crimes are performed spontaneously out of anger or other strong passions with little regard for the costs and benefits of the action (Barkan, 2006: 138). Therefore, Akers and Sellers (2004) argue that economic rationalism cannot be used to provide an explanation for every type of crime. However, economic rationalism may prove useful for explaining the underlying motives of certain types of crimes, particularly those that involve careful planning and weighing of potential costs and benefits. Cornish and Clarke (cited in Downs and Rock, 2007: 210) state that economic rationalism is most powerfully exemplified by organized crimes, which they claim are “rational crime par excellence”. This is due to the fact that organized crimes are typically carefully planned and conducted in ways that are intended to benefit the organizations. As will be discussed in Chapter Five, the current *modus operandi* of piracy networks in Somalia reflect highly organized criminal operations, thus economic rationalism may prove useful for increasing our understanding of the motives behind these networks.

In the piracy literature, many commentators have argued that the motive to commit piracy can simply be accounted for from the perspective of economic rationalism (see Anderson, 2001; Bradford, 2007; Leeson, 2009). Commentators adhering to this position, in the words of Hansen (2009: 7), “view piracy as a product of rational cost-benefit analyses conducted by the potential pirates”. From this viewpoint, it is argued that piracy takes place because pirates believe the potential benefits of doing so will overshadow any potential losses. This perspective is most dramatically demonstrated in Peter Leeson’s (2009) book *The invisible hook: the hidden economics of pirates*, in which he takes a historical look at piracy, arguing that the behavior and tactics of pirates have simply been the result of rational choices made within specific economic contexts.

Economic rationalism has frequently been adopted to explain the motives driving modern-day piracy, such as that occurring off the Somali coast (see Sörenson, 2008; Chalk, 2009; Gilpin, 2009; Ross and Ben-David, 2009). For instance, the United

Nations Security Council gives an economic rationalist account of Somali piracy, by stating:

Piracy is flourishing in Somalia as it is a quick way for all involved to earn a large amount of money way beyond any other means of income generation. While the action of piracy involves some risk the benefits far outweigh that risk (UNSC, 2008: 15).

Overall, commentators adhering to economic rationalism claim that pirates are simply driven by a profit motive. Like economic rationalist theorists in the conflict literature, some commentators on contemporary piracy have attempted to identify general characteristics that they believe enable piracy to be a profitable activity, to which we now turn.

3.2.2 *Proposed characteristics conducive of piracy*

It is often stated that “[p]iracy is a crime of opportunity” (Murphy, 2009a: 2; also see Pham, 2009; de Wijk, 2010). In the piracy literature much effort has been taken to identify the characteristics that are believed to be necessary for such an ‘opportunity’ to exist. The following section provides a review of the main characteristics that are purported to be conducive of piracy, including: favorable geography; weak governance; conflict and underdevelopment; and a proliferation of arms.

Many commentators have claimed *favorable geography* is a necessary characteristic for piracy to take place (see Carter, 1997; Gottschalk and Flanagan, 2000; Chalk, 2008; Lennox, 2008; Murphy 2007, 2009b). According to Gottschalk and Flanagan (2000: 3), piracy can only be sustainable in areas that are in close proximity to rewarding ‘hunting grounds’, such as areas by busy shipping routes. These shipping routes may prove even more rewarding if they pass through straits, bays, estuaries and archipelagos (Chalk, 2008: 11). ‘Chokepoints’, such as these, often require vessels to reduce their speed significantly and move close to shore for navigational purposes, thus making them easier to board as well as making it more difficult for them to take evasive action against pirate attacks (Lennox, 2008: 4). Murphy (2007; 2009b) suggests this is why piracy has historically occurred in the narrow seas close

to the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, the English Channel and the South China Sea, and why contemporary piracy is occurring in areas such as Southeast Asia, the Bay of Bengal, the Horn of Africa, the West African coast and parts of South America.

In addition to the necessity of favorable geography, various commentators have suggested *weak governance* is another key trait conducive of piracy. Quantitative studies by Nincic (2008), Hastings (2009), and Percy and Shortland (2009) have found statistical evidence that suggests there is a strong correlation between weak governance and piracy. Many commentators claim that the demise of the Somali state, and the associated weakening of the rule of law, has been the primary reason why piracy has flourished in Somalia (see Møller, 2009a: 38; Ross and Ben-David, 2009: 59; Schaefer, 2009: 2; Silva, 2009: 2). It is claimed that due to the lack of a functional government in Somalia there has been a lack of authorities, such as police, military, coastguards and navies, capable of preventing piracy (Murphy, 2007: 30). These authorities may be ineffective because of factors such as underfunding (see Chalk, 2008; Hansen, 2008; Petretto, 2008; Murphy, 2007; Frécon, 2006a, 2006b), as well as legal difficulties involved in prosecuting pirates (see Treves, 2009; Kontorovich, 2010; Sterio, 2010). Authorities may also be ineffective on account of the corruption of security forces, which Vagg (1995: 68) argues is a prerequisite for piracy (also see Murphy, 2009b: 42).

Although most commentators associate governance and Somali-based piracy prevention with capable central authorities, Hansen and Mesøy (2006) and Hansen (2009) claim that local entities, institutions and individuals in Somalia can also provide forms of governance and play significant roles in piracy prevention. This argument is in line with the criminology literature, where Felson (2002) argues that informal forms of social control, such as by individuals in the community, can also play a major role in crime prevention. Overall, from an economic rationalist perspective, it is believed that where there is weak governance, whether it stems from the state or locally, there may be a lack of capable authorities and individuals who are willing and able to prevent piracy, thus creating a setting in which piracy can thrive undeterred (Murphy, 2009b: 42).

Another factor heavily linked to weak governance that is often listed as a necessary characteristic for the causation of piracy is *conflict and underdevelopment*. Many commentators have argued that piracy may appear a relatively attractive livelihood option for individuals living in strife-ridden and war-torn areas with low levels of socio-economic development (see Chalk, 2009; Ross and Ben-David, 2009; Sörenson, 2008; Percy and Shortland, 2009; Tsvetkova, 2009; de Wijk, 2010). According to Ploch *et al.* (2009: 8), in such settings “the relative risk of engagement in piracy seems diminished” in relation to the potential economic gains the activity can bring. This position is clearly presented in an article written by Carney (2009) titled *Cutthroat capitalism: an economic analysis of the Somali pirate business model*, where the author attempts to explain Somali piracy using a simple economic rationalist argument:

An ordinary Somali earns about [US]\$600 a year, but even the lowliest freebooter can make nearly 17 times that - [US]\$10,000 - in a single hijacking. Never mind the risk; it's less dangerous than living in war-torn Mogadishu (Carney, 2009).

An additional factor that is often claimed to contribute to the causation of piracy is the *proliferation of arms*. Commentators such as Chalk (2008), Onuoha (2009), and de Wijk (2010) argue that the presence of readily available weaponry can enable piracy by providing individuals with an enhanced means of committing these acts.

In summary, this section has outlined the main characteristics presented in the literature that are purported to be conducive to the causation of piracy. These characteristics include: favorable geography; weak governance; conflict and underdevelopment; and a proliferation of arms. From an economic rationalist perspective it is believed that the presence of these characteristics can make piracy an economically viable activity, and thus increase the likelihood ‘rational’ economic agents will choose to commit piratical acts. To prevent piracy from an economic rationalist viewpoint, these characteristics should, where possible, be addressed to decrease opportunities for piracy. Although economic rationalist thought appears to dominate understandings of piracy, this perspective has nevertheless come under heavy criticism in the fields of development studies, conflict studies and criminology.

3.2.3 Critiques of economic rationalist explanations

Economic rationalist theorists claim that a profit motive, and settings conducive to making a profit, can explain the root causes of conflicts and organized crimes. However, the structural focus and economic reductionalist nature of such claims have been seriously criticized. This section examines these key criticisms that have been leveled at economic rationalism.

A significant objection to economic rationalism that has been raised in the conflict literature is that it places the blame for conflicts solely on the states in which they are taking place (Pugh and Cooper, 2004: 2). As discussed above, economic rationalism associates the causation of conflicts and organized crimes, such as piracy, with particular structural characteristics of the state. For instance, weak governance and underdevelopment are typically viewed as factors enabling conflicts and organized crimes to be financially viable. This overriding focus on the structural characteristics of the state largely ignores the underlying forces that may have given rise to these traits. According to Pugh and Cooper (2004: 2), this focus conveniently absolves external actors from any blame, as there are a myriad of ways in which external actors may contribute directly and/or indirectly to the characteristics conducive of conflict. In relation to Somali piracy, although it is useful to identify the characteristics that are conducive of piracy, it is also necessary to examine the deeper external issues of inequality and power that may have contributed to the existence of these characteristics.

From an economic rationalist perspective, international actors are encouraged to intervene and address the structural issues that are enabling activities such as piracy to be economically attractive. According to Murshed and Tadjoeeddin (2009: 88), this position advocated by Paul Collier and his collaborators has been extremely influential amongst the World Bank, the UN and donor policy circles, by providing “intellectual excuses for direct, colonial style, intervention to prevent failing states from collapsing”. Such interventions may be viewed as a form of neocolonialism if external norms, which may be inappropriate for the local populace, are imposed by external actors. In the development studies literature much has been written on how

the imposition of foreign economic, political and social systems may dominate and subjugate local populations (see Sachs, 1992; Latouche, 1993; Escobar, 1995; Rahnema and Bawtree, 1997). Based on the CHS's (2003) notion of human security, presented in the previous chapter, inappropriate external interventions may disempower individuals, threatening their "freedom to take action on one's own behalf". Therefore, from a human security perspective, if external actors are going to intervene to address the characteristics conducive of piracy, such interventions must be carried out in culturally acceptable ways that empower, rather than subjugate, the local populace.

A further serious critique of economic rationalist explanations relates to their reductionalist nature. For instance, under economic rationalism, economic factors are often mistakenly viewed as the *primary* cause of conflicts (Mac Ginty, 2004). However, the primary cause of a conflict may be due to other non-economic factors, such as grievances, with economic factors only coming into play at a later stage. Thus, with regards to Somali piracy, although many commentators claim the pirates are primarily motivated by economic factors, it is still necessary to examine if this has always been the case.

Another related criticism of economic rationalism, which has been voiced in the conflict and criminology literature, is that it fails to explain why some people take part in organized crimes and conflicts, while other people in similar contexts do not (Akers and Sellers, 2004). For example, even if there is an absence of authorities willing and able to prevent people from committing illegal and morally questionable activities, like piracy, most people still feel a reluctance to commit such acts. This reluctance may be due to their internalized moral obligations. Therefore, economic rationalism fails to explain how individuals are able to overcome the moral constraints that prevent the majority of society from carrying out illegal and morally questionable acts. According to Lilly *et al.* (2007: 277), economic rationalism ignores the factors that influence how individuals come to the point of breaking the law. Similarly Homer-Dixon (1994) states that economic factors can enable civil wars, but for combustion to occur these economic factors may need to spark with other motivating factors. As will be discussed below, grievances may provide the spark

required to push certain individuals to the point of committing morally questionable activities such as piracy.

3.3 Grievances as motivating factors

It is sometimes claimed that individuals are driven to take part in conflicts and crimes due to grievances. Grievances are motivations and/or justifications based on a sense of injustice in the way a social group, or individual, is or has been treated (Murshed, 2004: 76). As grievances are subjective perceptions, there is an almost infinite set of possible grievances that may motivate individuals to commit acts of piracy. The nature of a grievance will therefore depend on the dynamics unique to each situation, and how these dynamics are perceived by individuals. This section begins by presenting some examples of piracy that have been driven in some way by grievances. The section then outlines some specific grievances that commentators have claimed may be motivating Somali pirates. Finally, the section concludes by examining some critiques that have been leveled at grievance-based explanations of conflicts and organized crimes.

3.3.1 *Acts of piracy motivated by grievances*

History is full of piratical acts that have been justified on the grounds of grievances. For example, in describing acts of piracy against the Spanish in nineteenth century Philippines, Bankoff (1996: 188) cites a common conception of the time: "It is not a sin to rob a Spaniard". In that particular context the pirates viewed the Spanish as a morally repugnant, oppressive force who had violated their human security. As a result, the pirates believed they had a sense of moral justification to steal from the Spaniards. Therefore, although the pirates may have been driven by a profit motive, they were able to justify their actions on the basis of grievances against the Spanish. This example illustrates that in contexts where there are widespread grievances, acts of piracy that target the source of the grievances may be more culturally acceptable.

In more recent times, the activities of the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society (SSCS) highlight how incidences of piracy can be driven primarily by grievances. In protest of whaling, the SSCS has aggressively targeted vessels engaged in this activity by

boarding, ramming and even sinking their vessels (see Nagtzaan and Lentini, 2008; Roeschke, 2009). The activities of the SSCS show that acts of piracy can, in some cases, be ideologically driven by grievances with little regard for a profit motive. In summary, these brief examples demonstrate some of the ways in which piracy may be morally justified by, or motivated primarily by grievances. Such a grievance-based perspective may provide useful insights on the motives driving Somali pirates.

3.3.2 Proposed grievances motivating Somali pirates

In the literature on Somali piracy, most commentators have adopted an economic rationalist perspective to explain the causation of Somali piracy. Nevertheless, some commentators have speculated that grievances may be motivating the pirates, and providing them with a sense of moral justification. This section will examine the most commonly cited grievances in the literature, including: *illegal acts by foreign vessels in Somali waters*; *desperation*; and the *'unjust' actions of the international community*. As will be discussed below, these proposed grievances are not mutually exclusive as they are highly interlinked in many respects.

Various commentators, such as Waldo (2008), Hari (2009, 11 January), Sauvageot (2009), Schofield (2009), Aiyer *et al.* (2010) and Panjabi (2010), have argued that Somali pirates have, to some degree, been driven to piracy by *illegal acts by foreign vessels in Somali waters*. They claim that acts of illegal fishing and hazardous waste dumping by foreign vessels have threatened the economic, environmental, food, health and personal security of Somali fishermen and those living in coastal areas of Somalia. The above-mentioned commentators argue that these external injustices may have provided a sense of moral justification for the victims of these crimes to commit acts of piracy out of retaliation and/or retribution. This position is expressed by Johann Hari who states:

Did we expect starving Somalians to stand passively on their beaches, paddling in our toxic waste, and watch us snatch their fish to eat in restaurants in London and Paris and Rome? (Hari, 2009, 11 January).

In addition, it is often argued that these illegal acts by foreign vessels have contributed to the already high levels of *desperation* in Somalia. As discussed above, economic rationalist explanations of piracy claim poor socio-economic contexts may make piracy appear a rational economic 'choice' for some individuals. In contrast, commentators such as Aiyer *et al.* (2010) and Panjabi (2010) argue that instead of having a 'choice', some individuals may feel 'forced' into piracy out of desperation. The high levels of desperation in Somalia may also make 'horizontal inequalities' more noticeable. Horizontal inequalities refer to economic, political and social inequalities between groups, in contrast to the vertical inequalities that may exist amongst an ethnically homogenous population (Murshed and Tadjoeeddin, 2009: 89). In the conflict literature, it is often stated that horizontal inequalities between groups within the same state can contribute to the causation of conflicts, by providing the excluded groups moral justifications and motivations to improve their relative position through the use of force (Horowitz, 1985; Gurr, 1993; Stewart, 2004).

In the field of development studies, dependency theorists have argued that the global capitalist system produces 'unjust' horizontal inequalities, with the majority of global wealth ending up in the hands of 'developed countries' (the core) (see Conway and Heyen, 2008; Klak, 2008). In today's highly interconnected world, these horizontal inequalities existing globally are becoming more and more widely noticed by excluded groups. Panjabi (2010: 380) argues that individuals, such as Somali pirates, are becoming less inclined to passively accept and tolerate the huge economic disparities that exist within the current global system, and the moral injustice this inequality entails. Aiyer *et al.* (2010: 8) speculate that given the desperate situation in Somalia, Somalis may feel a sense of injustice by being "abandoned by the benefits of global capitalist investment". While due to Somalia's geographic location next to a busy shipping lane, this feeling of injustice is, according to Bezmozgis (2009, 19 May), constantly reminded as the "wealth of the world sails by just off the coast". Panjabi (2010: 382) has speculated that the hijacking of these 'symbols' of globalization and wealth might be justified by the pirates out of a sense of injustice from being excluded from the wealth that exists globally. Thus, from this perspective it is suggested that individuals may be motivated to commit acts of piracy due to

grievances stemming from feelings of desperation and injustice regarding the horizontal inequalities existing in the global capitalist system.

Heavily linked to the above-mentioned grievances is a further possible sense of injustice regarding the *actions of the international community*. According to K'naan (2009, 12 April), a Somali-Canadian singer and activist, the international community has done little to prevent the illegal activities of foreign vessels in Somali waters that are violating the human security of Somalis, and has done relatively little to address the humanitarian crisis being experienced by Somalis. Yet in contrast, he claims the international community has spent great effort and money on naval measures to crackdown on Somali piracy and protect the security of non-Somalis. Panjabi (2010: 470) argues that such actions may be viewed as “one-sided and hypocritical”, and may create a feeling of injustice amongst Somalis (also see Waldo, 2008: 7). Roger Middleton presents this perspective clearly:

People who have been forgotten by the world and who hear of toxic waste being dumped on their beaches and foreigners stealing their fish have difficulty being concerned when representatives of that world are held to ransom (Middleton, 2009, 15 April).

From this position, it is believed that the lack of concern by the international community about the plight of Somalis may provide some individuals a form of moral justification for committing acts of piracy.

In summary, this section has outlined the possible grievances that have been speculated in the literature that may motivate some Somalis to commit acts of piracy. These proposed grievances include the following highly interlinked issues: illegal acts by foreign vessels in Somali waters; desperation; and the perception that the behavior of the international community has been unjust and hypocritical. While these speculated grievances may provide useful insights on the possible motives of Somali pirates, they are not without their critics.

3.3.3 Critiques of grievance based explanations

Many theorists, particularly those coming from an economic rationalist perspective, argue that the grievances being voiced by individuals engaged in conflicts and organized crimes are likely little more than attempted public relations campaigns. For instance, Collier (2000; 2006) states it is important to be wary of the discourse of actors involved in violent conflicts. He claims they often engage in a public discourse of grievances, as “they are unlikely to be so naïve so as to admit to greed as a motive” (Collier, 2000: 91-92). With regards to Somali piracy, Roger Middleton (cited in Panjabi, 2010: 464) warns that the grievances being voiced by the pirates may largely be attempted public relations endeavors.

Therefore, although the grievances voiced by the pirates may provide useful insights on the root causes of piracy, it is important not to take this public discourse at face value. Thus, the grievances voiced by the pirates should be carefully examined in relation to other data sources in order to ascertain their legitimacy. However, regardless of whether these grievances are legitimate or not they may still provide a form of psychological self-justification for individuals to commit acts of piracy.

3.4 Chapter summary

This chapter has provided a literature review on the possible underlying causes of Somali piracy. This review has critically examined economic rationalist explanations of piracy, which argue that pirates are simply driven by a profit motive, and grievance-based arguments, which claim that pirates may be motivated by feelings of injustice. This chapter has demonstrated that there is no universal agreement on the motives of the pirates, as both schools of thought have come under fire from a range of criticisms. Although it appears there is no one-size-fits-all explanation for the causation of Somali piracy, both economic rationalist and grievance-based perspectives may provide useful insights on the possible factors motivating individuals to commit acts of piracy. As such, the remainder of this thesis aims to critically examine the validity of economic rationalist and grievance-based explanations of Somali piracy, while analyzing how these understandings are linked

to issues of human insecurity. To achieve these objectives it is first necessary to grasp the human security situation in Somalia, to which we shall now turn.

Chapter 4

Background to human insecurity in Somalia

4.1 Introduction

Studies of Somali piracy are often guilty of being overly focused on piratical activities at sea and how they affect international economic interests, while largely ignoring the context from which this piracy has emerged. Such decontextualized accounts are not only acts of ignorance, but should also be viewed as acts of imperialism (see Said, 1994; Ahmed, 2000), as they deny Somali pirates the benefit of context in favor of a narrative centered on international economic interests (Ali and Murad, 2009). To provide a more balanced account, this chapter presents a historical context to the human security situation in Somalia. The chapter begins by providing a brief overview of Somalia's history, examining how the country's volatile past has resulted in a precarious situation with regards to human security. The chapter then goes on to outline the dismal levels of development and human rights in Somalia, which are contributing to, and being caused by, the fragile security situation in the country. Finally, the chapter concludes by examining some specific human security threats to coastal regions of Somalia, such as Puntland, that, as will be discussed in later chapters, have been heavily linked to the causation of piracy. Overall, this chapter intends to provide a clear context from which the underlying factors contributing to the causation of Somali piracy can be better understood.

4.2 Historical background to human insecurity in Somalia

A variety of human security threats have been challenging human freedoms in Somalia. To fully grasp these threats it is first necessary to understand the historical

events that have given rise to these issues. The purpose of this section is, therefore, to briefly outline Somalia's tumultuous past, examining how the country's historical experience of colonial rule, tyrannical rule, state collapse, international intervention and the on-going attempts at reestablishing a central government, have contributed to the shocking levels of human insecurity that are currently plaguing Somalia.

4.2.1 *The pre-colonial and colonial periods*

Somalis are an ethnic group located in the Horn of Africa, who are estimated to number around 15-17 million people (CIA, 2010). At present, over 10 million of these ethnic Somalis are living in the nation-state of Somalia. However, historically the Somali people never had a unified political entity resembling a nation-state. According to Hesse (2010a: 250), the nomadic realities of the Somali people worked against state formation. Lewis (1994; 2002) asserts that the Somali people were instead united, to a degree, ethnically by language, culture, religion and clan-based social institutions. Law and order within these clan-based social institutions were maintained through *xeer* (customary law) and *diya* (blood money) (see Lewis, 1994: 117-134; Menkhaus, 2007: 87; Hesse, 2010b: 72-73). *Xeer* established rules regarding key aspects of social life, such as marriage, war, resource use, and social contracts between clans. In the absence of a centralized state, *xeer* was interpreted by decentralized clan networks and enforced through *diya*. *Diya* defined the rules regarding punishment for violations of *xeer*. It provided a system of mutual deterrence in which the clan elders played a key role in constraining the members of their respective clans. Thus, despite the lack of a centralized state, the Somali people were able to maintain a degree of law and order through clan-based social institutions.

The creation of nation-states in the Horn of Africa did not take place until the late nineteenth century, during what Pakenham (1991) labels the 'scramble for Africa'. During this time, the Somali people were divided among several colonial powers. This colonial partitioning divided a largely ethnically homogenous, clan-based population into relatively artificial groups separated by arbitrary borders (see Issa-Salwe, 1996; Lewis, 2002). France took control of present-day Djibouti; the United Kingdom established itself in what is now Somaliland and Kenya (which contains a

significant Somali population in the north); Italy set up a colony comprising most of present-day Somalia; while Abyssinia (Ethiopia) also expanded into territories with a Somali majority, such as Ogaden (now known as the Somali Region of Ethiopia). As outlined by Issa-Salwe (1996), these territorial arrangements were negotiated peacefully amongst the colonial powers without any consultation with the Somali people themselves. Due to this colonial imposition, the once autonomous clan-based Somali society was now forced to comply with the military might of external powers.

4.2.2 *Independence and the era of General Mohammed Siad Barre*

The colonial experience left many ethnic Somalis with the ambition to create a single nation-state for themselves (Laitin, 1976). This objective was partially met in 1960, when the United Kingdom controlled Somaliland and Italian controlled areas received independence and joined into a union to form the Republic of Somalia (see Tripodi, 1999). However, it is important to note, this new nation-state did not include other major regions containing ethnic Somalis, such as Djibouti, the Northern Frontier District of Kenya and Ogaden in Ethiopia (Meredith, 2005: 465). Overall, the colonial partitioning of the Somali people has left major fault lines that, as will be discussed below, have created tense relations between Somalia and its neighboring countries, as well as within Somalia itself.

When the Republic of Somalia was first formed it seemed that centralization and parliamentary democracy had endowed the country with a relative degree of stability. However, this sense of stability was short lived as it was not long before corruption and clan-based tensions started derailing politics (Laitin, 1976: 452; Lyons and Samatar, 1995: 14; Lewis, 2002: 166). In 1969, the unstable parliamentary government was ousted by a military coup, led by General Mohammed Siad Barre (Lewis, 2002: 207). Following the coup, Barre declared himself as President, suspended the constitution, abolished the Supreme Court and National Assembly and banned opposition parties (Ahmed and Herbold Green, 1999: 116).

A year after taking power, Barre declared Somalia a socialist state, allied with the Soviet Union (Bamfo, 2010: 57). Viewing tribalism and clan-rule as barriers to economic development, Barre attempted to replace them with nationalism and

'scientific socialism', an ideology he claimed was compatible with Islam and the realities of Somalia's nomadic society (Besteman, 1993: 576; Lewis, 1994: 150). Barre's sense of nationalism and desire to unite ethnic Somalis led him, with the initial backing of the Soviet Union, to attack Ethiopia in 1977-78 with the aim of taking control of Ogaden (Tareke, 2000). However, following a military coup in Ethiopia, the Ethiopian government established cordial relations with Moscow, which resulted in the Soviets severing ties with Barre's regime in favor of Somalia's larger neighbor (Lefebvra, 1991). With the loss of Soviet backing, Somalia effectively lost the war. According to a variety of commentators, this unsuccessful territorial war was a major turning point in the country's history, as it seriously weakened Barre's regime and its legitimacy, while strengthening that of his opposition (Lewis, 1994; Ahmed and Herbold Green, 1999; Tareke, 2000).

Following the border war, a number of opposition movements arose in Somalia (Sorensen, 1995). In 1978, there was an attempted military coup led by members of the Marjerteen clan. Although this coup was put down brutally by Barre's army, the surviving leaders went on to form the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF) (Ahmed and Herbold Green, 1999: 118). The SSDF had its headquarters in Ethiopia, and launched guerilla attacks against Barre's regime from across the border with Ethiopian support. In 1981, another significant opposition group was formed, this time by the Isaaq clan - the Somali National Movement (SNM) (Clark, 1992: 111). The SNM proceeded to raid government facilities and launch attacks on Barre's officials. In retaliation to these opposition movements, Barre's regime increased its levels of oppression on members of the Marjerteen clan in northeastern Somalia and the Isaaq clan in northwestern Somalia. Thousands of civilians were killed in Barre's attempt to suppress these opposition clan movements, while many more were subjected to arbitrary arrests and detentions (Africa Watch Committee, 1990: 9). To provide an example of the brutality of the regime, in the northwest Barre's forces targeted herders and farmers who were perceived as being affiliated with the SNM. They destroyed and poisoned wells, seized livestock and burned down entire villages (Ahmed and Herbold Green, 1999: 119). These deplorable acts demonstrate the level of insecurity the regime caused by violently depriving individuals of their safety and their livelihoods.

Due to this brutal crackdown, Barre's regime became isolated internationally with Western donors suspending humanitarian assistance to Somalia in 1988-89 (Lewis, 2002: 262). Under Somalia's socialist experiment, there had been a major demise in the agricultural sector. Faced with increasing levels of famine and hunger the country became heavily dependent on food aid and imports (Leeson, 2007: 694). Thus, the suspension of Western humanitarian assistance crippled an already impoverished nation, contributing to further food insecurity.

According to Adam (1995: 71), Barre's regime became increasingly tyrannical in its final years. Despite its initial attempts at stamping out tribalism and clan-rule, Barre's regime became even more infected by clan-rule. Towards the end of his reign, Barre only trusted his relatives and members from his own Darod clan to hold government positions, while attempting to eliminate the elites of other clans (Lewis, 1994: 163). Elmi and Barise (2006: 35) state that as the regime's resources dwindled, clans and armed militias began to retaliate more effectively against the tyrannical state. As a result, central authority soon disintegrated, and by 1990 most of the country was a patchwork of contending fiefdoms, controlled by warlords and armed militias, while Barre struggled to maintain control of Mogadishu (Meredith, 2005: 469). This situation inevitably led to the collapse of the Somali state.

4.2.3 *The collapse of the central government*

In January 1991, Barre fled Somalia after his army was finally driven out of Mogadishu by the militia of General Muhammed Farah 'Aideed' (Lewis, 2002: 262; Arnold, 2006: 660-663). According to Powell *et al.* (2008: 657), the actions of Aideed threw the door open for all faction leaders to try and establish themselves as the new government. Somalia was left in a power vacuum for any militia or faction to fill. As a result, southern and central Somalia were devastated by civil war. It is estimated that during this time around 250,000-350,000 Somalis died due to famine and warfare, and as many as a million fled the country as refugees (Refugee Policy Group, 1994; Shanoun, 1994: 15). Following the collapse of the central government, key infrastructure, throughout much of the country, was destroyed or ceased to function

due to a lack of maintenance (Ahmed and Herbold Green, 1999). Thus, southern and central Somalia was left in a dismal state of despair.

While southern and central Somalia were embroiled in a messy civil war, the north was, in comparison, experiencing relative stability with the emergence of two new regional authorities: Somaliland (a separatist state in the northwest) and Puntland (a nonsecessionist, semi-autonomous state in the northeast) (see Figure 4.1). By 1991, the Issaq dominated Somali National Movement had established control of Somaliland and proclaimed independence, remaining autonomous ever since, despite not receiving international recognition (Bradbury, 2008). A similar development occurred in the northeast of Somalia, where the Marjerteen dominated Somali Salvation Democratic Front's struggle eventually resulted in the establishment, in 1998, of what is today the semi-autonomous region of Puntland (Höhne, 2006).

Figure 4.1: Map of the regional authorities in Somalia



Source: Abbay Media (2010)

In contrast to the relative stability of northern Somalia, the rest of the country remained overwhelmed by extensive inter-clan fighting and general lawlessness. This conflict contributed to a devastating famine, while the much-needed aid being provided by relief agencies was sadly being looted (Dagne, 2009: 95). Belated media coverage of this dire situation triggered an international response, leading to a series of international interventions aimed at putting an end to the messy civil war (Hirsch and Oakley, 1995; Lyons and Samatar, 1995; Laitin, 1999).

4.2.4 International interventions

In 1992, the United Nations Security Council established the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM I) to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance and to monitor a ceasefire between the warring factions (Crocker, 1995: 3). Despite the intervention the violence continued, thus further impeding the provision of humanitarian assistance. In response, the US organized the Unified Task Force (UNITAF) with the aim, once again, of restoring order and facilitating the delivery of humanitarian aid (Dagne, 2009: 96). In May 1993, UNITAF was replaced by the United Nations Operation in Somalia II (UNOSOM II) (Koko, 2007: 11). These UN peacekeepers came under attack in June 1993 by Somali militia. The attacks escalated in October with eighteen US troops and hundreds of Somalis being killed in a violent clash, which has since been depicted in the movie *Black Hawk Down* (Bolton, 1994: 65). The UN finally withdrew from Somalia in March 1995, having failed to achieve its goal of restoring order.

A variety of commentators have claimed the interventions by the UN and US have, in many respects, made matters worse in southern and central Somalia, leaving behind a region descending deeper into the abyss of civil war, with rivaling warlords becoming more entrenched and so-called 'peacelords' (clan elders and business leaders) becoming increasingly marginalized (Ahmed and Herbold Green, 1999: 123; Menkhaus, 2004: 152). According to Møller (2009: 11), the failure of these international interventions has not been forgotten by the Somali population, most of whom, he claims, have developed a profound mistrust of both the United Nations and United States.

4.2.5 Attempts at reestablishing central governance

Following the dismal failures of previous attempts at stopping the conflict in Somalia through military intervention, many international actors have since focused on getting clan elders and local business leaders to work amongst themselves in order to sign peace treaties, with the aim of establishing a functional central government. For instance, in the year 2000 at a conference in Arta, Djibouti, a Transitional National Government (TNG) was established on a clan basis, dominated largely by Mogadishu-based clans (Streleau and Ngesi, 2003: 155; Menkhaus, 2007b: 359). The TNG was the first internationally recognized government in Somalia for about a decade. However, given the opposition that existed amongst most of the country's warlords, the government's control extended to only half of the capital (Mogadishu) and some small enclaves in central Somalia (Møller, 2009: 16). As Streleau and Ngesi (2003: 158) point out, the TNG was not even able to ensure the personal security of its own members, with many being assassinated. By 2003 the TNG had collapsed in all but name (ICG, 2003: 3). However, this failure did not spell an end to future attempts at reestablishing a central government in Somalia.

Following peace talks in Mbagathi, Kenya in 2004 a Transitional Federal Government (TFG) was formed (Ansems, 2007: 99). However, the TFG was once again little more than a government in name. According to Møller (2009: 18), the TFG had absolutely no control over the country. This point is dramatically demonstrated by the fact that the TFG's cabinet was initially based outside of Somalia in Kenya. When the TFG finally moved its headquarters to Somalia it was not to the capital, and even this was only possible with the protection of Ethiopian forces (Menkhaus, 2007b: 362). Once again the attempt at creating a central government was derailed by clan rivalry, with heavily armed militias continuing to fight for power.

As no central force could uphold law and order in southern and central Somalia, a variety of clans formed *Sharia* courts of law, which were deeply embedded in Islamic doctrines (Marchal, 2007: 3). In 2006, these courts grouped together to form the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) (Barnes and Hassan, 2007: 2; Bamfo, 2010: 58). The ICU was a type of judicial system that aimed to regain law and order in an otherwise chaotic state, through the imposition of a strict form of *Sharia* law. In June 2006, the

ICU seized Mogadishu and much of southern and central Somalia, ousting the warlords who had fought over the area for the previous fifteen years. In many respects, the ICU brought stability to the volatile region. According to Møller (2009: 21), the ICU significantly improved the day-to-day lives of the civilian population in Mogadishu by disarming most militias, reopening ports and the airport, and dismantling the many roadblocks in the city. Despite the increased stability under the ICU, their strict form of *Sharia* law was not without its critics, with human rights activists drawing attention to the harsh forms of punishment being meted out under this strict doctrine, such as the stoning of suspected homosexuals (see Bamfo, 2010: 58).

The overall objective of the ICU was to eventually convert the whole of Somalia to a system of governance based upon *Sharia* law (Barnes and Hassan, 2007: 4). This aim created fear both regionally and globally, with neighboring Ethiopia worried that the ICU might harbor expansionist ambitions to create an Islamic Republic throughout the Horn of Africa (Pham, 2010: 329), while the United States feared the ICU might have links with Islamic terrorist organizations (US Department of State, 2006). In response to these concerns, Ethiopia, supported by the United States, launched a major assault against the ICU, seizing control of Mogadishu in December 2006, on behalf of the TFG (Abbnik, 2009: 103).

Following the withdrawal of the ICU, the TFG was at long last able to establish its seat of government in Mogadishu, albeit only thanks to continued Ethiopian military support (Bamfo, 2010: 59). However, once again the TFG's ability to actually govern the country was extremely limited, restricted to Mogadishu. The TFG was far from having a grip on the rest of the country, least of all the autonomous and semi-autonomous regional authorities of Somaliland and Puntland. The TFG's lack of control over the country raised serious questions regarding its legitimacy. The TFG lost further local legitimacy by aligning itself so closely with Ethiopia who, according to Møller (2009: 22), most Somalis viewed as a hostile invader. The legitimacy of the TFG was weakened even more when, in January 2007, the President allowed the US to launch anti-terrorist air strikes against targets in Somalia, which apparently killed more than thirty innocent civilians (ICG, 2003: 2).

In 2009, in an attempt to improve its local legitimacy, the TFG was reconstituted with a former leader of the ICU, Sheikh Sharif Ahmed, as its new President (Le Sage, 2010: 1). To protect this transitional government, the United Nations has authorized the presence of African forces in Somalia in the form of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). According to Bruton (2010: 10), the TFG's very survival now "depends wholly on the presence of AMISOM forces". However, as Pham (2010: 330) points out, the presence of these troops has not restored stability, while the peacekeepers have been drawn deeper into the conflict suffering increasing casualties.

Since the overthrow of the ICU things have gone from bad to worse in many respects in central and southern Somalia. A humanitarian crisis has emerged, the likes of which the troubled country has not experienced since around 1991. The overthrow of the ICU has led to huge numbers of internally displaced people and refugees, while humanitarian assistance is once again being looted by warlords, highway robbers (Amnesty International, 2008a) and, as will be discussed in Chapter Five, pirates. Moreover, radical insurgency groups, such as *al-Shabaab* and *Hizbul Islam* have added to the volatile mix of those fighting for power (UNSC, 2010a: 18). After years of violence and disorder, Somalia is still without a functional central government.

4.2.6 Somalia the 'failed state'

According to McLure (2009: 151), the lack of strong central governance has created an "ongoing security vacuum [which] has encouraged the clan violence and anarchy that make Somalia a global poster child for a - failed state". Although there is no universal definition of state failure, a failed state is generally assumed to be one which, though retaining legal capacity, is unable or unwilling to provide and maintain security, infrastructure, or a minimum standard of living for its people (see Thurer, 1999; Rotberg, 2002). The United States think-tank Fund for Peace (2010) has developed a failed state index, which measures state failure based on a variety of social, economic and political indicators. For the past three years Somalia has topped the Fund for Peace's (2010) failed state index, being ranked the most failed state in the world.

Although Somalia may be regarded as a failed state that does not necessarily mean it is a failed society (Murphy, 2009a: 2). The central government may have collapsed but, as Menkhaus (2007a) argues, there still appears to be forms of “governance without government”. Due to the lack of a functional central government, many clans in southern and central Somalia have reverted back to the traditional governance systems of *xeer* and *diya* to provide a degree of law and order. Moreover, as mentioned earlier, although there may not be a functional *central* government in Somalia there are still two regional authorities which may be regarded as ‘functional’ to certain degrees: the government of Somaliland and the government of Puntland (Hesse, 2010b: 71). Somaliland and Puntland are far from being perfect examples of functional governments, yet they stand in marked contrast to the highly unstable southern and central regions of Somalia (Leeson, 2007: 700).

Despite these forms of decentralized governance, human security in an international context remains weak throughout the country. This section has highlighted how Somalia’s violent history has led to the fragmentation of the country with the establishment of two autonomous regions in the north, while southern and central Somalia have been left in a power vacuum, with a variety of factions fighting for control. Due to the seemingly never-ending civil war raging across much of Somalia, Gettleman (2009) labels the country as “the most dangerous place in the world”. The conflict in this region has contributed to, what the CHS (2003) would label, critical and pervasive threats to human freedoms and human fulfillment. As discussed in Chapter Two, security is a necessary condition for development and human rights. The lack of security in Somalia has therefore contributed to a humanitarian crisis, which is reflected in the dismal levels of development and human rights throughout the country.

4.3 The humanitarian crisis in Somalia

Due largely to the absence of a functional central government in Somalia, there has been a lack of locally collected data on development and human rights in the country. Nevertheless, a variety of international organizations have attempted to fill this void by collecting data on the situation in Somalia. Sadly, this data depicts a country with

appalling levels of development and gross violations of human rights. Economic and social indicators highlight the dismal levels of development in Somalia, while anecdotal evidence suggests the country is also plagued with human rights violations.

4.3.1 *Development in Somalia*

Economically Somalia is one of the poorest countries in the world, with GDP per capita estimated at US\$600 in 2008 (CIA, 2010). The African Development Bank (ADB) (2010: 4) estimates that, adjusting for purchasing power parity (PPP), 73% of households in Somalia live on less than US\$2 per day, while this figure rises to 80% amongst rural and nomadic populations. Furthermore, the ADB (2010: 5) estimates that 43% of households in Somalia live in extreme poverty, on less than US\$1, while the situation is once again even worse amongst rural and nomadic populations with an estimated 53% living in extreme poverty. These figures demonstrate the severe lack of economic security in Somalia. As mentioned in Chapter Two, economic measures of development by themselves fail to reveal the full picture of development. Nevertheless, as Rapley (2002: 10) points out, “there is a correlation between national income and a country’s ability to improve the social indicators of its citizenry” (also see Wade, 2004: 582). This relationship is clearly evident in Somalia, where other key development indicators are also performing dismally. For example, literacy rates are extremely low in Somalia, with the CIA (2010) estimating that only 37.8% of the population is literate.

Health conditions in Somalia are also amongst the worst in the world. The country has one of the lowest rates of life expectancy at birth, estimated at 49.63 in 2010 (CIA, 2010). Infant mortality rates in Somalia are also amongst the worst in the world, with the CIA (2010) estimating the infant mortality rate in 2010 at 109.19 deaths/1,000 live births. According to UNICEF (2010), diarrheal disease-related dehydration, respiratory infections and malaria are the main killers of infants and young children, accounting for more than half of all child deaths. A major underlying cause of diarrhea is a lack of access to safe water and poor sanitation. The ADB (2010: 6) estimates that, in 2006, only 29% of the population in Somalia had access to safe water sources, while only 23% had access to safe sanitation facilities.

Moreover, Somalia is a high-risk country for infectious diseases - cholera is endemic and tuberculosis is one of the most deadly diseases in the country (UNICEF, 2010). Overall, these health indicators draw attention to the horrific lack of health security in Somalia.

One of the major factors contributing to Somalia's woeful health indicators is malnutrition. It is estimated that a staggering 71% of the population does not receive minimum dietary energy (ADB, 2010: 6). As discussed in the previous section, Somalia is suffering from severe food insecurity. This situation is a result of the combined effects of the ongoing civil war, internal displacement, drought and high food prices (ADB, 2010: 6). Due to this food insecurity, it is estimated that more than 3.6 million Somalis required humanitarian assistance in 2010 (UNSC, 2010b: 6). Despite the great need for assistance, Somalia has experienced a drop in levels of humanitarian aid (UNSC, 2010b: 6), and to make matters worse the delivery of any such assistance is a perilous task due to the violence, banditry and piracy that is plaguing the country (McLure, 2009: 153). Overall, the available economic and social indicators reveal a country in the midst of a severe humanitarian crisis.

4.3.2 Human rights in Somalia

Amplifying this humanitarian crisis, there are also grave human rights concerns in Somalia, with widespread violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law. According to Amnesty International (2008b), "[r]ape, killings and looting have become widespread". In addition, human trafficking, especially of young women and children for the purpose of prostitution, as well as male slave workers, have also become commonplace activities in Somalia (UNSC, 2008: 21). In certain areas of the country, where there is currently no major fighting, civilians may nevertheless bear the brunt of arbitrary and repressive rules, violating their human rights (Amnesty International, 2010: 1). For example, in *al-Shabaab* controlled areas, women have "faced arbitrary detention, restriction of movement and other forms of abuse for failure to obey orders, including non-observance of the dress code" (UNSC, 2010b: 7). The UNSC (2010b: 7) goes on to state that this abuse has included "amputations, floggings and corporal punishment". Overall, claims such as these suggest that human rights violations are widespread throughout much of Somalia.

4.3.3 Regional variations in development

This section has thus far focused on the development and human rights situation in the ‘nation-state’ of Somalia. However, it is important to question the worth of the nation-state as a unit of analysis (Greig *et al.*, 2007: 39). The concept of a nation-state is a relatively new phenomenon in Somalia, which, as discussed above, was originally imposed on ethnic Somalis by colonial forces. The use of the nation-state as a unit of analysis seems even more arbitrary given that the levels of stability and prosperity in Somalia are as diverse as the clans who occupy the country (Powell *et al.*, 2006). Although there is a lack of recent data, Table 4.1 highlights the disparities that existed in 2002, with regards to GDP per capita, amongst the different regions and districts of Somalia (at the time the country’s GDP per capita was estimated at US\$226).

Table 4.1: Regional distribution of GDP per capita among the Somali districts in 2002 (US\$)

REGION	\$100-150	\$151-200	\$201-250	\$251-300	\$301-350
Mogadishu					<i>Banaadir</i>
Somaliland					<i>Awdal Galbeed Togdheer</i>
Disputed areas ¹				<i>Sanaag Sool</i>	
Puntland		<i>Mudug</i> ²	<i>Nugaal</i>	<i>Bari</i>	
Southern and Central Somalia	<i>Hiraan Gedo Bay Bakool</i>	<i>Middle Juba</i>	<i>Lower Juba Lower Shabelle</i>	<i>Galgaduud Middle- Shabelle</i>	

Source: Adapted from United Nations and World Bank (2008: 14-15)

The data presented in Table 4.1 suggests that the districts in Somaliland, and to a lesser degree Puntland, have relatively higher income levels than many of the districts in southern and central Somalia. It has also been suggested that Puntland and Somaliland have better access to social services than the more conflict-afflicted parts of southern and central Somalia (see Menkhaus, 2007a; Hesse, 2010b). However, owing to the lack of available socio-economic data, it remains difficult to

¹ These areas are disputed between the regional authorities of Somaliland and Puntland.

² The Mudug district is no longer part of Puntland, as it was in 2002.

adequately compare the development situation between these regions (Leeson, 2007: 700). Although levels of development may vary significantly throughout Somalia, they nevertheless remain atrociously low in an international context.

Overall, the indicators presented in this section provide a general insight on the humanitarian crisis that is wreaking havoc on the whole of Somalia. However, to better understand the origins of Somali piracy it is still necessary to move away from a nation-state focus to concentrate in more detail on the coastal areas of the country where piracy is rampant.

4.4 Human security threats to coastal areas of Somalia

Piracy networks have not taken root throughout the whole of Somalia. At present, the epicenter of piracy is Puntland, where the most active piracy network is based in the Nugaal district in the cities of Eyl and Garad, and to a lesser extent in central Somalia in the Mudug district, where a significant piracy network is based around the cities of Hobyo and Haradheere (UNSC, 2008: 17). To gain a deeper understanding of the context from which these piracy networks have emerged, the following section will examine some critical and pervasive threats that have impacted on the human security of individuals living in coastal areas of Somalia in general, and Puntland in particular. This analysis begins by examining how a variety of human security threats have contributed to the growing importance of marine resources for the livelihoods of individuals living along the Somali coastline. The section then goes on to outline how Somalia's marine resources have been devastated by a natural disaster, as well as by the illegal activities of foreign vessels in Somali waters.

4.4.1 *The growing importance of Somalia's marine resources*

At 3,300km, the Somali coastline is the longest in Africa. Somalia's territorial waters are also amongst the most lucrative fishing areas in Africa due to the nutrient rich water off the Horn of Africa (High Seas Task Force, 2006: 81). Despite the presence of this resource rich water, fishing ports were historically slow to develop along the Somali coast, due in part to a centuries old aversion to eating fish amongst the largely pastoralist Somali people (UNDP, 2005: 11; Bawumia and Sumaila, 2010: 15). In

Somali, the term “fish eater” is in fact a derogatory statement (Gettleman, 2010, 14 October). However, in recent times, Somalia’s marine resources have become an increasingly important food source, which many Somalis rely on. This growing reliance on marine resources has come about due to a variety of factors threatening the livelihoods of pastoralists in Somalia.

As mentioned above, Somalia is a country that has been gripped by famines, droughts and war. These threats have had a devastating impact throughout much of the country on food security for pastoralists. During the mid-1970s and 1980s, in response to this food insecurity, Barre’s regime encouraged pastoral nomads to resettle in coastal areas in a number of fishing cooperatives (Aiyer *et al.*, 2010: 6; Bawumia and Sumaila, 2010: 15). It is now estimated that around 55% of the Somali population lives in coastal areas, with the resource rich waters providing a means of livelihood for many individuals (UNEP, 2005: 133).

The semi-autonomous state of Puntland provides a strong example of a region that has become increasingly reliant on marine resources due to a range of human security threats. Despite having achieved a considerable amount of political success following the collapse of the central government, Puntland has not been spared from environmental hardship. Since declaring itself autonomous in 1998, Puntland has been plagued by severe drought. According to the United Nations and World Bank (2007: 5), 60% of employment in Puntland in 2002 was based on pastoralism. The pastoral sector is fragile at the best of times due to the semi-arid to arid climate in the region, while recurring droughts and livestock diseases have further crippled the sector (United Nations and World Bank, 2007: 5). The WFP (2007) estimates that there are 135,800 food insecure people in Puntland. This crisis has led many, who were previously pastoralists, to rely more heavily on inshore fishing as a livelihood option.

According to the UNDP (2005: 10), the general consumption of fish in Puntland has increased over the last decade. The UNDP goes on to outline three factors driving this increase. Firstly, as a consequence of the civil war, thousands of people have lost their assets and have thus become poorer. As a result, they have been unable to

afford other types of food, and have thus become more dependent on the cheaper fish products for their daily protein intake. Secondly, the recurrent drought afflicting the region has forced many nomadic pastoralists to move to coastal areas, where they have taken up fishing as a livelihood strategy. Finally, the report found that a large number of farmers are becoming seasonal fishermen, when inadequate rainfall prevents them from working on their land.

As demonstrated above, the harsh conditions in Somalia, and Puntland in particular, have forced many individuals to rely heavily on the rich marine resources found off the coast of Somalia. However, the security of these resources, and the livelihoods of those who depend on them, have come under serious threat from a natural disaster, as well as from illegal activities being committed by foreign vessels in Somali waters.

4.4.2 The Indian Ocean tsunami

Further exacerbating the already precarious situation in Puntland was the effects of the Indian Ocean tsunami, which hit the coast of Somalia in December 2004. Northeastern Somalia was the worst effected region, with Puntland being the worst hit. The UNEP (2006: 128) estimates that the tsunami resulted in the death of 300 people. While the tsunami is also estimated to have displaced 50,000 people, and destroyed 1,180 homes and 2,400 boats (Cawthorne, 2009: 9). The livelihoods of many people residing in towns and small villages along the Somali coastline, particularly in Puntland, were devastated. To make matters worse, the timing of the tsunami coincided with the peak of the fishing season, thus increasing the number of individuals affected. Overall, the Indian Ocean tsunami presented a major threat to the human security of individuals living in coastal regions of Puntland. However, as will be discussed below, long before the tsunami hit, the livelihoods of these individuals were already being threatened by a range of illegal activities being committed in Somali waters by foreign actors.

4.4.3 Illegal, unregulated, unlicensed foreign fishing

The international community is currently outraged at the piracy occurring off the Somali coast. However, from a Somali perspective a far more heinous crime is being

committed in Somali waters, that of illegal, unregulated, unlicensed (IUU) foreign fishing. With the collapse of Somalia's central government, a grave threat to Somalia's marine resources has emerged in the form of foreign fishing trawlers, which Menkhaus (2009: 22) states have "aggressively moved into Somalia's rich and unpatrolled waters". The scale of this threat is enormous, with the think-tank Chatham House (2008: 27) estimating there are around 850 foreign vessels engaged in IUU fishing in Somali waters every year.

These foreign vessels have reportedly been engaged in destructive and unsustainable fishing practices, using internationally prohibited methods such as drift nets and explosives (Achieng, 1999, 26 March; Musse and Tako, 1999: 5). Aiyer *et al.* (2010: 7) argue that these practices are depleting Somalia's marine resources "perhaps even beyond the point of recovery". This looting of Somali waters is clearly having a detrimental impact on the livelihoods of subsistence fishermen who rely on these resources for food security. Foreign vessels are, in the words of Waldo (2009: 2), stealing "an invaluable protein source from some of the world's poorest people". While Schofield (2009: 2) cynically points out that they are "taking considerably more protein out of Somalia's waters than the international community is supplying to Somalia in the form of humanitarian food aid". In addition to stealing vital resources from Somali fishermen, it has also been reported that foreign fishing vessels have aggressively chased local fishermen away from productive fishing grounds by cutting their nets, ramming their boats and physically attacking them with boiling water, high-pressure water hoses and even firearms (Achieng, 1999, 26 March; Schofield, 2009: 2; Waldo, 2009: 3).

This IUU foreign fishing has been responsible for a dramatic loss of revenue for local fishing communities in Somalia. A report from the Marine Resources Assessment Group (2005), prepared for the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), estimated that between 2003-2004 Somalis lost US\$100 million to illegal tuna and shrimp fishing in the country's territorial waters. While a United Nations official has been quoted stating that illegal fishing off the Somali coast amounts to about US\$300 million annually (cited in Mail and Guardian, 2005, 1

September). These large sums highlight the immense impact IUU foreign fishing is having economically.

The activities of IUU fishing trawlers in Somali waters are clearly having dramatic human security implications for Somalis. The personal security of Somali fishermen is being violated by the aggressive behavior of foreign trawlers, while the looting of marine resources is having a detrimental impact on the livelihoods of Somalis who rely on these resources for food and economic security. From a human security perspective, this looting of resources from a population already struggling for survival is a morally reprehensible action. Sadly, IUU fishing is not the only illegal activity being committed by foreign actors in Somali waters that is affecting the human security of Somalis.

4.4.4 Hazardous waste dumping

Another illegal activity taking place in both offshore and onshore areas of Somalia is the dumping of hazardous waste. According to the UN envoy for Somalia, Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah, European and Asian companies have been dumping industrial, toxic, and nuclear waste, along Somalia's coast (cited in Abdullahi, 2008, 11 October). The United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP, 2005: 134) states that "[m]ost of the waste was simply dumped on the beaches in containers and disposable leaking barrels". These heinous acts have been committed with complete disregard for the health of local communities and the environment.

It is alleged that this practice began in the early 1980s, with corrupt government officials receiving bribes to allow hazardous waste dumping, but the activity did not really take off until after the collapse of Somalia's central government in 1991 (UNEP, 2005: 134). From this time on there have been no authorities capable of effectively protecting Somalia's long coastlines. A combination of this instability, the availability of dumping sites in Somalia and the low public awareness of hazardous waste dumping has, according to the UNEP (2005: 135), made Somalia an attractive site for this illegal activity. Nick Nuttal, a UNEP spokesman, states: "European companies found it to be very cheap to get rid of the waste, costing as little as [US]\$2.50 a tonne, where waste disposal costs in Europe are something like [US]\$1000 a tonne" (cited

in Abdullahi, 2008, 11 October). Thus, it appears businesses in industrialized countries saw a great opportunity to make vast profits and took advantage of the instability in Somalia. This corporate greed has had serious implications for environmental and health security in Somalia.

Plate 4.1: Hazardous waste washed ashore in Puntland by the 2004 tsunami



Source: Somalia Monitor (2009, 24 January)

The effects of hazardous waste dumping were beginning to appear as early as 2002, when it was reported that thousands of fish and other marine life were mysteriously dying and being washed ashore along the Kenyan and Somali coastlines (BBC News, 2002, 31 January). As shown above in Plate 4.1, physical evidence of waste dumping literally appeared on the beaches of northeastern Somalia following the 2004 tsunami. The UNEP (2005: 134) reported that “the impact of the tsunami stirred up hazardous waste deposits” on Puntland beaches, resulting in the contamination of ground water, as well as health problems in the surrounding communities. According to the UNEP (2005: 134), these health problems have included “acute respiratory infections, dry heavy coughing and mouth bleeding, abdominal hemorrhages, unusual skin chemical reactions, and sudden death after inhaling toxic materials”. More recently, Egal (2009) has highlighted a suspected correlation between cancer incidences and hazardous waste dumping on Somali shores. Due to the lack of available information about the extent of such dumping, its full impact cannot be

calculated. Nevertheless, it has been speculated that around 300 people may have died as a result of this hazardous waste dumping (Noury, 2010: 30).

Acts of IUU foreign fishing and hazardous waste dumping are having devastating effects on the human security of Somalis. Panjabi (2010: 425) argues that the “deliberate and callous destruction of Somalia’s ocean ecology and the resulting threat to a vital food source so important for a country that lives on the edge of incessant famine is almost beyond comprehension”. Waldo (2009: 5-7) and Bawumia and Sumaila (2010: 21) have outlined how Somali fishermen, local authorities, and civil society organizations have made a number of attempts to draw international attention to the injustices of IUU fishing and waste dumping being committed by foreign actors in Somali waters. However, despite efforts to draw attention to these terrible crimes, they have gone largely unnoticed by the international community.

4.5 Chapter Summary

To fully grasp the underlying factors driving piracy off the Somali coast, it is necessary to have a good understanding of the context from which this piracy has emerged. This context has been provided through an examination of the human security situation in Somalia. The chapter has outlined how Somalia’s volatile past has led to the poor human security situation that is currently laying waste to the country. Somalia’s instability has contributed to, and is being reinforced by, the dismal levels of development and human rights that are being experienced to varying degrees throughout the country. As piracy in Somalia is based in coastal areas, this chapter has narrowed its focus to look at the human security situation in such areas. This analysis has revealed how individuals living in coastal areas, such as Puntland, have become increasingly more reliant on marine resources as a means of livelihood, due to a variety of threats to traditional pastoralist ways of life. However, these much-needed marine resources, and the livelihoods dependent on them, have been devastated by a tsunami, and the illegal activities of foreign vessels in Somali waters.

Overall, this chapter has painted the picture of a volatile country, experiencing critical and pervasive threats to human freedoms and human fulfillment. In addition, the chapter has demonstrated that external actors have contributed greatly to this

setting through colonial and imperial policies, and the looting and polluting of Somali waters. As will be discussed in later chapters, it is from this context of human insecurity in Somalia that the threat of piracy has emerged. However, for now our attention turns to examine what exactly is this 'threat of piracy'.

Chapter 5

Background to Somali piracy and counter-piracy measures

5.1 Introduction

To better understand the underlying factors that are contributing to the causation of Somali piracy, and how to address these factors, it is necessary to examine what exactly 'Somali piracy' is, and what is currently being done to address it. Thus, the purpose of this chapter is to provide a background to Somali piracy and the counter-piracy measures currently being used to tackle the issue. The chapter begins by examining the nature of Somali piracy, outlining how it has evolved over time to become a sophisticated, top-down criminal operation. The chapter then discusses the many ways in which this criminal operation threatens human security both locally and globally. The chapter then goes on to critically examine the responses that have been taken by a range of actors, both in Somalia and internationally, to address the human security threat of Somali piracy. Finally, the chapter concludes by arguing that the current international responses have largely been ineffective, as they have been overly focused on deterring and disrupting piracy, rather than addressing its underlying causes.

5.2 The nature of Somali piracy

To gain a greater understanding of the nature of Somali piracy, this section outlines its historical growth from a rare opportunistic form of hostage taking in the eighteenth century to the highly organized piracy networks that hijack ships almost at will in the twenty-first century.

5.2.1 *History of Somali piracy*

Piracy in African waters is not a new phenomenon, it has a rich and deep history. From the sixteenth century until the nineteenth century, the Barbary Coast in North Africa (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya) was an infamous region for piracy (see Konstom, 2008: 73-94). However, during this period piracy was not a major issue in the area now known as Somalia. While not technically acts of piracy, there were occasional cases of shipwrecks off the Somali coast being pillaged and the survivors being held hostage (Colley, 2002). Despite not having a rich history of piracy *per se*, these acts of hostage taking share striking similarities with some aspects of the contemporary form of piracy that is currently plaguing Somali waters.

During the age of sail, the coastline of what is now Puntland was a notoriously difficult stretch of water to navigate, due to its strong currents, tides and monsoons (de Wijk *et al.*, 2010: 48). By the 1780s, there had been several infamous cases where local communities held shipwreck survivors hostage for ransom (Colley, 2002). This ransoming was a slow and altogether speculative process, as back then it could take months to contact the shipping agents in Aden or Djibouti, and even longer to hear their responses (de Wijk *et al.*, 2010: 44). Much like present-day Somali pirates, these opportunistic hostage takers realized the importance of keeping their captives safe and in good health while waiting for potential ransom payments (de Wijk *et al.*, 2010: 44). Another similarity between these historical cases of hostage taking and contemporary Somali piracy is that whereas today's pirates are purported to give a cut of their ransom spoils to local authorities, their predecessors paid rent to the ruling political elites for every shipwreck they held (Durrill, 1986).

The second half of the nineteenth century saw a dramatic technological change in sea travel, with steam replacing sail. This advance significantly reduced the likelihood of shipwreck, thus diminishing opportunities for local communities to hold shipwreck survivors hostage. From this time on piracy and hostage taking off the coast of Somalia was not much of an issue. However, like most inhabited coastal regions, there were the occasional incidences of small vessels being robbed by armed groups, and in the rare event of a shipwreck the ship, cargo and crew could still be preyed upon by local communities (UNSC, 2008: 14).

The use of the Suez Canal has seen heavy levels of maritime traffic passing by Somalia. Some estimates claim that, at present, as many as 33,000 vessels pass through the Gulf of Aden every year (Kraska, 2009: 198). Due to its close proximity to major international shipping routes, Silva (2008: 14) states: “geographically, Somalia is one of the most strategically-positioned countries in the world in terms of maritime traffic”.

The increased volume of maritime traffic passing by Somalia has created greater opportunities for acts of piracy to take place. Yet, a more structured form of piracy in Somalia did not begin until the mid-1990s when some armed groups, posing as coastguards, allegedly responded to the illegal fishing that, as discussed in the previous chapter, is taking place in Somalia’s territorial waters. These ‘coastguards’ attacked vessels that were claimed to be fishing illegally, and held them for ransom (Kraska, 2009: 198; Murphy, 2009a: 101). Piracy reports, cited in Samatar *et al.* (2010: 1385), suggest that a significant number of the incidences of piracy off the Somali coast during the mid-1990s were aimed at vessels engaged in illegal fishing. However, from the late-1990s onwards it seems that the pirates have no longer been predominantly targeting fishing trawlers. For instance, data from the ICC-IMB (2010) shows that in 2009 less than 8% of the vessels attacked by Somali pirates were fishing trawlers. Therefore, it appears that Somali piracy has become primarily orientated towards making profits from ransom payments, rather than preventing IUU fishing.

This piracy and hostage taking has expanded to target virtually any vessel that sails within, or close to, Somalia’s territorial waters (Chalk, 2000: 75). The captured vessels and crews are brought to shore, or close to shore, and held hostage to be released when a ransom payment is received. As discussed in Chapter One, Somali piracy has exploded to an unprecedented level with 217 reported cases of pirate attacks being attributed to Somali pirates in 2009, of which 47 resulted in successful hijackings (ICC-IMB, 2010). It has been estimated that there are currently around 1,400 active pirates in Somalia (UNODC, 2010: 199). To fully grasp how Somali

piracy has reached such unbelievable levels it is necessary to look at the current *modus operandi* of the pirates.

5.2.2 Current *modus operandi* of Somali pirates

At present, a typical Somali piracy operation involves a group of four to ten people going out in a skiff to hijack a ship, with the intention of holding it for ransom (Lennox, 2008: 9). These operations are generally orchestrated by a handful of pirate bosses. Thus, in many respects the current *modus operandi* of the Somali pirates reflects a highly organized and efficient corporatized system, which in the words of Ghosh (2010: 8) is “similar to that of a modern private company”. As will be discussed below, the use of advanced logistical infrastructure, and the associated tactics, technology and weaponry it brings, has dramatically increased the capabilities of the pirates, making Somali piracy a grave threat to human security globally.

It has been estimated that it costs around US\$6,000 to finance a single piracy mission off the Somali coast, because of factors such as the cost of a skiff, buying food, fuel, and weaponry (Walker, 2009, 4 June). This is a significant expense, which is clearly beyond the means of the average Somali pirate, who according to the UNSC (2008: 17) are generally unemployed youth and poor fishermen. Thus, to finance these expensive expeditions funding is usually provided by pirate bosses, who are generally based further inland, and do not engage in the hijackings directly (Gilpin, 2009: 7). These pirate bosses typically provide the complete logistics of the missions, including all the necessary equipment and weaponry, bribes to local officials and the entire intelligence gathering process (Lennox, 2008: 9; Ghosh, 2010: 8; Pham, 2010: 334). The pirate bosses are, therefore, critical to the perpetuation of Somalia’s top-down piracy networks. These pirate bosses invest in piracy expeditions in the hope of future financial returns.

Although there is no universal set of rules, it has been reported that the ransom spoils are generally divided in the following manner:

-
- 50% - pirate bosses (those who finance the mission)
 - 30% - pirates (those who execute the hijacking)
 - 10% - armed militia (those who control the territory where the pirates are based)
 - 10% - the local community (elders and local officials)
- (Harper, 2009, 24 May)

The payments to the pirates are typically shared equally, although the first pirate to board the ship is often rewarded *saami sare* (a bigger share of the ransom for bravery) (Adbinur, 2009, 30 April). It has been estimated that the pirates who execute the hijackings may earn between US\$6,000 to US\$10,000 from a single successful piracy mission (UNODC, 2010: 199). While a portion of the profits received by the pirate bosses is typically invested in new equipment and weaponry to advance the attacking capabilities of future operations (UNSC, 2008: 17).

At present there are two major piracy networks operating along the Somali coastline: the largest and most active one is based in Puntland in the Nugaal district in the cities of Eyl and Garad, while the other is based in central Somalia in the Mudug district near the cities of Haradheere and Hobyo (UNSC, 2010a: 38). The hijackings by these networks are often well-planned operations reflecting the highly organized logistical infrastructure they employ (Meji *et al.*, 2010: 12). Previously the pirates typically relied upon local fishing communities for logistical support, whereas it is claimed some of the more successful pirate groups now receive intelligence information from a wide network of coastal and port informers (UNSC, 2008: 17). According to Gilpin (2009: 9), these informers provide the pirates with information regarding the routes vessels are taking, the cargo they are carrying, and the defense mechanisms they possess. Knowing this information in advance helps the piracy networks locate suitable targets, thus making their operations more efficient.

A key factor that allows the networks to implement this highly organized logistical infrastructure is the use of advanced technology. The use of satellite phones, the internet and GPS navigation units helps pirates receive information through their networks more quickly, locate targeted vessels more effectively, and coordinate their

attacks more efficiently (Gillan, 2007, 12 June; Onuoha, 2009: 36). The increased coordination such technology allows has enabled the pirates to devise and implement more daring operational tactics (Sörenson, 2008: 20). For instance, Fraser (2008, 21 November) reports “there is evidence they have staged ‘dummy’ attacks to lure in warships while another gang hits the real target, further away”. Another strategy that has been used involves the pirates making false distress signals to confuse shipping (Payne, 2010: 101). It has also become more common for pirates to attack in large packs, where a number of skiffs surround the prey making their defense even more difficult (Gettleman, 2008, 16 December). These are just a few examples indicating how the use of advanced technology, and the increased coordination it entails, has enabled improved tactical ploys, which have increased the capability of the pirates.

Another way in which the adoption of new technology has improved the capabilities of Somali pirates is through the use of more advanced vessels. The skiffs used by the pirates are fast and maneuverable, however their range is significantly limited. To overcome this constraint, since 2007, some pirates have been using ‘motherships’ to transport the skiffs to more desirable targets well beyond the coastal waters of Somalia (Hand, 2007, 18 May). According to Middleton (2008: 4), “these [motherships] are generally fishing trawlers that the pirates capture closer to shore”. Having the appearance of fishing trawlers enables the motherships to move inconspicuously, allowing the pirates to hide among genuine fishing boats. When a suitable vessel comes into view the skiffs can be released close by and race towards the targeted vessel (Percy and Shortland, 2009: 4). The use of motherships has enabled Somali pirates to greatly increase their attacking range.

An additional type of technology that has further advanced the capabilities of Somali pirates is that of weaponry. Chalk (2008: 13) argues that “[t]he global proliferation of small arms has provided pirates ... with enhanced means to operate on a more destructive and sophisticated level”. Somali pirates have largely abandoned the use of rudimentary weapons such as knives and clubs, instead they have adopted the use of increasingly more powerful weaponry (Lehr and Lehmann, 2007: 16; Konstam, 2009, 14 November; Ndumbe and Moki, 2009: 97; Sauvageot, 2009: 252). Somali

pirates are now typically equipped with AK-47 type assault rifles and rocket propelled grenades (RPGs) (UNSC, 2010a: 86). Plate 5.1 shows some weaponry that has been confiscated from Somali pirates, highlighting the destructive technology the pirates have employed. This use of advanced weaponry has increased the distance at which the pirates can fire upon vessels, as well as creating a higher level of fear, which may increase the willingness of seafarers to surrender during attacks. Overall, the use of advanced weaponry has greatly improved the pirates' capacity to attack vessels.

Plate 5.1: Weaponry seized from pirates during anti-piracy operations



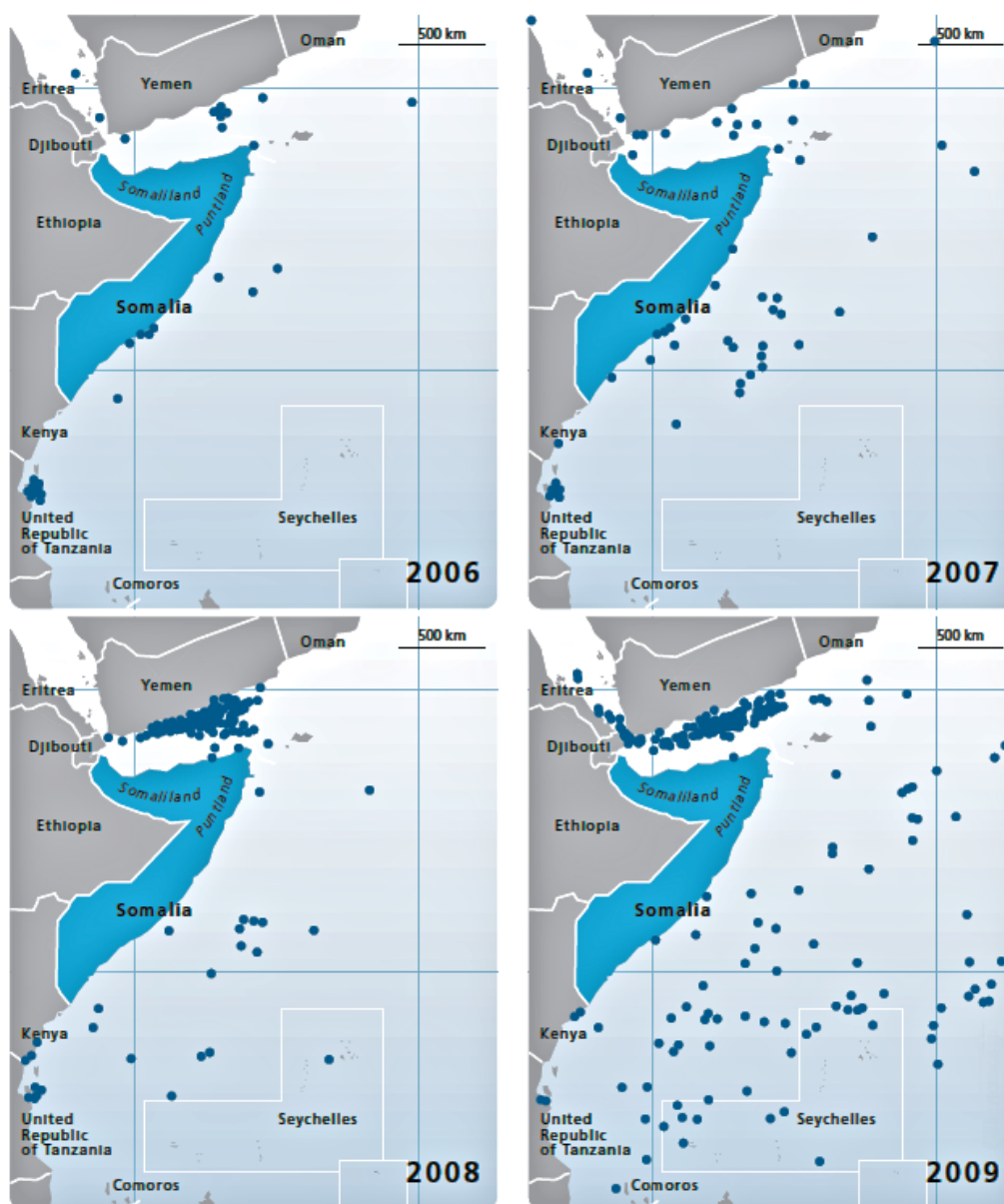
Source: UNSC (2010a: 85)

The above-mentioned advances in tactics, technology and weaponry have enabled Somali pirates to attack all kinds of vessels – including general cargo ships, bulk carriers, fishing vessels, sailing yachts, tugboats, and even Very Large Crude Carriers (VLCCs) (Onuoha, 2009: 36). The pirates' ability to successfully hijack VLCCs far from shore is an impressive feat given the sheer size of these vessels. The hijacking of the *Sirius Star*, which is one of the largest ships ever built, demonstrates the advanced attacking capabilities of the piracy networks. Box 5.1 outlines some key information regarding the hijacking of the *Sirius Star*.

Box 5.1: The *Sirius Star*, a VLCC hijacked by Somali pirates**Ship's name:** Sirius Star**Flag state:** Liberia**Country of ownership:** Saudi Arabia**Size of ship:** length - 330 meters, dead weight – 318,000 tons**Value of ship:** US\$150 million**Cargo:** two million barrels of oil, worth over US\$100 million**Location of hijacking:** over 800 kilometers off the coast of Kenya**Date of hijacking:** 15 November 2008**Duration of hijacking:** 56 days**Number of hostages:** 25 crew members**Ransom paid:** estimated at US\$3 million**Sources:** Rice (2008, 20 November);
Ndumbe and Moki (2009); and Onuoha (2009)**Source:** Boston Globe (2009, 27 March)

In summary, the above sections have highlighted how Somali piracy has evolved from an opportunistic form of hostage taking in the eighteenth century to become sophisticated, top-down criminal organizations, which proactively hunt potential targets. Technological and tactical advances have enabled Somali pirates to significantly widen their attacking range, as well as increasing the pool of targets they are capable of attacking. On the following page, Figure 5.1 visually portrays how these advances, particularly the use of motherships from 2007, have enabled the pirates to move from coastal waters to attack targets on the high seas at a much greater frequency. This increased capability has, in turn, increased the threat Somali piracy poses to human security both locally and globally.

Figure 5.1: Range and frequency of incidences of piracy attributed to Somali pirates, 2006-2009



Key: • Each dot represents an actual or attempted piracy attack

Source: UNODC (2010: 197)

5.3 Somali piracy as a human security threat

The purpose of this section is to demonstrate that Somali piracy presents a grave threat to human freedoms, and thus must be addressed. The effects of Somali piracy extend well beyond Somalia, with the impact on human security being felt by a range of actors globally. The implications of Somali piracy include, but are not limited to:

threats to the safety and wellbeing of seafarers; economic threats; threats to the provision of humanitarian assistance; potential environmental threats; and the possibility that pirate groups may have links with extremist organizations.

5.3.1 *Threats to the safety and wellbeing of seafarers*

One of the most direct and concerning implications of Somali piracy is the threat it poses to the personal security and economic security of seafarers. As shown in Table 5.1, between 2004-2009, 21 seafarers were physically injured, 11 were killed, and a staggering 2,210 seafarers were held hostage or kidnapped by Somali pirates.

Table 5.1: Number of seafarers held hostage or kidnapped, physically injured, and killed by Somali pirates, 2004-2009

Year	Held hostage or kidnapped	Physically injured	Killed
2009	857	10	4
2008	818	2	4
2007	197	6	2
2006	87	2	1
2005	241	1	0
2004	10	0	0
Totals	2,210	21	11

Source: adapted from ICC-IMB (2005-2010)

Being held hostage at gunpoint for months on end can cause significant psychological trauma for its victims (Chalk, 2008: 15; Sampson, 2009: 4). On the following page, Box 5.2 presents some first-hand accounts from seafarers, highlighting the immense trauma they have been subjected to by piracy. This discourse also demonstrates that some seafarers have been unwilling to return to the sea due to fear of piracy. Such disruptions in employment can have far reaching effects, particularly for seafarers from developing countries whose livelihoods, and in some cases the livelihoods of their communities, often rely heavily on income earned seafaring. Overall, Somali piracy presents a serious human security threat to seafarers by impacting on their physical, psychological and economic wellbeing.

Box 5.2: Seafarers' perspectives on Somali piracy

In media interviews with seafarers who have been held hostage by Somali pirates, many have conveyed strong feelings of fear and helplessness. For instance, Victor Bilbao, who was held hostage on the *Alakrana* for 47 days, recounts: *"We were frightened because at any moment they might have shot us"* (cited in Barillas, 2009, 30 November). Niaz Mohammad, a second-officer on the *Al-Meezan*, expresses similar feelings of fear: *"They treated us like dogs, they hit us, they threatened to kill us"* (cited in AFP, 2009, 27 November). While Abelardo Pacheco, the captain of the *MT Stolt Strength*, recounts: *"Daily life was always a combination of fear and helplessness, hopelessness. It was the most negative feeling one could experience"* (cited in AFP, 2009, 2 May).

In addition to being subjected to fear, seafarers have often experienced horrific living conditions while being held hostage. For example, Captain Genadiy Voronov, who was held hostage on the *MV Ariana* for 322 days, stated: *"They [the pirates] gave us some rotten rice and that's all we eat here. A couple of kilos a day for 24 people. No fresh water to drink or to wash up"* (cited in Popova, 2009, 3 September). Graham Egbegi, the captain of the *Yenegoa Ocean*, recounts his ten months in captivity stating: *"People got sick. They [the pirates] didn't care about our lives. We were miserable"* (cited in Reuters, 2009, 10 June).

Some victims of pirate attacks have decided to quit seafaring due to the trauma they have experienced. For instance, Jian Lichun, who was held hostage for 202 days on the *Qingfenghua*, asserts: *"I will never go back to sea"* (cited in Qian, 2009, 1 May). Even seafarers who have not personally experienced pirate attacks are seriously reconsidering their career options. For example, Carolos Campos, a 51 year-old Filipino seafarer, states: *"I'm retiring in the next few years. I can't risk anything happening to me"* (cited in Landingin, 2008, 26 November). While another Filipino seafarer, Jun Sampelo, exclaims: *"If I was offered a job that would take me to Somalia now, I would refuse. I have my family to think about"* (cited in Sudderuddin and Yon, 2009, 23 November). In summary, these statements by seafarers shed some light on the devastating impact piracy can have on their personal, economic and health security.

5.3.2 *Economic threats*

Seafarers are not the only actors whose economic security is affected by Somali piracy, as piracy also has significant financial ramifications for individuals, businesses and countries with international shipping interests. These costs can be incurred in a number of ways including: ransom payments; damage to ships and cargos; delays in delivering cargoes; and increased expenses from rising insurance rates and security measures (Ploch *et al.*, 2009: 13). It is difficult to estimate the exact financial costs of Somali piracy. Nevertheless, the examples discussed below aim to provide some insight on these costs.

The most direct financial expense associated with Somali piracy is that of ransom payments. The UNSC (2010a: 36) conservatively estimates that US\$82 million was paid in ransom to Somali pirates in 2009. In reality the amount paid in ransom will significantly increase if you factor in the cost of lawyers, risk consultants, security advisers, and the cost of delivering the money to the pirates (Cox, 2009, 29 January). In addition to the threat of having to pay large ransoms, Somali piracy has caused insurance rates for some ships traveling through the Gulf of Aden to rise from US\$500 per voyage in 2008 to US\$20,000 in 2009 (Frump, 2009, 12 January). Measures to deter pirates are also adding to the expenses for merchant vessels. For instance, the use of onboard security guards can cost as much as US\$40,000 per passage (Ho, 2009: 505). International counter-piracy measures are also proving expensive, with the cost of deploying naval vessels in Somali waters estimated to cost the international community between US\$200-350 million annually (Knott, 2009). These figures highlight just some of the ways in which Somali piracy is financially affecting actors globally. It is important to note that piracy is, in many ways, also having a detrimental impact on economic security in Somalia.

Although a significant amount of money has entered Somalia in the form of ransom payments, piracy nonetheless presents a variety of challenges to local economies. Due to piracy, many ships have been diverted away from docks at Somali ports, resulting in less income for port authorities and decreased employment opportunities at these ports (UNSC, 2008: 29). In addition, by diverting ships away

from Somali ports, Ndumbe and Moki (2009: 112) claim that piracy has led to a decline in imported goods entering the Somali economy, which in turn has resulted in highly inflated commodity prices. Anecdotal evidence also suggests that property prices in piracy havens, such as Eyl, have risen sharply due to the influx of ransom money (Gilpin, 2009: 11; Anderson, 2010: 331). Thus, it appears piracy is contributing to rampant inflation, displacing legitimate employment opportunities, and creating exclusion from the local economy for those who are not benefiting from the pirate trade. These issues are major human security concerns especially for people living in a country that, as demonstrated in Chapter Four, is already in the midst of a humanitarian crisis.

5.3.3 Threats to the provision of humanitarian assistance

As discussed in the previous chapter, more than 3.6 million Somalis required humanitarian assistance in 2010 (UNSC, 2010a: 6). However, the delivery of much-needed food aid has been disrupted by piracy, with some aid carrying ships being attacked by Somali pirates (Ploch *et al.*, 2009: 14). Due to the threat of piracy, the World Food Programme (WFP) was forced to temporarily suspend food delivery to Somalia in late 2007 and again in 2008 (Middleton, 2008: 9). In a country suffering from severe food insecurity, disruptions in the delivery of humanitarian assistance can have devastating implications.

5.3.4 Potential future threats

On top of the effects of Somali piracy that are currently being experienced, many commentators warn the activity may have additional ramifications in the future. For instance, it is often stated that piracy could lead to an environmental disaster, if the pirates were to fire on a ship laden with chemicals or oil (Chalk, 2008: 17; Middleton, 2008: 9; Potgieter, 2008: 8). If this scenario were to take place, it could cause severe damage to the fragile and valuable marine ecosystems in the Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean, thus threatening environmental security in the region.

Another potential threat, which has raised some concern, is the possibility that extremist organizations in Somalia, such as *al Shabaab* and *Hizbul Islam*, may partake in piracy or have links with piracy networks as a source of funding to further their

ideological causes (see Middleton, 2008; Jane's Terrorism and Security Monitor, 2008; Ndumbe and Moki, 2009; Swart, 2009). At the moment this is pure speculation as there is no evidence of any such links (Andersen, 2009: 4; UNSC, 2010a: 37). Nevertheless, the possibility of these links remains a feasible threat, which could have disastrous effects on political security in the region.

In summary, the above sections have drawn attention to some of the major implications of Somali piracy, such as the threats it presents to: seafarers; economic security globally and locally; the provision of humanitarian assistance; as well as concerns it may lead to environmental disasters and the strengthening of extremist organizations. These are all grave threats impacting on the freedoms of a variety of local and international actors. From a human security perspective, these threats are unacceptable and therefore must be addressed.

5.4 Responses to Somali piracy

In response to the threat of Somali piracy, a variety of actors have undertaken a range of measures intended to deter, disrupt and suppress piracy off the Somali coast. The following sections examine what is being done, both locally and internationally, to address the human security threat of Somali piracy, and evaluate the effectiveness of these measures.

5.4.1 *Local responses to Somali piracy*

As discussed in Chapter Four, Somalia has been without a functional central government since 1991. According to Murphy (2007: 30), the collapse of the Somali state has created a lawless environment in which piracy can flourish. This environment is highlighted by the lack of a coastguard or navy capable of patrolling the coastal waters, and the absence of a police force willing and able to patrol known pirate bases. Thus, the absence of capable central governance has arguably created a situation where pirates can ply their trade in Somali waters virtually unimpeded, while also being able to bring their hostages close to shore, or to shore, without fear of intervention. The demise of the Somali state has clearly decreased the capacity of

central authorities to prevent piracy, however this has not always been the case, as will be discussed below.

The importance of capable central governance at stamping out piracy is demonstrated by the fact that Somali piracy, in its present form, did not really begin until after the collapse of the central government in 1991. The importance of central governance is further highlighted by the brief rule of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) in the second half of 2006 (see Chapter Four). The ICU publicly declared that piracy was *Haram* (against Islam) and launched an attack against the pirate ports (Hansen, 2009: 27). As a result, during their brief six-month rule piracy virtually vanished around Somalia (Ho, 2009: 503). According to Middleton (2009: 3), “this indicates that a functioning government in Somalia is capable of controlling piracy”. However, as discussed in Chapter Four, although there may not be a functional *central* government in Somalia there are two regional governments, which may be regarded as ‘functional’ to certain degrees: 1) the Government of Somaliland; and 2) the Government of Puntland.

Somaliland has been relatively successful at preventing piracy. With the exception of the Sanaag province, which is contested by Puntland but not really controlled by either of the two entities, “Somaliland ports have never been used to host hijacked ships” (Hansen, 2009: 30). According to the UNSC (2010a: 37), the absence of piracy operations in Somaliland may largely be attributed to the local authorities, who have adopted a relatively firm and decisive posture against piracy. Somaliland possesses a coastguard with 350 personnel and maintains a dozen manned counter-piracy observatories (UNSC, 2010a: 37).

In contrast to Somaliland, the semi-autonomous region of Puntland has been home to the “most active and capable pirate networks” (Ploch *et al.*, 2009: 7). However, this situation is not necessarily the result of an absolute lack of governance, as in a Somali setting Puntland has relatively strong institutions of governance (see Chapter Four). Thus, Puntland arguably has authorities capable of preventing piracy, yet it seems they have been unwilling to do so. It is speculated that this unwillingness may largely

be due to some Puntland officials being linked to piracy (Middleton, 2008: 5; Eichstaedt, 2010: 62; UNSC, 2010a: 37).

However, it appears Puntland authorities have recently been making a greater effort to address piracy. From April 2009, Puntland security forces have begun to launch raids on pirate bases, and the region's courts have even tried and convicted suspected pirates (All Africa, 2009, 24 April; Hesse, 2010: 80). Local authorities have also initiated *wa'yigelin*, a 'sensitization campaign', which has offered general amnesty to those that renounce piracy (Ploch *et al.*, 2009: 7). Puntland officials also claim they are going to crackdown on piracy at sea, through the creation of a marine force mandated to protect Puntland's shores from pirates, as well as from IUU fishing (Garowe Online, 2010, 30 November). The force, when completed, is hoped to consist of 1,050 soldiers, of which the first batch of 170 has already been trained. It has been claimed that this greater willingness, from Puntland authorities, to fight piracy has had some success, with some piratical activity from the former pirate-hub Eyl being displaced to Garad (UNSC, 2010a: 38). However, Hansen (2009: 39) cynically speculates that this displacement may instead simply be the result of pirates trying to avoid having to pay bribes to Puntland officials. Overall, Puntland's institutions of governance arguably have the capacity to crackdown more effectively on piracy, yet it appears some local officials have lacked the willingness to do so, because of vested interests in the continuation of piracy.

It is important to stress that, as discussed in Chapter Four, although Somalia is a failed state that does not necessarily mean it is a failed society (Murphy, 2009a: 2). The central government may have collapsed but there still appears to be forms of "governance without government" (Menkhaus, 2007a). Thus, there have been instances of members of the general society, outside of official governance positions, attempting to curtail piracy. For example, Somaliland's success at preventing piracy is not solely the result of effective local law enforcement, but has also utilized the participation of local elders and communities in catching pirates (Hansen, 2009: 43). Moreover, some Islamic imams have embarked on campaigns to excommunicate pirates (Garowe Online, 2009, 26 May). Hansen and Mesøy (2006) and Hansen (2009) argue that there is great potential for individuals outside of official

governance systems, whether they are central or regional, to play a role in piracy prevention.

In summary, this section has outlined how the demise of the Somali state has decreased the capacity of central authorities to prevent piracy. However, despite the lack of capable central governance in Somalia, regional authorities and members of the general population have attempted to prevent piracy, with varying degrees of success. In spite of these local responses, piracy networks remain strong in certain areas of the country. As a result, international actors have had a significant role to play in the delivery of counter-piracy measures.

5.4.2 *International responses to Somali piracy*

In response to the global threat of Somali piracy the UNSC has passed a number of key resolutions. In June 2008, the UNSC adopted Resolution 1816, which permits states to use “all necessary means to repress acts of piracy and armed robbery” in Somalia’s territorial waters (UNSC, 2008, 2 June). While in October 2008, Resolution 1838 called for nations to intensify their efforts to combat Somali piracy (UNSC, 2008, 7 October). Another major resolution was passed in December 2008, which allows third-party governments to conduct counter-piracy operations on land in Somalia, but only with authorization from the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia (UNSC, 2008, 16 December). These resolutions have enabled and encouraged the deployment of foreign warships to Somali waters for counter-piracy purposes.

A variety of multinational task forces are currently patrolling Somali waters. For instance, warships under the Combined Task Force 151 (CTF 151) have been mandated to deter piracy and provide safe passage for ships through the Maritime Security Patrol Area (MSPA) in the Gulf of Aden (Combined Maritime Forces, 2009). In addition, the European Union Naval Force’s (EU NAVFOR) mission *Operation Atalanta* and NATO’s *Operation Ocean Shield* have deployed naval vessels to the region to deter piracy and escort ships carrying humanitarian aid (EU NAVFOR, 2009; NATO, 2009). Besides the ships operating under the auspices of these multinational task forces, there have also been a number of vessels deployed to

Somali waters on independent national missions, primarily to protect national shipping interests. The most notable countries to deploy warships independently include Russia, India, China, Malaysia, South Korea, Japan and Iran (Ho, 2009: 507; Ploch *et al.*, 2009: 19). In total, it is estimated that at any time there may be up to 30 naval vessels currently patrolling the region (van Rooyen, 2011: 240).

The deployment of these naval forces has had some success at disrupting piracy. Based on statistics from the ICC-IMB (2009; 2010), 36% of reported pirate attacks attributed to Somali pirates resulted in successful hijackings in 2008, while in 2009 the pirates' success rate dropped to 22%. Moreover, between August 2008 and December 2009, it is claimed international naval operations delivered 269 pirates for prosecution to Kenya and other jurisdictions (of whom 46 were jailed) and killed 11 pirates (Rotberg, 2010: 2). It was also reported that they destroyed 42 pirate vessels and confiscated 14 boats, hundreds of small arms, nearly 50 RPGs, and numerous other equipment (Rotberg, 2010: 2). Thus, it appears the international naval presence has had some success at deterring and disrupting piracy off the Somali coast. However, rather than eliminating piracy the UNSC claims:

... the main effect of international counter-piracy efforts has been to shift pirate areas of operation away from the Gulf of Aden into the Indian Ocean, and towards hunting grounds increasingly distant from the Somali coast (UNSC, 2010a: 36).

Attacks over 1,500km off the coast of Somalia have now become commonplace, with the pirates operating across 2.5 million square miles of water (Rotberg, 2010: 2; also see Figure 5.1). There is a general consensus among commentators and naval experts that many more ships are needed to effectively patrol such a large area, with some claiming as many as 250 warships may be needed (Ndumbe and Moki, 2009: 118).

To make matters even more problematic for international naval forces, even if they do apprehend pirates there are a variety of difficulties associated with prosecuting them (see Kraska and Wilson, 2008; Carbin, 2009; Kraska, 2009; Kraska and Wilson, 2009; Treves, 2009; Kontorovich, 2010; Sterio, 2010). Once captured, the pirates are generally not turned over to local authorities in Somalia, due to the perceived lack of

responsible authorities in the failed state (Kraska and Wilson, 2009: 518). There is a risk that the pirates may simply be released, or alternatively that they may be severely punished in a manner, such as the death penalty, which could create human rights violations (Kontorovich, 2010: 245; Sterio, 2010: 1483). In addition, it appears the authorities of many seizing states have been reluctant to prosecute the pirates themselves, due to the logistics and expenses involved, and concerns the pirates may subsequently be granted asylum (Kraska, 2009: 203; Møller, 2009b: 4; Kontorovich, 2010: 256). Due to these difficulties, several countries, including the US, Germany, France, Britain, Denmark and the Netherlands, have in some cases simply released pirates back to shore, where in all likelihood they will revert back to their piratical ways (see Associated Press, 2009, 21 April; BBC, 2009, 18 April; Ungood-Thomas and Woolf, 2009, 29 November; Groves, 2010, 28 January; Hughes and Radia, 2010, 2 April).

When a legal path has been taken, rather than prosecuting the pirates themselves, most naval authorities have found it easier to handover apprehended pirates to countries like Kenya or the Seychelles for trial (Kraska, 2009: 209; Kontorovich, 2010: 268). However, Kenya stopped accepting Somali pirates for trial in April 2010, claiming that many of the apprehending states had reneged on the financial commitments they made towards the cost of conducting these trials (BBC, 2010, 1 April). Kenya finally resumed accepting pirates for trial in June 2010, following a pledge by donors to spend US\$9.3 million to prosecute piracy suspects in regional courts (Associated Press, 2010, 15 June). Despite the limited success of this cooperation with regional players, the efforts to apprehend and prosecute Somali pirates have done little to stem the number of active pirates, thus leaving many merchant vessels to essentially fend for themselves.

To protect themselves from piracy, many shipping companies have attempted to enhance their own security. As a result, some commercial ships have adopted a variety of self-defense measures such as the use of: fire hoses, razor wire placed along decks, and non-lethal anti-piracy weapons like the Long Range Acoustic Device (LRAD); while some have even hired private armed guards (see Vaisman, 2007: 100; Carbin, 2009: 53; Baniela, 2010: 201; Mojon, 2010, 7 March; Reuters, 2010, 1 March).

However, once again these are merely measures to deter rather than eliminate piracy.

In summary, this section has outlined the international responses to Somali piracy to date, including the authorization of UNSC resolutions, the deployment of warships to Somali waters, the provision of funding for the prosecution of pirates in regional courts, and the increased securitization of some merchant vessels. While these measures have had some success at deterring and disrupting piracy off the Somali coast, they clearly have not eliminated it. The success rate of pirate attacks may have decreased, but the frequency and range of pirate attacks have increased to shocking levels.

5.5 Chapter summary

This chapter has provided a background to Somali piracy and the current counter-piracy measures being used to address this issue. The chapter has outlined the nature of Somali piracy, describing how it has evolved to become a highly sophisticated, top-down criminal operation, which has significant implications for human security both locally and globally. Due to the threat piracy poses to human security, a range of actors both in Somalia and internationally have attempted to curtail piracy through a variety of measures, to varying degrees of success. However, as discussed above, these measures have largely been focused on deterring and disrupting piracy, and have done little to address the underlying factors driving Somali piracy. Such a focus is clearly a major shortcoming, as for counter-piracy measures to be effective and sustainable they must deal with the underlying factors contributing to the causation of piracy. To address the causes of piracy, a greater understanding of these causes is first required. Thus, the following chapter will outline the methodological approach through which this study aims to contribute to an understanding of the underlying causes of Somali piracy.

Chapter 6

Research methodology

6.1 Introduction

It is often stated that one of the keys to good research methodology is that it must be transparent and open to discussion (Gomm, 2004; O'Leary, 2010). Thus, the purpose of this chapter is to clearly outline *how* the research for this study has been conducted, and *why* it has been carried out in such a manner. The chapter begins by discussing the research philosophy underpinning the methodological design of this study, and then goes on to describe and justify the methods that have been used to collect interview data from preexisting media sources. Finally, the chapter concludes by examining how this interview data has been analyzed thematically in order to contribute to an understanding of the root causes of Somali piracy.

6.2 Research philosophy and methodological design

Good research methodology must be designed appropriately to address the objectives of the research (O'Leary, 2010). To recap, the principal objective of this study is to contribute to an understanding of the effectiveness of a human security approach at addressing Somali piracy. The following section examines how the philosophical and methodological design of this study address this objective.

The positionality of this thesis is heavily influenced by my motives and presuppositions that led me to engage with the issue of Somali piracy. Despite having no connection to Somalia, pirates, people involved in counter-piracy measures or individuals affected by piracy, I have developed a strong interest in the topic. This interest stems largely from my belief that the counter-piracy measures currently being implemented by the international community are ineffective and in certain

respects unjust. As discussed in previous chapters, the international community's counter-piracy measures are largely only addressing a symptom of deeper problems in Somalia – a lack of human security. According to my opinion, all individuals should be guaranteed a minimum level of human security. However, with regards to Somali piracy, it appears the international community is only attempting to protect the human security of potential victims of piracy, while largely ignoring the human security of Somalis. Thus, my motive for conducting this research is to highlight how ensuring human security for *all* is not only just, but might also present a more effective and sustainable means of preventing piracy off the Somali coast.

My personal beliefs have clearly influenced my motives for undertaking this particular study, while also heavily influencing my values regarding the topic, thus raising serious concerns about the objectivity and worth of undertaking such a subjective piece of research. However, May (2001: 49) states it is futile to attempt to entirely eliminate the researcher's subjectivities from the research process, as attempts to find understanding are inevitably mediated through a researcher's background and beliefs. According to Gomm (2004: 19), instead of trying to eliminate subjectivities from research, a researcher should attempt to be as transparent as possible about them. Thus, as outlined in Chapter Two, this thesis is being approached openly from a human security perspective (CHS, 2003); built on the belief that ensuring human freedoms for all individuals is the most effective, and morally just, means of tackling issues of global insecurity, such as Somali piracy.

As discussed above, the motive for undertaking this particular research topic is to demonstrate the need for change in the counter-piracy measures currently being used by the international community, by contributing to an understanding of the effectiveness of a human security approach at addressing the root causes of Somali piracy. This style of research falls into the category of 'applied research', research which attempts to produce knowledge that, ideally, will help pave the way for change (Babbie, 2007: 25-26; O'Leary, 2007: 134-138). As this thesis intends to produce 'knowledge', it is necessary to outline the epistemological position of this study.

An epistemology is an assumption on how the world operates and how knowledge is produced (O’Leary, 2010: 5). Within the Western tradition of science, two general categories of epistemologies have been identified – positivism and interpretivism. Positivists argue that research can be conducted in a value-free, neutral, objective manner to discover a single ‘truth’ (David and Sutton, 2004: 35; Babbie, 2007: 33). In contrast, interpretivists believe that the world may not be knowable (O’Leary, 2010). Thus, whereas positivists seek to *explain* human behavior and the social world, interpretivists seek to *understand* these (Bryman, 2001: 13). Interpretivists acknowledge that these understandings can lead to different interpretations of reality, as they are inevitably mediated through the subjectivities and biases inherent in research (Mason, 2002: 3). However, interpretivists maintain that these interpretations are themselves part of the knowledge they are pursuing.

This study is conducted within the interpretivist approach, grounded on the belief that there is not one single, objective truth that can be found and explained. This approach argues that the social world, consisting of humans within changing contexts and situations, can be examined through a variety of methods that seek to understand the structure of the social world and the institutions and human relationships within it (Bryman, 2001: 13). Based on this epistemological position, this thesis does not intend to *explain* the underlying issues contributing to the causation of Somali piracy, rather it intends to *interpret* these through a human security analytical lens, and provide subjective recommendations on how to address these issues.

Due to the interpretivist nature of this thesis, the use of a qualitative research approach is most appropriate. Qualitative research aims to gather an understanding of human behavior and the reasons that govern such behavior (O’Leary, 2010: 113). To gain a greater understanding of the underlying factors contributing to the causation of Somali piracy, qualitative thematic analyses have been conducted on a range of preexisting media interviews with Somali pirates, and other key individuals in Somalia. The methodologies used to collect this data, and conduct these analyses, are outlined below.

6.3 Methodology for data collection

The purpose of this section is to explain the methodology used for data collection in this study, while demonstrating the relevance of this methodology with regards to the research objective. This aim will be achieved by justifying the use of an indirect data collection methodology, outlining the methods used for locating and recording potential sources of data, and by critically reflecting on this data collection process.

6.3.1 *The use of an indirect data collection methodology*

In order to understand the underlying factors contributing to the causation of Somali piracy it is clearly necessary to grasp the factors driving people to commit these acts. The motives and justifications voiced by Somali pirates, and other key individuals in Somalia, will provide valuable insights on the underlying factors contributing to piracy, and may also reveal how human insecurity influences these factors. Due to the security concerns as well as the ethical and logistical difficulties involved in conducting interviews directly with Somali pirates, an indirect approach for obtaining interview data has been adopted for the purpose of this study.

In recent times there has been a plethora of media reports on the topic of Somali piracy, an increasing number of which contain interviews with Somali pirates, as well as with individuals in Somalia talking about piracy. These media reports have been the result of the international community's current interest in Somali piracy, as well as the relative willingness of Somali pirates and their spokesmen to proactively engage with the media. These factors have led to an increasing body of interviews present in disparate media sources. Yet, in the academic literature on Somali piracy it appears there has, to date, been an absence of work that comprehensively draws together this data. This study intends to use an indirect data collection methodology by mining this rich untapped source of data in order to address the objective of this thesis.

The use of preexisting interviews presents a variety of advantages and disadvantages. The key advantage gained from adopting such an approach was that it gave me an avenue to 'listen to the voices' of pirates, and other Somalis, which would

have been unfeasible for me to obtain directly. Another advantage of this approach was that I was able to gather far more data than if I were to conduct the interviews myself. Furthermore, as these interviews were conducted by a variety of journalists, many raised questions that I may not have thought of if I were conducting the interviews myself. However on the other hand, as I had no control over the questions being asked within these interviews, there was a risk that the data might not adequately address my research questions. Another key issue I had to be weary of when dealing with interviews obtained from media sources was the reliability, validity, and potentially unethical nature of this data (this issue is examined in more detail in Section 6.3.4). Despite these potential challenges, overall I found the use of an indirect data collection methodology to be a valuable way to examine the motives and justifications voiced by Somali pirates, which would have been impossible for me to achieve by any other means.

6.3.2 *Locating and recording potential sources of data*

To locate potential sources of data this study has made use of online news sources. In recent times, internet newspapers have grown into a mainstream medium, with most major news outlets publishing much of their content online, thus allowing relatively easy access to archived media reports (Li, 2006). To locate news content on Somali piracy, this study has used a variety of online media search engines. The search engines listed in Table 6.1 were used to conduct an extensive search for general media content on Somali piracy, while a combination of the keywords listed in Table 6.2 were employed in these searches.

Table 6.1: Search engines used to find general media content on Somali piracy

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://global.factiva.com • http://news.google.com • http://news.yahoo.com |
|---|

Table 6.2: Key words used in online searches for media content on Somali piracy

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Somali* • Pirate* • Piracy • Interview* • Hijack* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ransom • Hostage* • Gulf of Aden • Puntland • Eyl 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garowe • Hobyo • Haradheere • Garad
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More focused searches to find additional media content on Somali piracy were also carried out on a selection of international and Somali-based news websites. These websites were chosen based on the likelihood they would possess useful and reliable sources of data. The websites listed in Table 6.3 met these criteria, based on insights garnered through the previous searches, as well as through an examination of their ethical codes of conduct (see Section 6.3.4).

Table 6.3: International and Somali-based media sources used to find content on Somali piracy

<i>International media sources:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://allafrica.com • http://www.bbc.co.uk • http://www.cnn.com • http://dailymail.co.uk • http://english.aljazeera.net • http://www.guardian.co.uk • http://nytimes.com • http://www.reuters.com • http://www.timesonline.co.uk 	<i>Somali-based media sources:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.garoweonline.com • http://somalimonitor.com • http://somaliiwyn.com
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Media content on Somali piracy was located on these websites through the use of one or more of the following approaches: manually searching through the archives available on the website; using the search option present on the website; and/or conducting advanced searches on <http://www.google.com>, whereby the search was restricted to one of the domain addresses listed above. When search engines were

used, a combination of the keywords listed in Table 6.2 was once again utilized. After locating media content on Somali piracy, the next step involved scanning it for relevant data (interviews with Somali pirates, and any other key actors, such as local officials, elders and residents in piracy affected cities) and then recording this data.

In the initial stage of data recording, all located interviews were extracted from their original sources and placed on a summary sheet (a Microsoft Word document). A decision was made to extract all readily available interview data at this point, as the use of selection criteria for data extraction during this early stage of research would likely have a detrimental effect on the research, as what is regarded as ‘relevant data’ may shift throughout the research process (Gomm, 2004: 235). Although there is an ever-increasing body of data, at present it is still a manageable size. As a result, it was feasible to extract all of the located interviews.

6.3.3 Reflections on the data collection process

The above sections have so far outlined the methodology for data collection used in this study. According to Bell (2008: 117), the data collection process should always be critically examined to “assess to what extent it is likely to be reliable and valid”. Thus, the use of an indirect data collection methodology in this study raises some serious issues regarding reliability, validity and ethics that should be reflected on. The remainder of this section will critically examine these issues at the following stages of data creation and collection: the initial discourse of the pirates; the construction of the media reports the data was located in; and the data collection process used for this study.

Firstly, it is crucial to reflect on the validity of the pirates’ original discourse, for example whether the motives, grievances and justifications voiced to the media are in fact accurate representations of the pirates’ realities. According to Gomm (2004: 152), interviewees may give incorrect information due to a variety of biases. Such deception may be due to “self-serving biases” and “social desirability biases”. Gomm states that self-serving biases may lead interviewees to voice inaccurate responses to interviewers, which support some preferred beliefs about themselves. For instance, they may portray themselves as the victims of the actions of other actors, in order to

justify their own behavior. In addition, Gomm argues that social desirability biases may lead interviewees to present a favorable impression of themselves. For example, they may portray their actions as being for the greater good.

Due to possibility of 'self-serving biases' being present in the interview data, it is necessary to examine the validity of the pirates' discourse – to evaluate whether it is based on legitimate claims. The interview data will, therefore, be critically examined in Chapter Eight, by crosschecking the pirates' discourse with the background information presented in Chapter Four and Chapter Five, in order to ascertain its validity. However, regardless of whether the discourse voiced by the pirates is based on legitimate claims or not, it will still provide useful insights on how the underlying causes of Somali piracy are understood, or at least being portrayed, by some individuals.

On top of the reliability and validity of the pirates discourse, it is also vital to reflect on the reliability, validity and ethics of the media sources from which the interview data has been extracted. According to Duffy (2008: 131), "it is important not to accept sources at face value", as they may be tainted by the biases and subjectivities of their authors (also see May, 2001: 49; Walliman, 2005: 206). The nature of the data collection methodology used for this research analysis may have avoided the biases and subjectivities of the media sources to some degree, as the data extracted were direct quotations from the pirates themselves. However, the biases and subjectivities of the journalists and editors may nonetheless still have had an impact on the data, due to factors such as the selective use of quotes and quotes being taken out of context (see O'Leary, 2010: 220). There is a possibility that the journalists and editors may have selectively edited the interviews and used them out of context in order to present Somali pirates in a certain light. Moreover, many of the original interviews were conducted in Somali or Arabic and translated into English by the media outlets. This raises the issue of whether the interviews were translated accurately, and whether through 'creative' translations the biases and subjectivities of the media sources were able to taint the data. These issues are all justifiable concerns, which must be reflected on.

In an attempt to avoid some of these issues, media sources that adhere to codes of ethical conduct have been chosen where possible. The majority of the international news sources used in this study claim to have adopted formal ethical codes, such as the Society of Professional Journalists' *Code of Ethics*, which states:

... public enlightenment is the forerunner of justice and the foundation of democracy. The duty of the journalist is to further those ends by seeking truth and providing a fair and comprehensive account of events and issues. Conscientious journalists from all media and specialties strive to serve the public with thoroughness and honesty. Professional integrity is the cornerstone of a journalist's credibility (Society of Professional Journalists, 1996).

In addition, all of the international media outlets listed in Table 6.3 have their own in-house ethical codes and standards clearly listed on their websites, which typically espouse the principles of truthfulness, accuracy, objectivity, impartiality, fairness, harm limitation, and public accountability (for example see BBC, 2010; New York Times, 2010). The Somali-based media sources, in contrast, did not have such codes readily accessible on their websites. Due to the importance of sourcing data from local as well as international media outlets, interviews obtained from Somali-based sources were still used, albeit very cautiously. When relevant interviews were found on media outlets that do not openly adhere to any formalized ethical codes and standards, this data was triangulated with data located on sources that do comply with such codes (O'Leary, 2010: 115). These comparisons allowed me to assess, to a degree, the reliability, validity and ethics of the interviews. This process was carried out for all media outlets, even those that openly adhere to an ethical code, due to the perennial concern that these standards may be ignored.

Many of the concerns outlined above also relate to the data collection process used for this study. According to Wimmer and Dominick (2006: 119), there is a risk that the researcher's biases and subjectivities may affect the data extracted. Once again, this may happen consciously or subconsciously through techniques such as selective choices on what to extract and the possibility of taking quotes out of context in order

to present a particular viewpoint (O’Leary, 2010: 220). To improve the reliability and validity of the data collection process used for this study, this chapter has attempted to provide readers with sufficient methodological detail so that the research is open to scrutiny and discussion (see Gomm, 2004: 19). Furthermore, this thesis provides direct references to all the data sources, thus making the original interviews readily available for inspection. Overall, the strategies mentioned in this section have been followed to ensure, to the greatest possible degree, the reliability, validity and ethics of the data collection process used in this study.

6.4 Methodology for data analysis

In addition to being transparent about the methodology used for data collection, it is also necessary to be open about the methodology used for data analysis. Thus, this section examines how the interview data has been thematically analyzed, and explains how this analysis will be used in the following chapters to address the research questions.

Once the interviews had been collected and placed on a summary sheet, the next step involved conducting a thematic analysis of this data (see Gomm, 2004: 189-197; O’Leary, 2010: 262-269). The interviews were coded and organized into categories of themes that may be relevant for addressing the research questions guiding this study. The initial coding was the outcome of both inductive reasoning, whereby codes were generated by insights gained through the process of data collection and analysis; and deductive reasoning, whereby codes were generated through the use of insights garnered from the literature presented in earlier chapters.

After the first round of data was collected, a list of initial codes was generated for provisional use through an examination and questioning of the data. This process is often labeled ‘open coding’ (see Strauss and Corbin, 1998: 102; David and Sutton, 2004: 205). According to Babbie (2007: 385), open coding is “the initial classification and labeling of concepts in qualitative data analysis”. During the process of open coding, the interview data was broken into discrete parts (quotes), which were then closely examined and compared for similarities and differences. Quotes highlighting

abstract themes that were found to be conceptually similar in nature or related in meaning were grouped together under specific codes. For example, a quote from a Somali pirate stating that illegal fishing ruined his livelihood as a fisherman would be coded as *desperation caused by illegal fishing and/or waste dumping*. While a quote discussing the inability of the international naval force to prevent piracy would be coded as *ineffectiveness of the international naval force*. During this process of inductive coding, numerous preliminary codes were generated in relation to the abstract themes that were emerging in the data, as shown in Table 6.4.

Table 6.4: Unorganized preliminary codes representing the abstract themes in the interview data

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desperation caused by illegal fishing and/or waste dumping • Piracy as retaliation against illegal fishing and/or waste dumping • Ineffective local authorities • Social gains from piracy • Piracy propping up local economies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ineffectiveness of international naval force • Low relative risks of piracy • Proliferation of arms • Favorable geography • Lack of alternative livelihood options in Somalia • Corrupt local authorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International inaction against illegal fishing and/or waste dumping • Informal forms of social control • Economic gains from piracy • Types of vessels targeted • International inaction on the humanitarian crisis in Somalia
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In addition to inductive coding, the coding process in this study was also used for the purpose of deductively examining understandings that have been proposed by other theorists (Glaser and Strauss, 1967: 101). Additional codes were therefore generated based on variables presented in preexisting theories. As discussed in Chapter Three, there are two main schools of thought regarding the motives of pirates, those who claim that the pirates are driven by economic rationalism and those who believe the pirates are motivated by grievances. A significant part of this thesis involves critically evaluating whether these economic rationalist and grievance-based understandings provide any worthwhile insights on the underlying factors contributing to the causation of Somali piracy. As such, codes representing variables from these understandings of Somali piracy were also generated, as shown in Table 6.5. For example, economic rationalism proposes that piracy is simply the outcome of *strong incentives for piracy* and *weak disincentives for piracy*. While common grievance-

based understandings of Somali piracy claim the pirates are driven by: *desperation*; *illegal acts by foreign vessels*; and the ‘*unjust*’ actions of the international community.

Table 6.5: Codes representing variables from economic rationalist and grievance-based understandings of piracy

Economic rationalist understandings	Grievance-based understanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong incentives for piracy • Weak disincentives for piracy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desperation • Illegal acts by foreign vessels • The ‘unjust’ actions of the international community

To better understand the relationship between the abstract themes (shown in Table 6.4) and the codes representing variables from preexisting theories (shown in Table 6.5), these latter variables were adopted as ‘axial codes’. According to Babbie (2007: 386), “axial coding aims to identify the core concepts in the study”. Axial coding involves a regrouping of the data, in which the researcher uses the open code categories and looks for more analytical concepts. Thus, it is a hierarchical process aimed at identifying what the core issues within the data may be (David and Sutton, 2004: 206). Overall, the procedure of axial coding is intended to highlight the relationships between various codes and their relative significance.

Table 6.6 shows how the preliminary codes were organized thematically in relation to economic rationalism, and its claim that individuals are motivated by *strong incentives* and *weak disincentives*. While Table 6.7 demonstrates how the preliminary codes were organized thematically with regards to possible grievances such as: *desperation*; *illegal acts by foreign vessels in Somali waters*; and the ‘*unjust*’ actions of the international community. This process of deductive coding was carried out to assess whether economic rationalist and grievance-based perspectives can advance our understanding of the root causes of Somali piracy.

Table 6.6: An example of axial coding in relation to economic rationalist understandings of Somali piracy

Name of the theory	Economic rationalist understandings	
Axial codes for core concepts	Strong incentives	Weak disincentives
Underlying codes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic gains from piracy • Social gains from piracy • Favorable geography • Types of vessels targeted • Proliferation of arms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of alternative livelihood options in Somalia • Low relative risks of piracy • Corrupt local authorities • Ineffective local authorities • Ineffectiveness of international naval force • Informal forms of social control

Table 6.7: An example of axial coding in relation to grievance-based understandings of Somali piracy

Name of the theory	Grievance-based understandings		
Axial codes for core concepts	Desperation	Illegal acts by foreign vessels	The 'unjust' actions of the international community
Underlying codes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of alternative livelihood options in Somalia • Piracy propping up local economies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desperation caused by illegal fishing and/or waste dumping • Piracy as retaliation against illegal fishing and/or waste dumping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International inaction against illegal fishing and/or waste dumping • International inaction on the humanitarian crisis in Somalia

In summary, this section has outlined the process of thematic analysis that was carried out both inductively and deductively using the interview data. This thematic analysis was conducted to critically analyze the themes existing in the data and the relationships among and between these themes. This process was followed in order to advance our understanding of the underlying factors contributing to the causation of Somali piracy, while verifying existing theories on the root causes of Somali piracy.

6.5 Chapter summary

The aim of this chapter was to explain the research methodology used in this study, thus providing for transparency. The chapter began by outlining how my theoretical

positionality and an interpretivist epistemology have influenced the philosophical and methodological design of this study. The chapter has also articulated the methods that have been used within this study to collect and record data from preexisting media interviews with Somali pirates and other key actors. Such an approach has opened an invaluable avenue for giving voice to these individuals, which would have otherwise been impossible for me to achieve. Inductive and deductive coding has been used to thematically analyze the interview data, and to contribute to an understanding of the underlying factors causing Somali piracy. The results of this analysis are presented in the following chapter. While Chapter Eight provides an interpretation of these results through the lens of a human security approach.

Chapter 7

The underlying motives driving Somali piracy

7.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to shed light on the motives driving Somali piracy, by giving voice to Somali pirates, and other key actors in Somalia, to let them tell their version of the story behind Somali piracy. To achieve this goal, the key findings from the data analysis, outlined in the previous chapter, have been presented thematically in relation to the economic rationalist and grievance-based understandings of piracy discussed in Chapter Three. The first part of the chapter presents the research findings with regards to economic rationalism; highlighting how some individuals have allegedly been drawn to piracy due to the potential benefits and low risks the activity can offer in comparison to alternative livelihood options in Somalia. The second part of the chapter goes on to present the research findings in relation to grievances; revealing how some individuals have claimed they have been motivated to commit piracy due to grievances, such as: desperation; illegal acts by foreign vessels in Somali waters; and the perception that the actions of the international community are unjust.

7.2 Economic rationalism as a motivating factor

As discussed in Chapter Three, it is often claimed that the underlying motive to commit piracy can simply be accounted for by economic rationalism (greed) (see Anderson, 2001; Bradford, 2007; Leeson, 2009). This perspective assumes that piracy is the result of rational cost-benefit analyses conducted by individuals. Yassin Dheere, a 39-year-old pirate in Garowe, states: *“When we are going out to sea, we*

expect benefits and losses” (cited in Reuters, 2009, 11 April; emphasis added). According to an economic rationalist viewpoint, individuals, such as Yassin, will be motivated to commit acts of piracy if they perceive the benefits of doing so will outweigh any expected losses. The following section examines the discourse of Somali pirates, and other key actors, through the lens of economic rationalism. This analysis reveals what these individuals claim are the strong incentives and weak disincentives driving piracy off the Somali coast.

7.2.1 Strong incentives to commit piracy

From an economic rationalist perspective, the main factor motivating pirates is the potential economic gains the activity can bring. From this position, it is believed the potential receipt of massive ransom payments provides the driving force behind Somali piracy (see Sörenson, 2008; UNSC, 2008; Chalk, 2009; Gilpin, 2009; Ross and Ben-David, 2009). This perspective appears to be reflected in the interview data, with many pirates admitting they specifically target vessels that will fetch large ransoms. For instance, Asad Abdulahi, a pirate boss who claims to have captured about 60 ships, states: *“We give priority to ships from Europe because we get bigger ransoms”* (cited in Rice and Hassan, 2008, 22 November). This view is reinforced by Priyantha Perera, the captain of the *MV Rozen*, which was held hostage by Somali pirates for 41 days:

The pirates who took us told me they were no longer interested in small ships – their main aim is to get tankers and big container ships. They are aiming for British, American, Japanese and Korean vessels. They know that’s where the money is (cited in Gillan, 2007, 12 June).

However, some pirates give the impression that the choice of targets is relatively random, chosen largely due to chance. In interviews, many individuals have claimed that Somalia’s geographical location next to a busy shipping lane provides ample access to random targets. For example, Abshir Boyah, a pirate boss from Eyl who admits to hijacking more than 25 ships, states: *“It’s like hunting out there. Sometimes you get a deer, sometimes you get a dik-dik [a runty antelope common in Somalia]”* (cited in Gettleman, 2009, 8 May). Therefore, although vessels that demand higher

ransoms may be more desirable for some pirates, the ease at which a vessel can be hijacked remains a significant factor contributing to which vessels are targeted.

If the main factor motivating pirates is assumed to be the potential economic gains the activity can bring, these potential gains may seem even more tempting given the poor socio-economic situation on land in Somalia. Chapter Four has already demonstrated that there is a severe lack of economic security throughout the country. The discourse of Somalis in the media draws further attention to this situation. For example, Shamun Indhabur, a pirate leader, asserts: *"There is wide unemployment in the country, there are no sources of income"* (cited in Norland, 2008, 18 December). Given this situation, it is often claimed that individuals are drawn to piracy due to the relatively high economic gains the activity can bring. For instance, Mohamed Abdule, an elder in Haradheere, states: *"Young unemployed men hear about the huge amounts of money the pirates can make with ransoms and that's all the encouragement they need"* (cited in Abdinur, 2010, 20 January). This point is further demonstrated by an anonymous Hobyo based pirate, who discusses the simple reason behind his decision to become a pirate: *"I joined them seeking money"* (cited in Hansen, 2009: 38), and a Haradheere based pirate, Dahir Mohamed Hayeysi, who states: *"My ambition is to get a lot of money so that I can lead a better life"* (cited in Hassan, 2009, 22 April). These statements highlight how some individuals may be attracted to piracy due to the potential economic gains it can bring in a country where there is a lack of attractive livelihood options.

Linked to these potential economic gains, piracy may also lead to gains in social status. A pirate, going by the alias Muhammed, claims: *"When you capture a ship people welcome you like you are a president"* (cited in Hansen, 2009: 40). While Abdi Farah Juha, a resident of Garowe, highlights the link between the economic gains of piracy and gains in social status by stating: *"They have money; they have power and they are getting stronger by the day. They wed the most beautiful girls; they are building big houses; they have new cars; new guns"* (cited in Hunter, 2008, 28 October). Naimo, another resident of Garowe, states that the economic gains of piracy can also improve marriage prospects for pirates: *"It's true that girls are*

interested in marrying pirates because they [the pirates] have a lot of money" (cited in Rice and Hassan, 2008, 19 November).

In the literature, it is often claimed the pirates' quest for economic gains is made easier due to the availability of powerful and sophisticated weaponry in Somalia (see Chalk, 2008; Onuoha, 2009; de Wijk, 2010). According to Saaid, a Garad based pirate, *"Somalia has weapons from all [over] the world. We get weapons from inside and outside the country"* (cited in Politics in Depth Team, 2010, 4 January). The discourse of some pirates gives the impression that the availability of such weaponry has improved the capabilities of Somali pirates, which in turn may increase their perception that piracy is a relatively easy activity to conduct.

Overall, commentators adhering to economic rationalism view the potential economic gains of piracy, and any associated social gains, as providing strong incentives for individuals to commit piracy, while Somalia's 'favorable geography' and the 'proliferation of arms' are believed to make piracy easier to commit. However, as Dahir Mohamed Hayeysi, a 25-year-old pirate, states: *"Piracy is not just easy money - it has many risks and difficulties"* (cited in Hassan 2009, 22 April). In relation to this point, economic rationalism maintains that individuals will remain motivated to commit piracy despite these 'risks and difficulties' if they perceive the incentives from the activity will outweigh the disincentives. Thus, under economic rationalism, piracy is viewed as a function of not only strong incentives but also weak disincentives.

7.2.2 Weak disincentives to commit piracy

Many Somali pirates, and other key actors, have claimed that piracy in Somalia is a relatively low risk venture, with weak disincentives. For instance, Gure, a 23-year-old pirate, states: *"There is a great business out here. You go with friends, you seize a ship without firing a single shot and weeks later you come back with big money"* (cited in Abdinur, 2010, 20 January). The perceived lack of risk involved in piracy is starkly contrasted against the risk involved in other alternative livelihood strategies in

Somalia. For example, Abdirahman Ali discusses how the low risk of piracy, compared to other alternatives, contributed to his decision to become a pirate:

First I decided to leave the country and migrate, but then I remembered my late colleagues who died at sea while trying to migrate to Italy. So I chose this option [piracy], instead of dying in the desert or from mortars in Mogadishu (cited in Reuters, 2009, 1 December).

The perception that piracy is a low risk venture is not only a factor of how it compares to the risks involved in alternative livelihood options, but also relates to how potential pirates perceive the risks presented by both local and international counter-piracy measures.

To date, it looks as if many pirates have not had much to fear from certain local authorities. As discussed in Chapter Five, it is widely believed that some local and regional officials in pirate strongholds, such as Puntland and Haradheere, have been connected to piracy (Middleton, 2008; Eichstaedt, 2010; UNSC, 2010). Boyah, a pirate leader, highlights this point by stating: *“The pirates are at sea and Puntland does not approach them. The pirates are on land and Puntland does not approach them”* (cited in McKenzie, 4 December 2008). According to Farah Ismail Eid, a pirate being held in a Puntland prison, *“a lot of our money has gone straight into the [Puntland] government’s pockets”* (cited in Gettleman, 2008, 18 December). This view is also backed up by Abdi Waheed Johar, the Director General of the Fisheries and Ports Ministry of Puntland, who states: *“There are government people working with the pirates. It’s just not us”* (cited in Gettleman, 2008, 18 December). While Mohamed Adam, Haradheere’s Deputy Security Officer, affirms: *“The district gets a percentage of every ransom from ships that have been released, and that goes on public infrastructure, including our hospital and our public schools”* (cited in Ahmed, 2009, 1 December). Following an economic rationalist perspective, these alleged links between local officials and piracy would likely decrease the perception of risk posed by the authorities, making a setting more conducive of piracy.

Even if particular local authorities are not linked to piracy, they still may not present a strong disincentive against piracy if individuals view their counter-piracy institutions and apparatuses as being weak and ineffective. This point is demonstrated by a pirate going by the name of Bosse, who describes the ineffectiveness of Puntland's counter-piracy measures:

The administration can only arrest the ones that meet with them but they cannot arrest the ones that they don't see or meet. Puntland has a long coast. In some cases, pirates deceive the administration. For example, you can join a pirate mission saying that you are going fishing (cited in Hansen, 2009: 57).

The above statements demonstrate some of the ways in which local authorities have been perceived as being ineffective at providing disincentives against piracy. Although local counter-piracy measures are usually associated with central and regional authorities, it appears some individuals in Somali societies have also been playing a role in discouraging piratical acts. For example, Sheikh Abdulkadir Nur Farah, an Islamic scholar in Puntland, claims that *"our job [as Muslims] is to advocate against piracy and we will continue our efforts"* (cited in Garowe Online, 2009, 26 May). This pressure seems to be having some impact on piracy. For instance, Abshir Boyah, a notorious pirate boss, appeared to be rattled by the efforts of local religious leaders, saying: *"Man, these Islamic guys want to cut my hands off"* (Gettleman, 2009, 8 May). Abshir Boyah later publically renounced piracy stating: *"I understand the wrong things that I was involved in and I'm aware now these acts are wrong in Islamic teachings"* (cited in BBC News, 2009, 25 May). Thus, it appears there is potential for actors outside of official governance positions to discourage piracy through informal forms of social control.

The perception of risk involved in piracy off the Somali coast is not just linked to Somali-based efforts at discouraging piracy, but is also related to how international counter-piracy measures are regarded by the pirates. It appears many individuals view piracy as a relatively easy income generating activity, due in part to the perception that the international naval presence off the Somali coast is ineffective. For instance, Sugule Ali, a spokesman for a pirate group, states: *"they can't catch us*

like goats" (cited in Gettleman, 2008, 4 October). While Hasan Ganey, a Haradheere based pirate, claims: *"Nobody is really hunting us, our teams go and seize ships under the noses of the foreign forces. When we see the navy, we simply change track and they don't follow us"* (cited in Abdinur, 2010, 20 January). According to an unnamed pirate, *"Sometimes, we capture ships when [warships] are right around us. We don't care about them. They're not going to stop us"* (cited in Bahadur, 2010, 16 April). Boyah reinforces this view by stating: *"No one can do anything about it"* (cited in McKenzie, 2008, 4 December). The above statements demonstrate how some pirates have claimed they are relatively unfazed by the current naval presence.

Overall, the findings presented in this section show that some pirates appear to be driven by economic rationalism, with strong incentives and weak disincentives influencing their decisions to partake in piracy. As discussed in Chapter Three, economic rationalist understandings dominate the literature on the causes of piracy. However, this study has found that many pirates have also voiced grievances in media interviews.

7.3 Grievances as motivating factors to commit piracy

In contrast to economic rationalist thought, some commentators claim that Somali pirates may have been driven to piracy out of a sense of injustice (see Waldo, 2008; Hari, 2009, 11 January; K'naan, 2009, 12 April; Schofield, 2009; Aiyer *et al.*, 2010; Panjabi, 2010). This general perspective, outlined in Chapter Three, argues that instead of being motivated simply by a profit motive, grievances may also play a role in pushing individuals to piracy. The following section presents the key grievances voiced by Somali pirates, and other key individuals. These grievances appear to be in line with those speculated in Chapter Three, including: desperation; illegal acts by foreign vessels in Somali waters; and the perception that the actions of the international community are unjust.

7.3.1 Desperation

Many Somali pirates have attempted to deny responsibility for their piratical activities on the grounds that they have been forced to commit piracy due to a lack of alternative livelihood options. In contrast to economic rationalist thought, these

individuals claim they have been ‘forced’ into piracy out of desperation rather than having the luxury to make that ‘choice’. For example, a pirate calling himself Mohamed states: *“I’m not happy with it [being a pirate], but since I have no education, I have no choice. If I had another choice, I’d do it, but this is the only job I know”* (cited in Wadhams, 2010, 1 April; emphasis added). This view is reinforced by Indianda, a pirate boss, who asserts: *“I’ve been forced by the situation to become a pirate. I never wanted to become a pirate”* (cited in Bartlett, 2009, 29 March; emphasis added). Abdulrashid ‘Juqraafi’ Ahmed, a pirate in Garowe, presents a similar argument:

We are driven by hunger, just look at our country and how destroyed it is. We are people with no hope and opportunities, that is what is forcing us into piracy (cited in Adow, 2009, 17 June; emphasis added).

These statements demonstrate how some individuals have attempted to deny responsibility for committing acts of piracy by claiming they have been forced to do so out of bare desperation and a lack of choice. Many Somalis argue that the wealth existing globally has bypassed their country, leaving piracy as the only means of propping up fragile local economies. This position is demonstrated by Abdullahi Abdi who declares:

Whenever we hijack ships we re-stock on essentials like food, buy goats for meat from the residents and this means we pump money into the economy. How else will these people feed themselves? (cited in Mohamed, 2010, 13 April).

Anab Farah, a restaurant owner in Eyl, reinforces this view by stating: *“We see piracy as an avenue of development and not a crime. If the pirates give us a platform to survive why not?”* (cited in Mohamed, 2010, 13 April). In the absence of alternative livelihood options, many pirates have argued that piracy is a necessary means of earning money to ensure survival. For instance, Abdullah Hassan maintains: *“We simply want the money so our families can live”* (cited in Querouil, 2008, 23 November), and Jamal Akhmed states: *“We have bills to pay and families to care for”* (cited in Harding, 2009, 16 June).

These statements show that desperation is frequently voiced as a key factor driving individuals, who lack alternative livelihood options, to piracy. To make matters worse, the sense of desperation being experienced by some individuals has been further intensified by the illegal actions of foreign vessels in Somali waters.

7.3.2 *Illegal acts by foreign vessels in Somali waters*

Many Somali pirates have also voiced grievances regarding the illegal, unregulated, unlicensed (IUU) foreign fishing and hazardous waste dumping taking place in Somali waters, which were outlined in Chapter Four. It is often argued that these injustices committed in Somali waters have destroyed the livelihoods of Somali fishermen, leaving many with no alternative but to commit piracy. For instance, Dahir Mohamed Hayeysi states:

Years ago we used to fish a lot, enough for us to eat and sell in the markets. Then illegal fishing and dumping of toxic wastes by foreign fishing vessels affected our livelihood, depleting the fish stocks. I had no choice but to join my colleagues (cited in Hassan, 2009, 22 April).

Abdullah Hassan also claims to have been forced into piracy by illegal fishing: *“Before, I was an honest fisherman. But since the commercial fishing boats emptied our seas, we have had to find a way to survive”* (cited Querouil, 2008, 23 November). From this viewpoint, it is argued that IUU fishing and hazardous waste dumping have contributed to a further sense of desperation, forcing individuals to commit acts of piracy. For example, a pirate calling himself Daybad claims: *“This is what drove us to our piracy”* (cited in Booth, 2008, 25 November). While Jamal Akhmed, a 32-year-old pirate being held in prison, maintains: *“It was forced upon us because we were attacked [by foreign vessels]”* (cited in Harding, 2009, 16 June). Yassin Dheere further emphasizes this position by stressing: *“[foreign vessels] forced us to become pirates”* (cited in Reuters, 2009, 11 April). While Shamun Indhabur dramatically states: *“if we are forced to avoid fishing our waters, then those [foreign] ships are all our fish”* (cited in Norland, 18 December 2008). These statements demonstrate some of the ways in which Somali pirates have voiced their grievances in the media on how IUU foreign

fishing and hazardous waste dumping have destroyed livelihoods by depleting fishing stocks, thus creating further desperation.

In addition to the depletion of fishing stocks, many pirates have also drawn attention to the dangers Somali fishermen and their equipment have been subjected to by foreign vessels. For example, Jeylani Shaykh Abdi states: *"[foreign vessels] are not only taking and robbing us of our fish, but they are also trying to stop us from fishing. They have rammed our boats and cut our nets"* (cited in Reuters, 2006, 9 March). This point is further reinforced by Asad Abdulahi, who claims: *"[foreign vessels] would destroy our boats and force us to flee for our lives"* (cited in Rice and Hassan, 2008, 22 November). While a pirate serving time in prison called Ali states: *"When we faced those ships they started to use force against us. They were throwing explosives and using guns"* (cited in Fowler, 2009, 28 April). Saaïd also recounts how he and his colleagues were victimized by foreign vessels when he was a fisherman:

One night, we ventured into the sea with 61 fishing boats, each carrying three or four people. Some of us were asleep when a big ship passed in between our convoy. It was a disaster, it roughed up the waters and left some of us [to] drown; of all the 61 boats, only nine survived the tragedy. So you can guess what our colleagues across the country are facing (cited in Politics in Depth Team, 2010, 4 January).

Based on the negative impact foreign vessels are having on the economic, food and personal security of Somali fishermen, many pirates, who claim to be ex-fishermen, have portrayed themselves as victims and foreign vessels as the true criminals. This point is expressed by Farah Ismail Eid, who argues: *"I believe the title of pirates should be given to those who come to our waters illegally"* (cited in McConnell, 2009, 6 December). By presenting themselves as victims, many pirates claim they are seeking retribution for the illegal activities being committed in Somali waters by foreign vessels. For instance, Januna Ali Jama, a spokesman for a pirate group, justifies the act of taking hostages from foreign vessels and demanding ransoms on the following grounds: *"The Somali coastline has been destroyed, and we believe this [ransom] money is nothing compared to the devastation that we have seen on the seas"* (cited in

Abdullahi, 2008, 11 October). Sugule Ali, another pirate spokesman, presents a similar view stating: *"If you hold hostage people who are doing illegal activities, like waste dumping or fishing, that is not a crime"* (cited in Gettleman, 2008, 30 September). This line of thought has led pirates such as Januna Ali Jama to conclude: *"I do not think we are in the wrong"* (cited in Garowe Online, 2008, 27 September).

Based on the perception that they are victims of injustices by foreign vessels, many pirates have claimed they are simply acting as a sea militia in order to protect Somali waters from those who they perceive are the true criminals. For example, Saaïd argues: *"We decided to counter illegal fishing along our coastlines ourselves, and to protect our resources from foreign looters"* (cited in Politics in Depth Team, 2010, 4 January). This perspective has led individuals such as Jamal Akhmed to assert: *"We are not pirates. We are gentlemen, defending our shores against foreign fishermen"* (cited in Harding, 2009, 16 June). In a similar vein, Boyah states: *"I'm not a pirate, I'm the savior of the sea"* (cited in Bahadur, 2009, 16 April). This view is further reinforced by Sugule Ali, who maintains:

"We don't consider ourselves sea bandits, we consider sea bandits those who illegally fish in our seas and dump waste in our seas and carry weapons in our seas. We are simply patrolling our seas. Think of us like a coast guard" (cited in Gettleman, 2008, 30 September).

Overall, these findings show that illegal acts by foreign vessels in Somali waters are often cited as a key grievance driving individuals to commit piracy out of desperation, retribution and as a form of protection. Feelings of injustice regarding these illegal activities may for some individuals be further exacerbated by the hypocritical actions of the international community.

7.3.3 The 'unjust' actions of the international community

As discussed in Chapter Five, the international naval force present off the Somali coast has a mandate to prevent piracy, yet it is not authorized to prevent IUU fishing or hazardous waste dumping in Somali waters (Waldo, 2009). In relation to this point, some pirates and members of the general Somali population have argued that the international condemnation of Somali piracy is hypocritical given the lack of

concern the international community has demonstrated regarding the injustices inflicted on Somalis by foreign vessels. Abdulrashid Muse Mohamed, who is serving time in prison for piracy, draws attention to this point:

Behind every navy ship that is supposedly guarding against the pirates, they are also bringing with them many foreign fishing vessels. We tell the international community there is no solution in sending these navy ships to Somalia because they are not doing anything to stop this illegal fishing (cited in Al Jazeera, 2009, 15 June).

Instead of preventing IUU fishing and hazardous waste dumping, Indhabur claims international forces are protecting the foreign vessels committing these crimes (cited in Norland, 2008, 18 December). Saaïd reinforces this view by stating “*Piracy will end ... [only] ... when the world really wants to protect Somali waters and stops dumping toxic waste and leaves [the] coast of Somalia*” (cited in Politics in Depth Team, 2010, 4 January).

From this perspective, it is claimed that the international community has only been concerned with protecting the security of non-Somalis, while ignoring the plight of Somalis. Farah Ismail Eid highlights this point by stating: “*Now the international community is shouting about piracy. But long before this, we were shouting to the world about our problems. No one listened*” (cited in Bengali, 2009, 3 May). This position is further emphasized by Puntland’s Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, Farah Dala who asserts: “*after all the suffering and war, the world is finally paying attention to our pain because they’re getting a tiny taste of it*” (cited in Gettleman, 2009, 8 May). It appears some individuals feel a sense of moral justification for committing acts of piracy, due to the perceived double standards of the international community. For example, Indhabur states: “*I justify it as a dirty business encouraged by the foreign forces that were escorting illegal fishing boats and toxic waste dumpers*” (cited in Norland, 2008, 18 December). These statements demonstrate how some pirates and members of the general Somali population, have raised serious questions about the international community’s moral right to condemn Somali piracy, given the lack of concern the international community has

demonstrated with regards to the illegal acts being committed by foreign vessels in Somali waters, which have violated the human security of Somalis.

Overall, the findings presented in this section reveal that many individuals have cited grievances as key factors motivating Somali piracy. The main grievances voiced appear to stem from feelings of injustice regarding desperation, illegal activities by foreign vessels in Somali waters, and the 'unjust' actions of the international community.

7.4 Chapter summary

To summarize, this chapter has presented the main findings from a thematic analysis of media interviews with Somali pirates and other key actors. These findings have drawn attention to the motives driving Somali piracy; revealing that Somali pirates may be motivated in a variety of ways by both 'rational' economic choices and grievances. Some pirates appear to be motivated by economic rationalism, with strong incentives and weak disincentives influencing their 'choice' to commit piracy. While many pirates claim to be driven, to various degrees, by grievances. The main grievances that have been voiced are highly interlinked issues, which include: desperation; crimes by foreign vessels in Somali waters; and the perception that the actions of the international community are hypocritical and unjust. Overall, the findings presented in this chapter provide valuable insights on the possible motives driving individuals to commit acts of piracy off the Somali coast. However, as discussed in the previous chapter, it is possible the motives being voiced may be inaccurate representations of the pirates' realities, due to 'self-serving biases' (see Gomm, 2004). Therefore, it is necessary to critically examine these findings to ascertain their validity, as will be conducted in the next chapter.

Chapter 8

Discussion and conclusions

8.1 Introduction

The objective of this study was to contribute to an understanding of the effectiveness of a human security approach to address the issue of Somali piracy. To achieve such an aim, it is crucial to grasp the underlying factors that are contributing to the causation of Somali piracy. Therefore, this chapter begins by weaving together the findings from the preceding chapters in order to critically examine what factors are likely driving piracy off the Somali coast. The findings from this discussion demonstrate that there are no one-size-fits-all explanations of piracy, as there is evidence to suggest that both economic rationalism and grievances have contributed to the growth of Somali piracy. Nevertheless, it appears weak human security and external violations of human security in Somalia are behind many of the factors that are likely driving Somali piracy. Therefore, the causation of Somali piracy should be viewed as a human security issue, which requires integrated development and security solutions. As such, this thesis proposes some possible steps the international community could take to address the root causes of Somali piracy, by protecting Somalis from human security threats and empowering them to advance their own human freedoms. Overall, this study asserts that the international community not only has a moral obligation to ensure human security in Somalia, as it is arguably a human right, but there is also a pragmatic motive for doing so, as in the long run this is the only sustainable means of addressing the issue of Somali piracy.

8.2 Possible factors driving Somali piracy

The previous chapter has drawn attention to the possible motives driving piracy off the Somali coast, which have been voiced within media interviews by Somali pirates

and other key actors. However, it is important to note, the estimated 1,400 pirates in Somalia are not homogenous (UNODC, 2010: 199). According to Hansen (2009: 12), their motives “may vary from pirate to pirate, group to group and geographical location to geographical location”. It is therefore difficult to generalize about the motives driving Somali piracy. Nevertheless, the research findings presented in the previous chapter demonstrate that many Somalis have alluded to similar factors to explain and in some cases justify piracy off the Somali coast. The motives and justifications voiced by these individuals provide valuable insights on the possible root causes of Somali piracy, suggesting that *both* economic rationalism and grievances may be contributing to piracy off the Somali coast. However, commentators such as Roger Middleton (cited in Panjabi, 2010: 464) warn that the grievances being voiced may, to a degree, be public relations endeavors. Thus, it is important to critically evaluate the legitimacy of the explanations of piracy that have been cited in the media by Somali pirates and other key actors. The aim of this section is to crosscheck this discourse with the background information presented in Chapter Four and Chapter Five. This analysis is intended to shed light on the underlying factors that are contributing to the causation of Somali piracy, and thus help evaluate the economic rationalist and grievance-based understandings of piracy, which were outlined in Chapter Three.

8.2.1 *Evaluation of economic rationalist understandings of piracy*

Economic rationalist understandings of piracy propose that individuals are motivated to commit acts of piracy simply due to favorable cost-benefit analyses (see Anderson, 2001; Bradford, 2007; Leeson, 2009). From this perspective, it is argued that piracy may be viewed as an economically ‘rational’ choice for some individuals in settings that possess: underdevelopment; favorable geography; weak governance; conflict and a proliferation of arms (see Chapter Three). The purpose of this section is to critically examine the likelihood that these factors have, in fact, contributed to the causation of Somali piracy.

In the literature many commentators have suggested that piracy may seem a relatively attractive livelihood option for some individuals due to the poor socio-economic situation in Somalia (see Sörenson, 2008; Chalk, 2009; Ross and Ben-

David, 2009; Percy and Shortland, 2009; Tsvetkova, 2009; de Wijk, 2010). The findings from the previous chapter reinforce this perspective, with many Somali pirates stating the potential economic gains of piracy, and associated social gains, have been strong incentives motivating them to commit acts of piracy. As discussed in Chapter Five, it has been estimated that a Somali pirate may earn anywhere from US\$6,000 to US\$10,000 from partaking in a single successful piracy mission (UNODC, 2010). Given that GDP per capita in Somalia is only US\$600 a year (CIA, 2010), some Somalis may view piracy as an economically attractive activity in contrast to alternative livelihood options. Therefore, it looks likely the poor socio-economic situation in Somalia, outlined in Chapter Four, may contribute to the 'choice' of some individuals to join piracy networks.

As discussed in Chapter Three, Somalia's geographical location next to a busy shipping lane is also frequently cited in the literature as a key factor enabling individuals to commit acts of piracy (see Chalk, 2008; Lennox, 2008; Murphy, 2007, 2009b). The findings presented in the previous chapter appear to support this claim, with some pirates stating the Somali coast provides relatively easy access to rewarding 'hunting grounds'. However, by itself, this factor fails to explain why the piracy networks are only located in certain areas, such as in Puntland and near the cities of Haradheere and Hobyo in central Somalia, as opposed to other locations that also possess favorable geography for piracy. For instance, the coastline of Somaliland is adjacent to the Gulf of Aden, and thus in theory should offer potential pirates great access to targets. Yet, as stated in Chapter Five, Somaliland ports have never been used to host hijacked ships (Hansen, 2009: 30; UNSC, 2010a: 37). Therefore, although favorable geography is a key factor enabling piracy, it appears it is only one of the elements necessary for the chemistry of piracy.

In addition to favorable geography, another key factor that seems to be required for a setting to be conducive of piracy is weak governance. Chapter Three has shown that many commentators have claimed the collapse of the Somali state, and the associated weakening of the rule of law, has been instrumental to the rise of Somali piracy (see Møller, 2009a: 38; Ross and Ben-David, 2009: 59; Schaefer, 2009: 2; Silva, 2009: 2). The findings in the previous chapter reinforce this perspective, with many Somalis

stating that piracy is a relatively easy livelihood option due to the lack of authorities in Somalia who are willing and able to prevent the activity. The alleged link between state failure and Somali piracy is further supported by data from the ICC-IMB (2004: 5), which shows the first case of Somali piracy was not reported until 1994, well after the collapse of the central government in 1991 (see Chapter Five). The possible relationship between state failure and piracy is further demonstrated by the significant drop in incidences of piracy that occurred during the Islamic Courts Union's brief, but relatively successful, rule of Somalia in 2006 (Hansen, 2009: 27; Ho, 2009: 503). These factors suggest there is a link between state failure and Somali piracy, as piracy has not been a significant issue in Somalia while the country has had a functional central government.

It is important to reiterate, Somalia may be a failed state but that does not necessarily mean it is a failed society (Murphy, 2009a: 2). As discussed in Chapters Four and Five, despite lacking a functional central government, Somalia has two regional governments, which are relatively 'functional' in a Somali setting: the Government of Somaliland and the Government of Puntland. It has been shown in Chapter Five that officials and members of the general community in Somaliland have been willing and able to prevent piracy from taking root in that region (see Hansen, 2009: 30; UNSC, 2010a: 37). The lack of piracy in Somaliland, despite its favorable geography, suggests that strong governance, even when it is not emanating from a central government, may be able to prevent piracy within the Somali context.

In contrast to Somaliland, Puntland has been the epicenter of piratical activity in Somalia (Ploch *et al.*, 2009: 7). Yet, as discussed in Chapter Four, Puntland has relatively strong institutions of governance in a Somali context. Nevertheless, commentators such as Middleton (2008), Eichstaedt (2010) and the UNSC (2010a) have suggested that Puntland officials have been unwilling to prevent piracy due to having vested interests in the activity. The findings in the previous chapter confirm these purported ties, with many pirates, as well as some local officials, stating there are strong links between some Puntland officials and piracy. These findings also appear to support claims by Vagg (1995: 68) and Murphy (2009b: 42) that the

corruption of law enforcement officials is a prerequisite for piracy, as piracy has only taken root in areas of Somalia where officials have been tolerant of the activity.

This study has also reinforced the view that in Somalia there are forms of “governance without government” (Menkhaus, 2007a). Chapter Five has discussed some of the ways in which members of the general society, outside of official governance positions, have attempted to prevent piracy. For example, Islamic imams have embarked on campaigns to excommunicate pirates (Garowe Online, 2009, 28 May). The findings from the previous chapter suggest these efforts have had some effect at discouraging individuals from piracy. Thus, in line with claims by Hansen and Mesøy (2006) and Hansen (2009), it seems there is potential for local entities, institutions and individuals to discourage piracy through informal forms of social control.

This section has, thus far, provided plausible economic rationalist accounts on why piracy is rampant in Puntland and non-existent in Somaliland. However, the question of why piracy has not taken hold in other coastal areas of Somalia remains unanswered. With the exception of Harardheere and Hobyo, in the Mudug district, large-scale piracy networks have not developed in central and southern Somalia (UNSC, 2010a). The lack of significant piracy networks in central and southern Somalia may partly be explained by the levels of conflict in these areas.

In the literature it is often stated that conflict is a key factor enabling piracy, as it can make the relative risk of piracy appear diminished (Sörenson, 2008; Ploch *et al.*, 2009). The findings from this study support this point, with many Somali pirates stating in media interviews that the relative risks involved in alternative livelihood options in the conflict-ridden country have contributed to their decision to partake in piracy. In addition, Somalia’s ongoing conflict has left the country awash with a proliferation of arms, which according to the literature and the findings in the previous chapter has provided individuals with an enhanced means of committing acts of piracy (Chalk, 2008; Onuoha, 2008; de Wijk, 2010). This conflict and proliferation of arms has left much of central and southern Somalia embroiled in a messy civil war, with a variety of factions fighting for control (Dagne, 2009).

Although conflict may enable piracy by diminishing its relative risk, it appears the extreme conflict and instability in central and southern Somalia has likely prevented the development of piracy networks in these areas. As discussed in Chapter Five, Somali piracy is a time intensive process (de Wijk *et al.*, 2010: 44). Thus, the piracy networks require a degree of stability while they are holding their hostages for ransom. Chapter Four has demonstrated that such stability is lacking throughout most of central and southern Somalia due to the ongoing power struggle between rival warlords. Therefore, it appears that while a degree of conflict and a proliferation of arms may enable Somali piracy, severe conflict may in contrast be disruptive to the hostage taking process.

The degree of stability in Puntland, in combination with the authorities' apparent tolerance of piracy, has enabled the region to become a hotbed for piracy. Similarly, Harardheere and Hobyo are, according to Hansen (2009: 25), "far away from the factions in the Somali civil war". Thus, piracy networks in these areas have been able to operate relatively undisturbed by authorities and rival warlords. It appears this relative stability has allowed these piracy networks to develop into highly sophisticated criminal organizations, which are able to implement long-term 'business' plans (see Lennox, 2008; UNSC, 2008; Gilpin, 2009; Ghosh, 2010; Payne, 2010). As demonstrated in Chapter Five, forward thinking through investment and innovation has enabled these networks to improve their attacking capabilities overtime. The technological and tactical advances that such improvements have allowed are likely key factors behind the dramatic surge in piracy off the Somali coast that has occurred since 2008. For instance, the use of motherships and advanced logistical infrastructure have enabled the piracy networks to coordinate attacks at a greater frequency, further from shore, and against a wider range of targets (Gilpin, 2009: 9). It seems likely that such advances have only been possible for networks based in areas with a degree of stability and a lack of authorities willing and able to intervene.

In summary, this section has critically examined the economic rationalist claim that piracy may be viewed as a rational 'choice' for some individuals in settings that are purported to be conducive of piracy. The above analysis reveals that

underdevelopment, favorable geography, weak governance, a degree of conflict (as opposed to severe conflict), and a proliferation of arms appear to have strongly influenced the development of piracy networks in particular areas of Somalia, such as in Puntland, Harardheere and Hobyo. From an economic rationalist perspective, these characteristics have created strong incentives and weak disincentives, for individuals to join piracy networks, while also creating environments in which these networks can prosper.

However, such a viewpoint assumes the individuals involved in these networks are driven largely by economic motivations, while failing to acknowledge there may also be possible ideological motives driving them to piracy, such as grievances. As discussed in Chapter Three, economic rationalism makes the assumption that people are inherently willing to break not only the law, but also the moral codes of a society, if an opportunity arises which is perceived as being personally beneficial (Lilly *et al.*, 2007: 277). This assumption fails to explain how Somali pirates have been able to overcome the moral constraints that prevent the majority of society from carrying out piratical acts. Even if there are strong incentives and weak disincentives to commit an illegal and morally questionable activity, most people still feel a reluctance to do so, due to their internalized moral obligations (Akers and Sellers, 2004). This point is amply demonstrated by the fact the majority of Somalis living in areas that are supposedly conducive of piracy *do not* commit piratical acts. Therefore, to understand how pirates have been willing and able to bypass not only the law, but also moral constraints, it is useful to move beyond the reductionalist nature of economic rationalism to also examine the possible role grievances may play in motivating individuals to commit piracy.

8.2.2 Evaluation of grievance-based understandings of piracy

Some commentators have adopted a grievance-based perspective, arguing that Somali pirates have been driven by grievances rather than greed. It has been speculated that pirates have been motivated by injustices, such as: illegal acts by foreign vessels in Somali waters; desperation; and the ‘unjust’ actions of the international community (see Chapter Three). The purpose of this section is to examine the legitimacy of these purported grievances to critically evaluate the

likelihood that they have played a role in motivating individuals to commit acts of piracy off the Somali coast.

Various commentators have suggested that individuals have been driven to piracy, to some degree, by foreign vessels committing illegal acts in Somalia's territorial waters (see Hari, 2009, 11 January; Sauvageot, 2009; Waldo, 2009; Aiyer *et al.*, 2010; Panjabi, 2010). In line with these claims, the findings in the previous chapter reveal that many Somali pirates have cited IUU fishing and hazardous waste dumping by foreign vessels as key grievances motivating them to commit acts of piracy. These illegal activities by foreign vessels are well-documented facts (see Chapter Four). IUU fishing and hazardous waste dumping have been major issues since the collapse of the Somali state in the early 1990s (see UNEP, 2005; Waldo, 2009; Chatham House, 2009), which roughly coincides with the initial emergence of Somali piracy (Menkhaus, 2009: 22; Anderson, 2010: 326). As discussed in Chapter Five, there is evidence to suggest that during the mid-1990s some piracy networks were specifically targeting foreign fishing trawlers, which were alleged to be fishing illegally in Somalia's territorial waters (Samatar *et al.*, 2010). Thus, claims that Somali pirates have been motivated by IUU may have some degree of legitimacy, particularly regarding the initial wave of piracy off the Somali coast during the mid-1990s.

However, the current nature of Somali piracy raises serious doubts regarding whether piracy is still being committed primarily in response to crimes by foreign vessels. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, many pirates have claimed they are simply retaliating against foreign trawlers that are fishing illegally in Somali waters. Yet, the type and location of vessels being targeted by the pirates does not suggest there is any major agenda to protect against IUU fishing. Data from the ICC-IMB (2010: 60-100), reveals that in 2009 less than 8% of the vessels attacked by Somali pirates were fishing trawlers, of which it is unknown whether they were in fact engaged in IUU fishing or not. In addition, as discussed in Chapter Five, many pirates are attacking vessels far from Somalia's territorial waters (Rotberg, 2010: 2). These factors suggest that the prevention of IUU fishing is unlikely to still be a primary motive of the piracy networks.

Nevertheless, IUU fishing and hazardous waste dumping may still contribute to a general sense of injustice amongst Somalis living in coastal areas. It is therefore possible that anger from such feelings is being vented indiscriminately at foreign vessels, regardless of whether they are engaged in these criminal activities or not. Furthermore, these illegal acts by foreign vessels are impacting on the socio-economic situation in coastal areas and thus potentially intensifying the sense of desperation being felt by Somalis living in these areas.

As discussed above, from an economic rationalist perspective it is claimed the poor socio-economic situation in Somalia may make piracy appear a 'rational' economic choice for some individuals. In contrast, commentators such as Aiyer *et al.* (2010) and Panjabi (2010) argue that instead of having a 'choice' to turn to piracy, some individuals may feel they are 'forced' into piracy out of bare desperation. This perspective is supported by the research findings presented in the previous chapter, which reveal that many pirates have claimed they have been 'forced' to commit piracy out of desperation, due to a lack of alternative livelihood options. Chapter Four has demonstrated that Somalia is a country suffering from a severe humanitarian crisis, with the majority of the population experiencing difficult living conditions, such as: economic insecurity, severe food insecurity and poor health security (see ADB, 2010; CIA, 2010; UNICEF, 2010). This crisis is being further compounded in coastal areas by foreign vessels that are fishing illegally and dumping hazardous waste in Somali waters (see Schofield, 2009: 2; Waldo, 2009: 2). Given this horrific setting, there may be some legitimacy in claims that the pirates have been 'forced' to commit acts of piracy out of desperation.

The purported link between desperation and Somali piracy may have some credence given that piracy off the Somali coast, as discussed above, did not really begin until after the illegal activities of foreign vessels began to seriously affect livelihoods in coastal areas. The possible link between desperation and piracy is further highlighted by the jump in piracy levels that occurred following the December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. As discussed in Chapter Four, the tsunami had a significant impact on livelihoods in coastal areas of Somalia, with Puntland being severely

affected (UNEP, 2006; Cawthorne, 2009). This destruction of livelihoods appears to correspond with a significant rise in incidences of piracy off the Somali coast - from ten reported cases in 2004 to 48 cases after the tsunami in 2005 (ICC-IMB, 2005, 2006). It is possible the increasing levels of 'desperation' caused by the tsunami may have 'forced' more individuals to turn to piracy as a livelihood strategy. Although the desperation argument provides plausible insights on why Somali piracy may have begun and why its levels may have risen in 2005, it fails to explain why piracy exploded in 2008. No significant events took place around this time, which may have affected the already poor livelihood situation in coastal areas of Somalia.

Furthermore, it looks as if desperation is not a factor motivating *all* actors involved in Somali piracy. As discussed in Chapter Five, piracy is a relatively expensive operation in Somalia, with a single piracy mission estimated to cost around US\$6,000 (Walker, 2009, 4 June). Such costs are clearly beyond the means of most individuals living in Somalia, a country with a GDP per capita estimated at US\$600 (CIA, 2010). Given the high costs involved in running piracy missions, it is safe to assume the individuals who finance these missions are not doing so out of desperation. Chapter Five has demonstrated that the piracy networks in Somalia appear to be run in a highly organized corporate manner, with the aim of making a profit (Ghosh, 2010: 8). Nevertheless, it is highly likely the unemployed youth and poor fishermen these networks recruit to conduct the hijackings may very well be forced into piracy out of desperation rather than greed.

The desperation argument may provide a degree of insight on why some unemployed youth and fishermen are joining piracy networks, but it does not explain why these networks are only based in certain coastal areas of Somalia. Poverty and desperation are rife throughout *all* of Somalia, yet the major piracy networks are located in just two districts: the Nugaal district in Puntland and the Mudug district in central Somalia (UNSC, 2010a: 38). The desperation argument, by itself, does not shed any light on why 'Somali' piracy is predominantly based in these districts, while it is less prevalent in other coastal districts such as Middle Juba, Lower Juba and Lower Shabelle, which as shown in Chapter Four (Table 4.1) are equally as poor, and in some cases poorer.

Although the presence of desperation is likely a necessary prerequisite for piracy, it only paints part of the picture. By itself, the desperation argument fails to explain why piracy levels have jumped to unprecedented levels in recent times, what motivates the pirate bosses/financers, and why the major piracy networks are based in some of the relatively 'better off' parts of Somalia. These factors appear to be better understood in relation to the economic rationalist characteristics discussed above. Nevertheless, in accordance with claims by Panjabi (2010) and Aiyer *et al.* (2010), it is possible that, given the horizontal inequalities that exist globally, the desperation felt by some Somalis might instill them with a sense of injustice. Such feelings might enable these individuals to overcome moral constraints and commit acts of piracy against foreign ships, which may be viewed as symbolizing the global wealth that Somalia has been excluded from. This sense of injustice appears to be further exacerbated by the actions of the international community.

Commentators such as Waldo (2009: 7), Panjabi (2010: 470) and Samatar *et al.* (2010: 1380) have speculated that Somali pirates may feel a sense of moral justification due to the 'unjust' actions of the international community. The research findings in the previous chapter appear to support this claim, as some pirates, as well as some members of the general Somali population, have questioned the international community's moral right to condemn the activities of the Somali pirates. These individuals suggest the international condemnation of Somali piracy is hypocritical given the lack of concern the international community has demonstrated with regards to crimes being committed by foreign vessels in Somali waters. This grievance appears to be based on legitimate claims, as the illegal acts by foreign vessels and their devastating impact on human security in coastal areas of Somalia are very real issues, as is the international community's relative inaction to prevent these crimes (see Chapter Four). The international naval presence off the Somali coast is mandated to suppress piracy, yet it is not authorized to prevent IUU fishing and hazardous waste dumping (Ghosh, 2010; Panjabi, 2010). Based on this double standard, it is likely that some Somalis may feel the international community is only concerned with protecting the human security of non-Somalis. It is therefore possible that this viewpoint may create a sense of injustice among some individuals, enabling

them to morally justify acts of piracy which target vessels that are seen as representatives of this 'unjust' international community.

Overall, the findings from this study reveal that many pirates share, or at least claim to share, a similar set of grievances. The main grievances that have been voiced in media interviews match those speculated in the literature. These grievances include: illegal acts by foreign vessels in Somali waters; desperation; and the perception the actions of the international community are hypocritical and unjust. The legitimacy of these purported grievances have been critically examined, finding that they are all based on well-documented issues, which may be viewed as injustices. However, it is difficult to ascertain to what degree these grievances have in fact motivated individuals to commit piracy. Nevertheless, the evidence presented above suggests it is likely these grievances have, at various times, provided some individuals with motives and justifications for committing piracy.

8.2.3 Conclusions on the possible factors driving Somali pirates

This section has so far examined the legitimacy of claims that individuals are being motivated to commit piracy as a result of 'rational' economic choices and/or grievances. Samatar *et al.* (2010: 1381) state "we cannot assume that all pirates are cut from the same criminal cloth". This point must be stressed, as the individuals committing acts of piracy off the Somali coast may hold differing motives and justifications for doing so, which may even change over time. Nevertheless, the findings from this study reveal that many of the individuals labeled as Somali pirates appear to be driven, in a variety of ways, by similar factors. These factors fall into what are labeled as economic rationalist (greed) and grievance-based understandings of piracy (see Chapter Three). In the literature many commentators have argued that Somali pirates are driven by motives stemming from rational economic choices (Sörenson, 2008; Ben-David, 2009; Chalk, 2009; Gilpin, 2009), while others claim grievances may be key motivating factors (Waldo, 2009; Schofield, 2009; Aiyer *et al.*, 2010; Panjabi, 2010). This section has demonstrated that this greed/grievance divide is an inaccurate oversimplification. The findings from this study reveal there are no one-size-fits-all explanations of Somali piracy. For many individuals it appears that economic rationalism and grievances may *both* play

significant roles motivating them to commit piracy, and providing them a sense of moral justification for doing so.

Economic rationalist thought provides some useful insights on the factors that may make a setting conducive of piracy, such as: underdevelopment; favorable geography; weak governance; a degree of conflict; and a proliferation of arms (see Chapter Three). The strong incentives and weak disincentives to commit piracy that these characteristics can present are likely key forces driving Somali piracy. It appears that the convergence of these factors in time and space has played a significant role in creating environments that are conducive of piracy. This convergence has made certain districts, such as Nugaal in Puntland and Mudug in central Somalia, profitable bases for piracy networks, while investment and innovation by these networks have significantly increased their attacking capabilities, leading to the recent explosion of piracy that is plaguing Somali waters. However, the findings in this study reveal that, in addition to these economic rationalist characteristics, grievances have also been required to make these districts conducive of piracy. Therefore, although favorable cost-benefit analyses can enable piracy, it appears that grievances may provide the sense of self-justification that is needed to push individuals to the point of committing piracy and thus breaking legal and moral codes.

In media interviews, many Somalis have cited IUU fishing and hazardous waste dumping by foreign vessels in Somali waters, desperation and the 'unjust' actions of the international community as key factors driving Somali piracy (see Chapter Seven). This chapter has demonstrated that these grievances are all based on legitimate claims. As discussed above, it is quite likely that Somali piracy began in the mid-1990s primarily in response to illegal acts by foreign vessels in Somali waters and the devastating impact these crimes were having on livelihoods in coastal areas, while the first significant jump in piracy levels in 2005 may have been strongly linked to the desperation caused by the Indian Ocean tsunami. However, there is evidence to suggest the piracy networks are no longer being driven predominantly by these grievances. For instance, many pirates claim to be acting in response to IUU fishing and hazardous waste dumping in Somali waters, yet it appears the

perpetrators of these crimes have not been the main targets of the pirates. Furthermore, there is still a possibility that these claims may, to a degree, be public relations endeavors, intended to make Somali piracy appear more morally and socially acceptable (Middleton cited in Panjabi, 2010: 464). Nevertheless, these factors do not take away from the legitimacy of the grievances that have been voiced. These complaints are based on very real injustices that, as will be discussed in the next section, have impacted on the human security of many Somalis and must therefore be addressed.

Overall, it appears there has been a shift in the overriding motives of the piracy networks in Somalia from grievances to greed (a profit orientation). However, many of the individuals recruited by these networks are likely being driven by need rather than greed. In addition, grievances may still provide an important sense of moral justification for these individuals to commit acts of piracy, even if their primary motive has been to make economic gains. Therefore, although economic factors have enabled piracy in certain areas of Somalia at certain times, it appears that grievances have still been required to push people to the point of committing piracy. In conclusion, these findings contribute to a greater understanding of the underlying factors driving Somali piracy, which is much-needed in the current climate (see Chapter Five) and sadly lacking in the current literature (see Chapter Three). These findings also provide an important context for the next section, which will examine how the possible motivating factors, discussed above, are heavily underpinned by issues of human insecurity in Somalia.

8.3 Human insecurity and the motives of Somali pirates

The discussion in the previous section has highlighted that there are no one-size-fits-all explanations of piracy, as there are a variety of factors that may be contributing to the causation of Somali piracy. Nevertheless, it appears weak human security and external violations of human security in Somalia are behind many of these factors. As discussed in Chapter Two, the notion of human security adopted for the purpose of this study is comprised of “freedom from fear”, “freedom from want”, and “freedom to take action on one’s own behalf” (CHS, 2003: 10). This section firmly plants Somali piracy in a development context, by examining how threats to these human freedoms

underpin many of the economic rationalist and grievance-based factors that are likely driving piracy off the Somali coast. Moreover, this section demonstrates that external actors should take some responsibility for the existence of many of these factors.

8.3.1 *Human insecurity and economic rationalist motives*

As demonstrated earlier, for some individuals, piracy may be viewed as a 'rational' economic choice in settings that possess: favorable geography; weak governance; underdevelopment; a degree of conflict; and a proliferation of arms. Other than favorable geography, which is essentially a fixed variable, these characteristics, as will be discussed below, are all heavily linked to issues of human insecurity.

Chapter Four has shown that weak governance is prevalent throughout most of Somalia. According to the CHS (2003: 68), "[w]ithout effective governance, people are not empowered". Therefore, the weak governance in Somalia signifies a critical threat to individuals' "freedom to take action on one's own behalf". As discussed in Chapter Four, the weak governance afflicting Somalia stems from the country's historical experience of colonial rule, tyrannical rule, state collapse and the unsuccessful on-going attempts to reestablish a functional central government, which have been sponsored by international actors.

Somalia's volatile past, along with a proliferation of arms, has also left much of the country ravaged with conflict and underdevelopment (Dagne, 2009: 657). These are highly interlinked issues, which can clearly diminish individuals' human security. According to the CHS (2003: 21), violent conflict and underdevelopment both pose major threats to people's survival, livelihoods and dignity. This point was amply demonstrated in Chapter Four, which highlighted how conflict and underdevelopment have left much of Somalia in the midst of a horrific humanitarian crisis (see ADB, 2010; CIA, 2010; UNICEF, 2010). To date, the international community has failed to respond adequately to this crisis (UNSC, 2010b).

To summarize, this study has shown that for some individuals piracy may be viewed as a 'rational' livelihood option in settings possessing: favorable geography; weak

governance; underdevelopment; a degree of conflict; and a proliferation of arms. Other than favorable geography, these characteristics are all inextricably linked to critical and pervasive threats to human freedoms in Somalia. From an economic rationalist perspective, the causation of Somali piracy can, therefore, be viewed as a result of human insecurity, which external actors have contributed to in many ways. Similarly, grievance-based explanations of Somali piracy are also heavily underpinned by issues of human insecurity, to which we now turn.

8.3.2 *Human insecurity and grievance-based motives*

This thesis has already demonstrated that grievances, regarding illegal acts by foreign vessels in Somali waters, desperation and the ‘unjust’ actions of the international community, may provide some individuals with motives for committing piracy. The purpose of this section is to demonstrate that these grievances are all heavily linked to issues of human insecurity in Somalia and external violations of this human security.

The foreign vessels engaged in IUU fishing and hazardous waste dumping in Somali waters clearly present critical and pervasive threats to the human freedoms of Somali fishermen and individuals living in coastal areas of Somalia (see Chapter Four). The findings presented in the previous chapter reveal that many Somali pirates, who were previously fishermen, have claimed that foreign fishing vessels have violated their personal security by aggressively chasing them away from rich fishing areas in Somalia’s territorial waters. This violent behavior clearly violates individuals’ “freedom from fear” of violence, abuse and persecution. In addition to the threat of fear, IUU fishing and hazardous waste dumping are also threatening individuals’ “freedom from want”. These illegal activities, as discussed in Chapter Four, are having a negative effect on fish stocks in Somali waters, which in turn is having a detrimental impact on economic security and food security for those who rely on these marine resources for employment and food (Schofield, 2009; Waldo, 2009). The destructive fishing methods used by some IUU fishing trawlers and the practice of hazardous waste dumping are also having an adverse effect on environmental security in the region, damaging the fragile marine ecosystem (Musse and Tako, 1999; BBC News, 2002, 31 January). Moreover, hazardous waste dumping

is directly affecting the health security of individuals living in coastal areas of Somalia (UNEP, 2005; Egal, 2009). Overall, these impacts demonstrate that human freedoms in Somalia are being externally violated by foreign vessels in Somali waters.

In addition, the frequently cited grievance of desperation is unquestionably a human security issue. The findings in the previous chapter show that many Somalis feel a sense of desperation regarding their lack of livelihood options and the fact that the wealth existing globally has bypassed them. These findings are reflected in the dismal socio-economic situation in Somalia, which was outlined in Chapter Four. This situation in Somalia suggests individuals are lacking the “building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity” that, according to the CHS (2003: 4), are required for human security. Thus, the existence of such severe desperation indicates a significant threat to Somalis’ human security.

Another key grievance, linked to human insecurity, is the perception that the actions of the international community are unjust. According to the CHS (2003: 4), the objective of a human security approach is “to protect the vital core of all human lives” (emphasis added). However, as discussed previously, the international community has done relatively little to ‘protect the vital core’ of Somalis’ lives from external threats, such as those incurred through IUU fishing and hazardous waste dumping (see Waldo, 2009; Ghosh, 2010; Panjabi, 2010). Therefore, this grievance is linked to the international community’s failure to protect Somalis from external human security violations, which according to the CHS (2003: 9) is a universal human right.

Overall, the key grievances driving Somali piracy appear to be heavily linked to issues of human insecurity in Somalia and external violations of this human security. Illegal acts by foreign vessels in Somali waters, desperation and the ‘unjust’ actions of the international community are all related to critical and pervasive threats to human freedoms in Somalia, which from a human security perspective must be addressed.

8.3.3 *Conclusions on human insecurity and the motives of Somali pirates*

This section has placed Somali piracy firmly within a development context, by demonstrating that issues of human insecurity heavily underpin both economic rationalist and grievance-based explanations of Somali piracy. While earlier, Chapter Five outlined many ways in which this piracy has itself contributed to further human insecurity in Somalia, as well as internationally. These findings suggest that Somali piracy is caused by and contributes to human insecurity. Such a viewpoint supports claims by the UNDP (1994) and the CHS (2003) that human insecurity breeds further insecurity. In addition, the findings from this study reinforce the importance of the CHS's (2003) human security paradigm, and its guiding assumption that development and security are highly interlinked and mutually reinforcing. This study has demonstrated that a lack of security is seriously hindering development in Somalia, while in turn the lack of development is further weakening the country's security situation. This process has created a vicious cycle of insecurity and underdevelopment from which Somali piracy has emerged.

Overall, these findings strengthen the perspective that security and development are inextricably connected, and therefore *must* be treated holistically (also see UNDP, 1994; CHS, 2003; Faust and Messner, 2005; von Feigenblatt, 2009). Somali piracy should therefore be viewed as a human security issue, which requires integrated development and security solutions. Furthermore, this section has demonstrated that external actors have contributed greatly to the existence of many of the underlying issues of human insecurity that are likely driving Somali piracy. Thus, the international community must take some responsibility in addressing these issues of human insecurity.

8.4 Possible means of addressing Somali piracy

In accordance with claims by Menkhaus (2009: 22), Onuoha (2009: 43) and Tiffany Basciano (2009: 7), this study has demonstrated that Somali piracy is little more than a symptom of deeper problems. As discussed above, these problems stem from weak human security in Somalia and external violations of this human security. Yet, the

international community has, to date, paid relatively little attention to addressing these underlying issues. Instead, the international community has been largely focused on countering piracy through naval fixes, such as the deployment of warships to the region. Chapter Five has shown that although the international naval presence has had some success at deterring and disrupting piracy off the Somali coast, it has been unable to eliminate the activity, with incidences of piracy continuing to rise (ICC-IMB, 2010; Rotberg, 2010; UNSC, 2010a). The findings presented in the previous chapter highlight the futility of relying solely on naval fixes to address Somali piracy, with many pirates stating they are relatively unfazed by the international naval presence in the region. These factors suggest the international community's current response to Somali piracy is inadequate. This study therefore proposes that to effectively counter Somali piracy it is necessary for the international community to adopt a holistic approach that addresses the underlying issues of human insecurity that are driving the activity.

The international community has both a pragmatic rationale and a moral obligation to address the lack of human security in Somalia. Chapter Five has demonstrated that Somali piracy is having a detrimental impact on human security globally. It is therefore in the international community's self-interest to address the underlying issues of human insecurity that, as discussed above, are contributing to the causation of Somali piracy. On top of this pragmatic motive, the international community also has a moral obligation to ensure human security in Somalia, as human security is arguably a universal human right (CHS, 2003: 9). The aim of this section is to briefly outline some possible steps the international community could take to ensure Somalis have "freedom from fear", "freedom from want" and "freedom to take action on one's own behalf" (CHS, 2003).

8.4.1 Ensuring 'freedom from fear'

"Freedom from fear" of violence, abuse and persecution is a key component of human security (UNDP, 1994; CHS, 2003). This study has demonstrated that in Somalia this freedom is being grossly violated by a range of issues, including illegal acts by foreign vessels in Somali waters, the conflict that is devastating the country, and the arms trade that is enabling this conflict. These issues must be addressed.

There is an urgent need to curb the threats of IUU fishing and hazardous waste dumping in Somalia's territorial waters. At present, there are no significant international initiatives aimed at preventing these illegal activities (Waldo, 2009). Yet, there is a strong international naval presence off the coast of Somalia that is authorized to prevent piracy. These international forces should have their mandates expanded to also include the prevention of IUU fishing and hazardous waste dumping in Somali waters (Ho, 2009: 512; Rotberg, 2010: 5; Samatar *et al.*, 2010: 1391). Such a response will provide Somalis with a valuable form of protection from these external threats, while also going some way towards addressing the deep-rooted grievances regarding crimes by foreign vessels and the 'unjust' actions of the international community. The policing of Somali waters by international naval forces may be a necessary strategy in the short-term, yet a more sustainable approach will require greater local-ownership. In which case, the international community could help build the capacity of the Puntland and Somaliland naval forces. In the long run such a strategy could lead to the presence of local forces capable of preventing not only IUU fishing and hazardous waste dumping in Somali waters, but also piracy.

Another key threat impinging on "freedom from fear" in Somalia, which must be addressed, is the violent conflict that is devastating the country. The CHS (2003: 131) states that preventing conflict is a key aspect of a human security approach. However, as outlined in Chapter Four, previous attempts to quell the conflict in Somalia through international interventions have, in many respects, made the situation worse (Ahmed and Herbold Green, 1999: 123; Menkhaus, 2004: 152). These failures stem largely from the international community's willingness to engage with actors lacking legitimacy in Somalia, such as favored warlords, the current 'central' government (the TFG), and Somalia's historical enemy – Ethiopia (Ahmed and Herbold Green, 1999; Møller, 2009b). These past failures suggest that if the international community is going to intervene in any way it must be conducted in a manner that has local support and, as will be discussed later on, empowers Somalis.

One way in which the international community may be able to tackle the conflict in Somalia is by addressing the illegal arms trade that has been taking place unhindered

throughout the country since the collapse of the Somali state (UNSC, 2008: 22). The proliferation of arms in Somalia is a significant factor fueling the country's civil war (Menkhaus, 2007: 81). According to the CHS (2003: 134), protecting people from the illegal arms trade is a key step to ensuring human security. Thus, the international community should strive to eliminate the illegal arms trade in Somalia. As demonstrated throughout this thesis, security and development are highly interlinked issues. Therefore, to prevent conflict in the long-term and ensure "freedom from fear" it is also necessary to improve the socio-economic situation in Somalia, to which we shall now turn.

8.4.2 Ensuring 'freedom from want'

"Freedom from want" of gainful employment, food and health is another key aspect of human security (UNDP, 1994; CHS, 2003). Chapter Four has demonstrated that this freedom is severely lacking in Somalia, with the majority of the population suffering from economic insecurity, severe food insecurity and poor health security (see ADB, 2010; CIA, 2010; UNICEF, 2010). To address this humanitarian crisis and ensure "freedom from want", the international community must increase assistance to Somalia, guarantee the safe provision of this assistance, and help build viable livelihood options for Somalis.

As discussed in Chapter Four, there has been a rise in the number of Somalis desperately requiring humanitarian assistance, yet there has been a significant drop in the amount of assistance provided by the international community (UNSC, 2010b: 6). According to the CHS (2003: 133), a human security approach should "provide minimum living standards everywhere". Therefore, the drop in the provision of humanitarian assistance in Somalia is a major concern, which *must* be reversed. To make matters worse, the delivery of this much-needed aid is frequently being obstructed by conflict, banditry and piracy (McLure, 2009: 153). As such, there is a grave need for the international community to implement greater measures to ensure the safe provision of this assistance. The international community needs to make sure that humanitarian aid does not end up in the hands of warlords and pirates, as this will not only deprive those who need the assistance, but may also

strengthen the warlords and pirates, thus continuing the vicious cycle of conflict and underdevelopment in Somalia.

Despite its importance, the provision of humanitarian assistance by the international community will not provide a long-term solution to the crisis in Somalia. This provision is only a stopgap measure needed to alleviate the dire situation in the short-term. To sustainably guarantee “freedom from want”, Somalis must have adequate livelihood options that provide for their survival and dignity. As discussed in Chapter Three, critical theorists claim the global capitalist system, in its current form, produces unjust horizontal inequalities (see Conway and Heynen, 2008; Klak, 2008). From this perspective, the improvement of livelihood options in Somalia may therefore require the international community to make structural changes to this system to improve the equability of the division of global wealth. Such changes would be in line with a human security approach, which according to the CHS (2003: 133) advocates fair trade and trade that benefits the extreme poor.

In addition to the need for major structural changes, the international community may, in partnership with local people, be able to help build and improve livelihood options in Somalia through development projects. For instance, international assistance could be given to capacity building projects in the fishing and pastoralist sectors (see UNSC, 2008). However, such development projects must be conducted in a careful manner that empowers Somalis.

8.4.3 Ensuring ‘freedom to take action on one’s own behalf’

The final component necessary for human security is “freedom to take action on one’s own behalf” (CHS, 2003). Establishing “freedom from want” and “freedom from fear” in Somalia will go some way towards empowering Somalis. However, the CHS (2003: 68) states that effective governance is also required for empowerment. Following this line of thought, many commentators have proposed that a functional central government must be reestablished in Somalia (Møller, 2009a: 38; Ross and Ben-David, 2009: 59; Schaefer, 2009: 2; Silva, 2009: 2). The international community, as demonstrated in Chapter Four, has already taken various steps to try and reestablish a central government.

However, the notion of central governance is arguably a foreign concept in a Somali setting (Powell *et al.*, 2008; Hesse, 2010a). According to Menkhaus (2007a), there is a lack of agreement amongst Somalis over the form a possible central government should take. Until there is a meaningful reconciliation between those holding differing views, international attempts to help broker the reestablishment of a central government will, in the words of Bruton (2010: 28), “ultimately be a recipe for further conflict”. Reconciliation and governance are essentially in Somali hands. Therefore, instead of attempting to build central governance, the international community could collaborate with local entities, institutions, clan elders and religious leaders to strengthen the local governance systems that are already in place. Such an approach may strengthen governance in Somalia, leading to greater empowerment.

8.4.4 *Conclusions on possible means of addressing Somali piracy*

This section has outlined some possible steps the international community could take to improve human security in Somalia, by ensuring: “freedom from fear”; “freedom from want”; and “freedom to take action on one’s own behalf”. Following a human security approach, the international community has a moral obligation to protect and improve these human freedoms in Somalia, as human security is a right for *all* individuals (CHS, 2003: 9). The international community also has a vested interest in ensuring human security in Somalia, as human insecurity, as demonstrated above, is contributing to the causation of Somali piracy. To ensure human security in Somalia, and thus address the root causes of Somali piracy, this section proposes that the international community should take a holistic approach that tackles the following issues:

- Protecting Somalis from the illegal activities of foreign vessels;
- Protecting Somalis from violent conflict;
- Protecting Somalis from the proliferation of arms;
- Providing minimum living standards for all Somalis;
- Encouraging fair international trade;
- Building livelihood options; and

- Strengthening local governance systems.

Addressing these issues will, from an economic rationalist perspective, reduce the incentives for Somalis to turn to piracy, by ensuring there are alternative livelihood options, while also strengthening the disincentives against committing acts of piracy. Moreover, these measures may go some way towards addressing deep-rooted grievances, such as those relating to crimes by foreign vessels in Somali waters, desperation and the ‘unjust’ actions of the international community, which this study has shown are likely contributing to the causation of Somali piracy.

However, the holistic nature of such an approach raises concerns that international assistance may become conflated with counter-piracy security measures, thus potentially diverting assistance away from areas of need unrelated to piracy. For example, assistance may only be given to projects in Somalia that are tied to counter-piracy objectives. This thesis does not in any way advocate the tying of assistance. Chapter Four has amply demonstrated that human insecurity in Somalia is a pressing issue in its own right, which must be addressed regardless of its role in the causation of piracy.

8.5 Conclusions

In April 2008, the US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, rallied the international community to take action to end the “scourge” of piracy off the Somali coast (cited in Reuters, 2008, 8 April). Clinton suggested that the pirates are criminals, who must be brought to justice. In her speech, as in most mainstream commentary on Somali piracy, a simple good/bad dichotomy was presented, with the pirates being portrayed as little more than ‘villains’ who are threatening global capitalism (Ali and Murad, 2009). This thesis has demonstrated that there is *some* truth to this perspective, as Somali piracy has devastating effects on its victims, and thus must be addressed. However, such simple portrayals fail to appreciate the deeper issues that have driven individuals to piracy. Instead, the pirates’ existence is presented merely in relation to international economic interests. As a result, Somali pirates have typically been depicted as ‘villains’ in the story of global capitalism.

Through such decontextualized accounts, the story of Somali piracy is restricted to how the international community can protect itself from these criminals. This position is reflected in international counter-piracy measures, which attempt to fight piracy through naval fixes. These measures are largely based on protecting international shipping interests, rather than addressing the context from which Somali piracy has arisen. Such approaches conveniently place the blame for piracy on the 'immoral' character of the pirates and the failure of the Somali state, while absolving external actors from any responsibility. In response to these decontextualized accounts, this thesis has attempted to provide a more nuanced understanding of Somali piracy.

8.5.1 *Summary of the research findings*

The principle objective of this study was to contribute to an understanding of the effectiveness of a human security approach at addressing the issue of Somali piracy. To achieve this aim, the following research questions were investigated:

1. What underlying factors are contributing to the causation of Somali piracy?
2. How does human (in)security affect these underlying factors?
3. Will a human security approach be able to appropriately address these factors?

To explore these questions, it was necessary to 'listen' to the motives and justifications voiced by Somali pirates. Given the difficulty and possible danger involved in conducting interviews directly with pirates, an indirect method for data collection was adopted. As a result, this study conducted a qualitative media content analysis, which examined preexisting interviews with Somali pirates, and other key actors, from a variety of online media sources. This approach provided an invaluable avenue for collecting interview data, which would have been unfeasible by any other means.

In the literature on piracy, there are two general schools of thought regarding the motives of pirates: economic rationalist and grievance-based understandings. During this study, the interview data was thematically analyzed, in relation to these

economic rationalist and grievance-based understandings. These understandings of piracy have been examined by crosschecking their claims with: background information on the human security situation in Somalia; information regarding the nature of Somali piracy; and the results from the media content analysis. The following section will elaborate on the findings of this research in relation to the research questions that were explored.

To address the first research question, this study has critically evaluated economic rationalist and grievance-based understandings of piracy to shed light on the underlying factors that are contributing to the causation of Somali piracy. The findings show that piracy may be viewed as a rational 'choice' for some people in settings in which there is underdevelopment, favorable geography, weak governance, a degree of conflict, and a proliferation of arms. It is likely that these characteristics have created strong incentives and weak disincentives for individuals to join piracy networks, while also creating environments in which these networks can thrive, such as in Puntland, Harardheere and Hobyo. In addition to these factors, this study has found that grievances may also contribute to the causation of Somali piracy, by providing individuals with a sense of self-justification. The key grievances that appear to have contributed to Somali piracy, to varying degrees at different times, are related to illegal acts by foreign vessels in Somali waters, desperation, and the perception that the actions of the international community are hypocritical and unjust. Overall, this study has found that economic rationalist and grievance-based factors may *both* play significant roles motivating people to commit acts of piracy, and providing them a sense of moral justification for doing so.

The second research question was approached by examining how human insecurity affects the economic rationalist and grievance-based factors that are likely driving piracy off the Somali coast. Although there are no one-size-fits-all explanations of piracy, this study has found that issues of human insecurity underpin many of the factors that are likely causing Somali piracy. Other than favorable geography, the economic rationalist factors mentioned earlier all represent critical and pervasive threats to human freedoms in Somalia. Similarly, the key grievances discussed above are all linked to weak human security and external violations of human security in

Somalia. Therefore, this study has placed Somali piracy firmly within a development context by demonstrating that underdevelopment and insecurity are ultimately at the heart of the issue.

To investigate the third research question, this thesis has examined how a human security approach could be used to address the factors driving piracy. This thesis proposes that to counter Somali piracy it is necessary to adopt a holistic approach that confronts the underlying development and security issues that are contributing to the causation of Somali piracy. As such, this thesis has outlined a variety of steps the international community could take to protect human freedoms in Somalia, and empower Somalis. Such responses will, from an economic rationalist perspective, reduce the incentives for Somalis to turn to piracy, while also strengthening the disincentives. Moreover, these measures may go some way towards addressing the fundamental grievances that are contributing to the causation of Somali piracy.

Overall, the research methodology used in this study has provided a useful means to address the research questions guiding this thesis. Through a triangulation of the interview data and background information on Somalia and piracy, this study has demonstrated that ensuring human freedoms in Somalia will be the most effective and sustainable way to prevent piracy off the Somali coast.

8.5.2 *Concluding comments*

This study has amply demonstrated that the international community cannot simply point the finger of blame for piracy solely on Somalis, as external actors have contributed significantly to the underlying issues of human insecurity that are driving Somali piracy. Through colonial and imperial policies, illegal acts by foreign vessels in Somali waters, and the unequal distribution of global wealth and livelihood choices, external actors have presented critical and pervasive threats to human freedoms in Somalia. Therefore, Somali pirates should not be viewed simply as 'villains' in the tale of global capitalism, as they have their own legitimate stories of victimhood in which external actors have played a large role.

Thus, the international community has a moral obligation to address the issues of human insecurity that plague Somalia. This obligation stems from external actors complicity in many of these issues, and the fact that human security is arguably a universal human right (CHS, 2003: 9). In addition, the international community also has a pragmatic rationale for addressing human insecurity in Somalia, as through acts of piracy this insecurity can have serious global ramifications. Overall, Somali piracy presents a valuable lesson on the dangers of global inequality, demonstrating that global wealth and livelihood choices must be distributed more evenly and justly or the entire world may suffer the consequences if exploited and neglected groups choose to take violent routes to improve their situation (Panjabi, 2010). Therefore, those living in the relative comfort and prosperity of the so-called 'developed world' cannot continue to ignore the underdevelopment and insecurity afflicting other parts of the globe, such as in Somalia, because "when human security is at threat anywhere, it can affect people everywhere" (UNDP, 1994: 34).

This thesis has analyzed Somali piracy through the lens of a human security approach and has taken a critical stance on the international community's current response to the issue. This position does not in any way mean condone the activities of Somali pirates, as piracy is a deplorable activity that has unpardonable effects on its seafaring victims. Rather this thesis advocates the belief that human security is a universal right for all individuals (CHS, 2003: 9). Therefore, the international community has a moral obligation to address human security threats regardless of the nationality of the victims, whether they are seafarers from developing countries victimized by Somali pirates, or Somalis whose human freedoms are being violated.

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