

# The Role of African Diaspora in Governance and Development:

The Case of Somaliland

By

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- Strategic Location
- Former British Colony
- 31 year post-colonial union with Somalia
- *De facto* independence in 1991
- No international recognition as a state *de jure*
- Tough Neighbourhood especially in the south
- ‘Oasis of stability with some Development.  
Why?

# Challenges

- Civil war killed 50,000 and displaced 500,000 out of population of 2-3 million
- Infrastructure destroyed and
- Land littered with Landmines and unexploded ordinance
- No access to standard international funding
- No experience of statehood and economic governance to direct development.
- FDI deterred by proximity to conflict and piracy in neighbouring Puntland and South Central Somalia

# Development in Somaliland

‘Africa’s best kept secret’ (Jhazbhay, 2003)

- Telecommunication
- Financial Services
- Airline
- Trade
- Construction booming
- Infrastructure Built where there was none
- Several universities now exist
- Human capital is being replenished steadily

# Theoretical framework

## Migration-led development

- Financial Remittance
- Skills transfer
  - Brain Gain Vs Brain Gain
- Diaspora's influence on the homeland

# Diaspora Vs Emigrant

- The term Diaspora is often hard to distinguish from emigrant but reflects a level of integration and organisation within the host country indicating that the Diaspora possess a financial and political power which may be outside the remit of new emigrants. This political and organisational power can have impact upon homeland development.

# Case of Somaliland

- Starting from zero -The aftermath of conflict
- Remittances to Somalia
- The Role of Remittances in Financing Modern Sectors of the Economy
- Pioneering Industries
- Informal Money Transfer Organisations (IMTOs)
- The role of the private sector
- Absorptive Capacity in Skills Transfer

# Conclusion

- Somaliland as a country whose development has been primarily financed and skilled by its migrant population and transnationals who divide their time between host and home country.
- It has been noted that Somaliland's unique geographical and political situation offered few alternative avenues to development.
- Furthermore the particularly strong ties held between the diaspora and the home population means that this is a model of development not easily or desirably replicated elsewhere.
- Nevertheless the modest economic growth and 18 years of stability Somaliland has enjoyed defy economic development models which list external assistance or foreign direct investment as necessary prerequisites for development.
- As such the example of Somaliland makes for an interesting case study within the discussion of African models of development, highlighting the value of indigenous solutions to and ownership of development.