

## **Ethical Leadership in Post-Conflict Somalia: Humanity as a Governance Principle**

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I never met Abdirizak Jiis Jumbur. At the time of his death on January 16<sup>th</sup>, 1999, he was just eleven years old; only a boy, but like any boy anywhere, full of adventure, mischief, dreams, and potential. Had he lived, who can imagine what contribution he might have made to Somalia, perhaps to the world? Yet even if he had lived an unremarkable life in his village of Goobweyn, not far from Kismayo, he surely would have brought joy and meaning into the lives of many.

Two weeks before his untimely death, Abdirizak was abducted along with 11 others much older than him, and held as a prisoner of war by militia members. For reasons unknown, all the captives were taken into a small hut, and militia members proceeded to drive a truck over the hut repeatedly, crushing those within. What then remained of the hut was subjected to intense gunfire. Surprisingly three persons survived the brutality and cowardice of these attacks, but Abdirizak was not among them.

Another Abdirizak, named Abdirizak Hirsi Dheere, also died in this incident. I will let the words of his own niece share the story of this remarkable man. Her account begins with the obvious question:

What were the sins of my uncle to face such a horrible death? The only crime my uncle has committed is that he was an inhabitant of Kismayo. No one deserves this senseless and cruel death. My uncle as a student was a political activist, before Somalia's independence. Later, he worked at the Somali National Bank and was an active trade unionist. He opposed the dictatorship of Siyad Barre as early as 1974, among the first Somalis who understood the savagery of the regime. From that time, he disassociated himself from the government, but remained a strong opposition to the regime. While working at the bank he was

never promoted because of his views against the military regime of Barre. He was so honest and strict that he did not own a car, because he could not afford one. I remember him walking almost all the time to his office, some three km from the residence of the banking staff.

His children were resentful at times because they saw some of his counterparts abusing their power and owning the latest cars as well enjoying other perks. In 1989, I asked him one day, "Uncle, why don't you buy a car and a new furniture to change the old one in your house". His response was, "walking is good for the health and as for buying these material things I can not afford them and I do not want to obtain them through corruption". I was impressed by his honesty. He believed that when a genuine and democratic government comes to Somalia there would be justice for all. Unfortunately, Somalia has not yet seen the democracy my uncle was hoping for and no checks and balances have yet been made. Worse than that, my uncle had to flee Mogadishu in 1991 because he was suddenly lumped with the regime he had fought against for all his life. He then settled in Kismayo, in Southern Somalia. Until the day he was captured, my uncle fought against the corrupt and the criminal.

I have very vivid memories of the good times I spent with my uncle. As a teenager, he introduced me to my first serious reading and he made me aware of famous freedom fighters, writers of the time and philosophers. His love for books was strong up to the end of his days. In the course of the civil war, he made a small library in his home in Kismayo. He always asked me to bring or send books and old magazines to keep him informed. He hardly asked for money that he surely needed more. He shaped my upbringing and moral value and ethics.

I never felt I have learned enough from the wisdom of my uncle. I was hoping that one day I will sit with him under the shade of a tree somewhere in Somalia where I will listen with earnest, as I always did, to his enormous knowledge about Somalia and the rest of the world. But now this is not going to happen because brutal killers have crushed him to his death in Goobweyn, outside Kismayo town.<sup>1</sup>

I have introduced two people – a boy and a man – both sharing the name Abdirizak. I chose them for my own reasons. The elder Abdirizak was an exemplar of the integrity that is the hope for Somalia's future, a modest man of unheralded, quiet virtue. Upon the likes of him are all successful societies grounded. I chose the younger Abdirizak because I am the parent of an eleven-year-old boy, and that simple coincidence

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<sup>1</sup> This narrative is from the Women's Vigil for Peace at Horn Relief, P.O. Box 70331, Nairobi, Kenya. The complete names of those killed in Goobweyn include: 1. Abdirizak Hersi Dheere (58); 2. Abdirahman Mohamed Isse (43); 3. Nabadoon Yusuf Hassan Baadari (80); 4. Abdinuur Musse (33); 5. Ahmed Xiirey Kulan (20); 6. Sanweyne Salah Gamuure (30); 7. Abdirizak Jiis Jumbur (11); 8. Mohamud Moallin (45); and 9. Jaama Mahdi (40).

has connected me to this tragic story in the same way that any parent knows the depth of the love in which children are held, and the love that they return tenfold. Two persons – yet they serve as potent symbols of the truly human face of Somalia’s tragedy. Through their stories, we lose the dulling protection that statistical records afford us. Through their stories, we see in a brighter light the tragedy of hundreds of thousands of innocent non-combatant civilian deaths in the wake of Somalia’s violent unraveling over the past two decades, and even before.

### **The moral landscape of Somalia**

You who are gathered here know Somalia far better than I, who have only visited Mogadiscio and Kismayo but a few times, and over twenty years ago. You know the “landscape”, and you have your own ways – your own words – to describe the current situation in your country. Yet this situation, as bad as it has been, is not new to the human experience. The chaos and poverty, the anarchy and violence, and the stirrings of a new but terribly tender blossoming of peace have been seen in other times in human history, and many minds have wrestled mightily to understand why conditions could become so troubling.(Glover 2001)

Among these minds was Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), and arguably there are many who would describe Somalia’s recent history as “Hobbesian”.<sup>2</sup> Hobbes’ vivid description of a world without ethics is now famous, and still harrowing:

Whatsoever therefore is consequent to a time of war, where every man is enemy to every man, the same consequent to the time wherein men live without other security than what their own strength and their own invention shall furnish them withal. In such condition there is no place for industry, because the fruit thereof is uncertain: and consequently no culture of the earth; no navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by sea; no commodious building; no instruments of moving and removing such things as require much force; no knowledge of the face of the earth; no account of time; no arts; no letters; no

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<sup>2</sup> Commenting on conditions in Somalia in an article entitled *A Society Without State*, *The Economist* once mockingly observed that: “if there were a prize for the nation that had rolled back furthest the frontier of the state, there could only be one winner: the Somalis. For most Somalis, however, the price has been living in a Hobbesian nightmare where there is neither rule of law nor institutions to regulate relations and protect the most vulnerable from the most vicious”. See “Somalia: New rescue plan for the “world’s worst humanitarian disaster”, in the *Humanitarian Affairs Review*, 13 December 2000:

society; and which is worst of all, continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.

In a Hobbesian world, everyone has a "right" to everything. This is a world with no moral constraints at all, in which nothing can be unjust because there is no consensus on justice, no enforcer of just rules, and no opportunity for mercy.

Can ethics save us from a Hobbesian world? Can ethics really offer any help to the new leaders of Somalia, and to the people who have suffered so much and waited so long for good governance? It is my strong conviction that ethics can, and does, offer powerful resources to shape the minds and behavior of people.

The challenges of Somalia today, as demonstrated by the Goobweyn tragedy, are enormous. Even the most intrepid humanitarian aid organizations fear to operate within the country.<sup>3</sup> The weak and innocent have been exploited, traditional Somali ethics and culture have been uprooted and destroyed, and even the code of the warrior has become meaningless. Instead of fighting to protect and defend, warriors in Somalia have fought to exterminate. Often the enemy has not been respected as human and worthy, and the conventional rules known to combatants the world over have lost their power to constrain. The full dimensions of the destruction will never be fully counted or truly comprehended, as no one can truly grasp the intensity and scope of such losses to humanity, society and the environment. The destruction has swept away lives and those elements that make any lives worthwhile: aspirations, hopes, trust, compassion, dignity, tenderness, love, and even self-respect.

### **The moral duties of a state**

Where do those Somalis who now shoulder the awesome responsibilities of governance begin in such a setting? In the days ahead, we will discuss in some detail the

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<sup>3</sup> Somalia is the only country in the world where security considerations prevent the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) from having a resident international delegation, as a result of the kidnapping of its staff in Mogadishu some years ago.

technical and administrative obligations to create good and accountable governance, and the many financial and economic requirements. But what of the moral priorities?

As long ago as Aristotle, and perhaps before, people have debated this question. According to Aristotle, the state exists to enable the individual to realize the highest quality of life of which he or she is capable. Aristotle was no idealist, and he framed his views by grounding them in realism:

Those may be expected to lead the best life who are governed in the best manner of which their circumstances admit. We must, therefore, judge the state not by some standard of values peculiar to and distinctive of the state, but by the standard of the quality of the lives lived by its citizen.<sup>4</sup>

In short, the quality of governance is measured by the quality of life enjoyed by the citizens, within realistic limits. Those in leadership are put to the task of leading a process to reclaim a sense of the public good, to rebuild a deliberative society, and to bridge across deep divisions. There are many means to achieve these goals, but their success is directly linked to (and some would argue dependent on) the moral character and integrity of those in leadership, as demonstrated by consistent performance over time.

### **Ethics as a resource for good governance**

The application of ethics depends on accessing moral resources, and through such resources forging ethical individuals, ethical institutions, and an ethical society. We all know most of these resources already – they are what our mothers and fathers, our aunts and uncles, our elders and our religious leaders taught us from when we were very small. Our cultures and our literature, our art and our music, our intuitions and our consciences, and the examples of men and women of virtue and integrity, all combine to shape our moral values, principles, beliefs, and convictions. As reasoning adults, these resources are available to each of us, if we but choose to reflect upon them, and to see what they can say to us as we consider our choices of action and policy.

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<sup>4</sup> See <http://www.peoplefirstindia.org/chap2.htm>

The inventory of moral resources is hardly complete by this stage, as there are many other sources of morality and ethics. Obviously the Koran and similar great works of faith provide profound wisdom and guidance<sup>5</sup>, if used in a way that seeks to unite us in our common values, instead of dividing us between factions who support differing – and by definition not provable – “truths”.

Perhaps the most relevant ethical guidance when dealing with the complexities of governance and post-conflict reconstruction are to be found in the many moral theories that have been formulated and refined over the centuries. Unlike the empirical theories and arguments of science, moral theories do not *prove* anything. Values, and the arguments that depend on value judgments, are not by nature provable. Instead, moral theories seek to *persuade* – they offer carefully constructed arguments that attempt to convince people by their logic and rationality, their emotive strength and intuitive appeal. Moral dilemmas, when viewed through the lens of one or more moral theories, become clearer, and possible solutions to moral dilemmas become evident. In most cases, however, different moral theories will offer differing perspectives on what ought to be done, or how the dilemma itself ought to be thought of; the ethical decision maker must consider these different arguments and make choices after due reflection and deliberation.

A full description of the leading moral theories, and the resources that they offer to decision makers and leaders, would take several weighty volumes to relate. Nevertheless, a very quick overview will at least serve to bring attention to these valuable moral assets, particularly in the context of moral leadership.

Of all of the historical figures of ethics, the name of Adam Smith (1723 – 1790) is perhaps among the best known. Anyone who has studied economics has learned of Smith’s “invisible hand” of the market metaphor, coined in his book *The Wealth of Nations* in 1776, in which he argued that the force of the free market coupled with the

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<sup>5</sup> For example, The Straight Path as described in the opening chapter of Koran is God's criteria to judge between good people and bad people. For human beings, it provides the moral parameters to judge between good and bad actions. Those who follow sound moral codes are the law-abiders, while those who violate one or two moral codes are criminals, and those who struggle to protect the moral codes are considered heroes.

drive of human beings to fulfill their desires would ultimately create an ethical order in society.<sup>6</sup> Less well known is Smith's publication much later in his life, in 1789, called *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. In this latter publication, Smith appeals to all citizens to put the common good – the well being of their society – ahead of the interests of any faction or sub-group of that society. He goes on to make a special plea to the leaders of such societies to demonstrate moral leadership by stepping forward to construct a moral society, through their thoughts, deeds, and character. As noted by Jerry Evensky:

By the end of his life, Adam Smith was no longer looking to the invisible hand to guide society to the conditions necessary for a constructive classical liberal state. Instead, he called upon the visible hand of moral leadership from all individuals, and especially statesmen, to create those conditions and thereby that society.(Evensky 1998)

Immanuel Kant is another towering figure of philosophy and ethics, and he too has a message of relevance for Somalia and its leaders. Kant argued for what we now call the categorical imperative, in which everyone is morally bound to treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of another, always as an end in itself and never as a means. In other words, individual persons have incalculable value, and are not to be used or manipulated as pawns in a larger game, or as steps in any political agenda. Kant's ethics are the ethics of rigorous duty, in which permissible compromises are few, and the recognition of the value and worth of each and every human life is paramount.

Human rights theory also offers moral resources of value to Somalia, which is itself a signatory of the UN Charter of Human Rights.<sup>7</sup> In recent years, thinkers such as Henry Shue, Jack Donnelly, Michael Ignatieff, James Nickel, Brian Orend, and Amartya

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<sup>6</sup> The invisible hand is Adam Smith's metaphor to illustrate how the wealthy, by following their individual self-interest, unwittingly stimulate the economy and assist the poor. Smith claims that, within the system of capitalism, an individual acting for her own good tends also to promote the good of her community. See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Invisible\\_hand](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Invisible_hand)

<sup>7</sup> It is argued that the new government of Somalia is bound by international and regional human rights treaties ratified by the former government, as well as by customary rules of international human rights and humanitarian law. Somalia is thus party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and its First Optional Protocol, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the four Geneva Conventions of 1949, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, the UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, the OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, and the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

Sen have brought great energy to the concepts of human rights, and the relationship of human rights to the basic human freedoms that are at the heart of development everywhere. The Transitional Federal Government would do well to engage itself – in dialogue and action – as a champion of human rights, as such a public commitment would lead to strategies that would strengthen all subsequent efforts to create a sustainable peace and a just society. Yet no government anywhere, and certainly not the TFG, has sufficient economic resources and the ability to shape public morality such that the claims arising from all recognized human rights can be satisfied in the short term. Despite these two constraints, all governments remain morally obliged *to make that effort*, and to demonstrate to their citizens the ways in which they are laboring in this regard. Even if the satisfaction of some of these rights may seem utopian, or possibly achievable only after a century or longer, ethical governance means demonstrating both a genuine strategy to meet those claims over time, and a pattern of gradual – and hopefully steady – progress in pursuing and refining such a strategy. Even in the extreme conditions that Somalia presents, the leadership of the TFG is not relieved of the moral obligation to factor into its policies and actions human rights thinking, planning, actions, and accountability.

This, of course, is not a new message to the leadership of the TFG. The international community has already weighed in heavily in encouraging the TFG to place human rights on the post-conflict development agenda. Not long ago, the UN’s independent expert on human rights, Dr. Ghanim Alnajjar, urged the TFG actively to pursue the integration of international human rights norms and standards into the reconstruction of its executive, legislative, and judicial branches.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, leading international NGOs such as Amnesty International are advocating for a strong emphasis on the recognition of and respect for human rights in Somalia.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> “Expert Says Respect for Human Rights is Key to Securing Peace and Stability in Somalia,” UN Press Release of 7 February 2005

<sup>9</sup> Rights which Amnesty International is advocating for include: freedom of expression and opinion, fair trial, formation of political parties and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), humane treatment of prisoners, protection of human rights defenders, protection of humanitarian workers and NGOs, and protection of vulnerable groups – especially women, minorities, children, and internally displaced persons. See “Expert Says Respect for Human Rights is Key to Securing Peace and Stability in Somalia” in the UN Press Release of 7 February 2005

Closely related to the thinking of human rights, and again deeply influenced by Amartya Sen along with thinkers such as Martha Nussbaum and David Crocker, is another moral theory and resource: the capabilities approach. The capabilities approach begins by questioning what people are actually able to do and to be. It argues that each person is entitled to a decent level of opportunity. In some variants of this moral theory, there are areas of particular centrality identified, such as life, health, bodily integrity, affiliation, and practical reason. In the context of public policies, the capabilities approach is used a tool to evaluate the potential for enhancing the capacities or powers of people as human beings; these could range from the most fundamental ones required to fulfill nutritional and health needs to more complex ones required for social and political participation. Under a capabilities approach view, income and wealth are not a sufficient indication of a person's quality of life; they are but a means to achieve different human functionings, a life of social, economic and political freedoms. The capabilities approach also makes reference to the opportunities that people have to nurture and to exercise their capacities, since people's capacities often are significantly affected depending on the opportunities and hardships that they face in their family and society.<sup>10</sup>

Another but perhaps less well known moral resource is one that has evolved from – but which is certainly not limited to – the experience of women. Called the ethics of care or feminist ethics, it advocates a view of morality that springs from “the moral attitude or longing for goodness and not with moral reasoning”(Noddings 1984). In arguing for a social environment in which caring is encouraged to flourish, feminist ethics turns away from reliance on moral reasoning alone to motivate people to lead ethical lives. In the thinking of feminists ethics, there is something abstract and rather remote in arguing for enforcement of human rights obligations and actions. Proponents of this ethics of care would argue that even the most persuasively argued abstract principles are unlikely significantly to modify human behavior; instead, this moral theory challenges us to come face to face with concrete realities instead of abstract principles.

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<sup>10</sup> See <http://www.hinduonnet.com/fline/fl2204/stories/20050225005900400.htm>

Only when leaders focus on the reality of suffering, and on their relationship to those who suffer, will leaders respond with effective policy changes and actions appropriate to the needs of those who suffer.

Virtue ethics is distinct from other moral theories in that its focus is on the individual's moral character, not on his or her actions. Virtue ethicists argue that we must concentrate on developing virtuous character traits first, so that moral actions will naturally follow. When confronting the reality of hunger and malnutrition in others, a person of virtuous character will be motivated, by definition, to apply whatever resources and actions he or she can to mitigate this situation. Christine McKinnon, a leading virtue ethicist, supports such a view of the locus of motivation in the context of moral agents<sup>11</sup>:

Successful character-construction will serve agents well in their quest to lead meaningful, fulfilled human lives; it will also provide agents with reasons to act in ways which permit other humans to pursue their quests to lead meaningful, fulfilled human lives.(McKinnon 1999)

Whether conceived as problems to be solved, urgent suffering to be relieved, or impermissible indignities to be eliminated, the challenges of governance and development in post-conflict Somalia remains central. Feminist ethicists and virtue ethicists both argue that unlike those moral theories that appeal to reason on the basis of principles and obligation, their two moral theories provide a direct link to motivation. Both moral approaches argue similar positions: that only through an inner sense of moral leading as a by-product of one's own moral identity, and not a product of intentional moral reasoning, will we be motivated to do what we can reasonably do to bring a lasting peace to Somalia, together with the fruits of development. If we accept that our moral identity – how we see ourselves – is a function of our character (be that conceived as virtuous or as caring), then we will act out of how our moral identities lead us to perceive our world and ourselves.

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<sup>11</sup> I adopt, for this paper, the definition of a moral agent as offered by J.Edwards: "A moral agent is a being capable of those actions that have a moral quality, and which can properly be denominated good or evil in a moral sense." See <http://dict.die.net/moral%20agent/>

Perhaps the most significant role that virtue plays in the ethics of leadership is the concept that the virtuous person doesn't merely subscribe to ethical principles and moral values, or apply such values to ethical decision-making; instead, the virtuous leader internalizes and embodies these values within his or her character. The life of virtue is a disciplined, reflective, diligent life, molding one's character on the basis of carefully considered values, life experiences, and access to a wide variety of moral resources.

### **Reconciliation challenges**

In discussing the evaluation of our decision making, planning, and policies on the basis of moral values, it is foolhardy to forget that some of those who are the subjects of governance have no desire to acknowledge a legitimate government, or to base their own thinking and actions on ethical concepts. Every society has "bad elements", whose actions run counter to the public good, and who must be either rehabilitated into a more socially acceptable and constructive way of thinking, or failing that, be constrained from causing harm to others.

The leadership of the TFG will face many "bad elements" and many enemies. There are some in Somalia who benefit from the current chaos, who prosper from an economy based on war and conflict, and who have no concern for the welfare of Somali society or the individuals around them who suffer from their actions (or, in the case of failing to offer needed assistance, their inactions).

In confronting such selfishly ill-intentioned individuals or groups, strength is important, but only to the extent that the strength of those in legitimate governance positions is qualitatively different from the strength of those who seek to pursue their own greed and power at the expense of the innocent. The TFG's strength must be based on moral values and the principles of ethical governance. In short, the TFG must be a moral actor if it hopes to influence others to pursue the common good, and the moral path:

But if we give up who we are in order to destroy our enemies, what sort of victory will we have secured for ourselves?”<sup>12</sup>

Somalia is a country where the warrior’s life was often the only path to survival. Yet warriors in every country and in every conflict face enormous moral dilemmas. The eminent American psychiatrist Jonathan Shay, who studied the mental health of many Vietnam War veterans, observed that fighting for one’s country can render one unfit to be its citizen. His work on post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) provided the linkage between conflict experiences that were not simply violent, but which involved what Shay terms the “betrayal of ‘what’s right’”. Veterans who believe that they were directly or indirectly party to immoral or dishonorable behavior (perpetrated by themselves, their comrades or their commanders) have the hardest time reclaiming their lives after the war is over.<sup>13</sup> The TFG must be aware of the moral plight of former combatants as it seeks to create a country in which combat is no longer the norm, and in which combat – when necessary – is conducted in compliance with a warrior’s code of honor.<sup>14</sup>

Yet what of the Somali survivors of years of conflict and violence? What must the leadership of the TFG think about them, say to them, or do for them? What can Somalia’s new leaders do for those who have suffered so much?

From a moral perspective, three answers exist. One answer is that the TFG must be able to earn its legitimacy in the minds of its citizenry by offering justice and stability. The second answer, of equal importance but far less often cited, is that the TFG must cultivate loyalty and trust in its citizenry by offering respect, care and compassion. And the third answer, again of equal importance, is the one that requires no further explanation: that the leadership must guide Somalia towards economic development opportunities that are accessible to all, in an equitable manner, and free from corruption or immoral distortion.

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<sup>12</sup> In The Code of the Warrior by Shannon A. French, United States Naval Academy

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> According to Shannon French: “The code of the warrior not only defines how he should interact with his own warrior comrades, but also how he should treat other members of his society, his enemies, and the people he conquers. The code restrains the warrior. It sets boundaries on his behavior. It distinguishes honorable acts from shameful acts”.

Justice and stability are what governments are supposed to provide. The rule of law, and the institutions of governance, serves this function above all others – creating an environment in which society’s laws as agreed through formal deliberation are honored and enforced, and wherein such laws are grounded in the shared moral values of that society. No society’s laws are perfect, nor is the administration of such laws through the courts and police always fair or proper, yet it is every government’s duty to seek the best possible standard of justice. In Somalia, that task is enormous, but surely no one in the TFG leadership lacks this awareness.

Also in the context of justice, there is much clamoring for the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission.<sup>15</sup> While the decision regarding the best strategy for dealing with past crimes and violations of human rights is complex and controversial, the overriding priority from a moral perspective is that the TFG be seen to deliver justice. Delivering justice in this context means holding people accountable for the harms that they have caused to others. It also means creating a public record – as a form of public validation and as a legacy for the future – of the individuals lost and the manner in which they suffered, and at whose hands. It ought to mean that certain people must be punished for their past deeds. Delivering justice in such a process has an even deeper moral meaning, however. The vast number of lives lost and the suffering caused may happen yet again unless the message from the TFG’s leadership is unequivocal – human lives are valuable, and the human dignity of each and every person will be respected and protected. The degree to which the leadership of the TFG acknowledges this central moral truth – that morally we are all of equal worth and value – will do much to determine the longevity and legitimacy of this leadership, and its effectiveness in shaping a new and peaceful society in Somalia.

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<sup>15</sup> Early in 2005, Dr. Ghanim Alnajjar – the UN’s independent expert on human rights – told the FTG’s Prime Minister Ali Mohammed Gedi that “it is imperative that the Government establish a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to redress the suffering of the millions of Somalis who lost either their relatives and/or livelihoods during the many years of conflict and to bring those responsible to justice”. See: “Expert Says Respect for Human Rights is Key to Securing Peace and Stability in Somalia” in the UN Press Release of 7 February 2005

Caring is less often associated with governments, and certainly is far removed from the typical bureaucratic mindset common to government officials everywhere. Yet caring is the most influential characteristic of a truly transformational leader, and it informs his entire approach to his leadership style. A ruler doesn't care. He commands from above, by fear or force, and his followers obey only because they lack any other alternatives. A ruler may achieve concrete results, but a ruler will not transform the attitudes, hearts, and minds of his followers, so that they join with him in pursuit of goals that fundamentally improve society. In contrast to a ruler, a leader – and particularly a transformational leader – leads by vision and by the example of caring and concern, and that example includes setting a high standard of integrity. Indeed, authentic transformational leadership is characterized by its high moral and ethical standards, and by its care and compassion.

Two of the best-known writers in the dynamics of transformational leadership are Bernard M. Bass and Paul Steidlmeier. They argue that the components of transformational leadership are four: charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration:

If the leadership is transformational, its charisma or idealized influence is envisioning, confident, and sets high standards for emulation. Its inspirational motivation provides followers with challenges and meaning for engaging in shared goals and undertakings. Its intellectual stimulation helps followers to question assumptions and to generate more creative solutions to problems. Its individualized consideration treats each follower as an individual and provides coaching, mentoring and growth opportunities. (Steidlmeier 1998)

But what does the reality of caring mean for those who have suffered so badly in Somalia? Perhaps a recent example from the region, in Uganda, will make the point. A visiting group of American college students were in Gulu, in the north of Uganda, which is an area that has suffered severely under the mindless carnage and brutality of Joseph Kony's Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). One of the destinations of this visit was a prominent NGO in Gulu, called the Gulu Support for Children Organisation (GUSCO). Here the students met many children who had previously been abducted to serve as child soldiers or sex slaves in the LRA – an abduction process that always involved savage and

horrific brainwashing through induced trauma. These few children were among the lucky ones to have escaped back to a place of sanctuary, away from the cruel combat of the LRA's many campaigns of terror. Most of these children were enjoying their coloring books, and it was easy for the visiting college students to engage with them and strike up a dialogue. One college student, however, found herself facing a child with no book – only a lost and vacant expression in his eyes. He had just returned from the bush the day before, and he remained mired deep within his trauma. She was unable to get him to talk, other than inaudibly muttering his name; no further conversation was possible. She felt a strong need to reach out to this child, and a deep compassion for one so young who had faced moral dilemmas that no child or adult should ever face, who had known such hardship, and who had had his childhood trust and innocence so abruptly stripped away. Without thinking, she did what her feelings told her to do – she reached over and gently rubbed the back of this boy. The boy's face slowly transformed, as a smile began to form, and soon some sparkle returned to his eyes. The boy relaxed in the long lost sensation of feeling a warm and gentle touch, in connecting with someone who actually cared about him, and who valued him. For just a brief moment, he was a little boy again. His path ahead will require many such reassurances if healing ever is to come.<sup>16</sup>

The many children and adults in Somalia who suffered similar traumatic experiences also stand in need of compassion, care, and concern, and their healing too will not come quickly. While the TFG leaders cannot stop to gently touch the backs of all boys such as the Ugandan boy at GUSCO, the attitude of caring that characterizes such a gesture should be evident to all Somalis in the leadership qualities and actions of every TFG leader.

### **Starting, and moving on**

This gathering lasts but three or four days. The majority of this time together will consider the mechanics of governance, and the skills and techniques that are so essential

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<sup>16</sup> This visit took place on June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2006. The college student was Ms. Halle Butvin, of Washington, DC, USA.

to effective nation building. Chief among these will be the attention paid to restarting and managing the Somali economy, to offer the possibility for Somalis to earn a living through productive, rewarding, and meaningful endeavors. While not wishing to detract from the importance of that dialogue, it is my hope that in starting this time together by considering the moral dimensions of governance, we will have helped the TFG to pursue a richer moral goal than economic growth alone.

Ethics complements economics. Economics places a heavy emphasis on the acquisition of property and “things”, which are assigned a far greater value in public policy than less quantifiable goods such as the value of families and interpersonal relations, access to quality education, enjoyment of cultural affairs, humane workplace organization, or recreational and sporting pursuits. Approaching the reconstruction of Somali society only as an exercise in economics and public administration would be shortsighted at best, and ultimately doomed to failure.

The time to broaden the economic and policy dialogue about Somalia’s future through linking this to essential deliberations about the fundamental values of Somali society – spiritual and religious convictions, personal morality, societal values, public integrity, virtuous character, accountability, and caring – is now. The leadership of the TFG must lead Somali society to regain its voice, empowering it to say aloud and with ringing conviction that integrity is deeply valued and honored; and that indolence, indiscipline, disrespect of legitimate authority, unfaithfulness, untruthfulness, and causing harm to others are wrong.

This moral reconstruction of Somali society is not the task of government alone. Throughout Somalia there are communities and individuals that are able to offer their own cultural, moral, and spiritual resources:

In every community there are agencies of moral and cultural development that seek to shape the ways in which individuals conceive of their duties to themselves, their obligations to each other, and their responsibilities before God.(Loury 1998)

The leadership of the TFG is uniquely positioned to seek out these communities and individuals, to unlock these resources, and together with them to bring Somalia into a new era of moral accountability, of high ethical standards, of reinvigorated Somali culture, and of deep and committed caring. That is the challenge: to make Somalia humane, to guide Somalia towards ethical consensus on the goals and priorities of nation building, and to foster a peace that is more than just an end to violence, but that is instead a fertile field in which a peaceful, humane, and prosperous society may flourish.

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