

# The impact of failed states

[Government](#), [Military](#)



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### Introduction

It is often rare for a country to become a failed state but a combination of factors can be a perfect storm for that to happen, like in the case of Somalia today. However, other countries in the world such as Afghanistan and Pakistan also have the potential to become failed states if the factors contributory to such a situation are not prevented from occurring. Somalia is already in a state of failed government, without a doubt. This brief paper discusses the internal, regional and international repercussions in these three countries as it pertains to United States foreign policy.

### Discussion

Somalia is a relatively small country with a population of about ten million only but its location in Africa is very strategic as it straddles the Horn of Africa through which most of the worlds shipping passes through. As such, it has become a virtual pirates lair because of a failed state situation. Its proximity to the Gulf of Aden which is a maritime choke point for global trade gives the country strategic importance and requires attention from U. S. foreign policymakers.

Internal problems facing Somalia today is the on-going famine because of warfare such that people have no time to devote to agriculture and food-production activities. Everything they do is related to short-term immediate survival only and there are no medium- or long-term plans. Lack of a government infrastructure can be overcome by utilizing religion (Islam) and

clan ties to persuade people to band together to make their country work again as a whole Somali nation. Somalis see Islamic law as the answer but it does not mean support for terrorism and the United States must be perceptive enough to distinguish this crucial difference in crafting its policies.

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Regional problems involved the possible export of mayhem and violence to neighboring countries such as Kenya, Ethiopia and Eritrea or even a second war against Ethiopia in the future if the Islamists are not brought under control by the provisional government and United States. A dystopian Somalia can destabilize other peaceful Arab countries nearby such as Saudi Arabia. An international problem is that Somalia has become a magnet for recruits of international terrorism much like what Afghanistan was before, during the Soviet invasion of that country.

Internal problems facing Afghanistan today are the lack of an effective central authority as most of the countryside are controlled by the Taliban and the lack of womens rights under its Islamic laws or sharia. Absence of government in many areas allowed the Taliban to grow and to export its cash crop of marijuana and hashish to support itself financially. Regional problems can arise if the U. S. finally leaves Afghanistan as it will allow Iran to expand its influence to Central Asian countries such as Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. Already, Iran complained to Afghanistan about use of its western territory for drone flights against the country of Iran. 2 Most pressing international problem is the possible alliance of Afghanistan and Pakistan in case a war erupts between the U. S. and Pakistan about its support for terrorists on its soil. 3 Another potential problem is the

uncontrolled growing and exporting of opium from Afghanistan in illegal drugs.

Pakistan's internal problems are poverty, hunger, floods and sectarian strife between the various Muslim factions in the country. Its regional problem as far as the U. S. is concerned is its tendency to lean towards China for protection against its giant neighbor India. The international problem it can pose to the United States is its nuclear arsenal falling into extremist Islam hands.

### Conclusion

The three countries mentioned in this paper are primarily Islamic states with fairly good chances of becoming failed states and as a consequence, also become a magnet for international terrorists to find new recruits. Its significance is it will compound the U. S. problem of dealing a death blow to international terrorism. The ultimate solution will be to fight the idea of jihad with a better idea that is focused on progress and development for these countries to draw their people away from being enticed by the false promises of these trans-national religious terrorists.

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