

Background: Overview of Somali Independence and Greater Somalia

After Somalia gained full independence on July 1, 1960, when the former **British Somaliland** and the U.N. Trust Territory of **Italian Somaliland** united to form the Somali Republic, it faced challenges in bringing the northern and southern regions together. A big focus was on "**Greater Somalia**," which meant including all areas with Somali people in one country. Politicians thought that if they didn't strongly support this idea, they would lose the people's support.

This idea affected the new government and led to building up the military, which eventually caused conflicts with Ethiopia and fighting in Kenya. The Somali flag had a five-pointed star, with each point representing areas claimed by Somalia, like former Italian and British territories, Ogaden, Djibouti, and the Northern Frontier District (NFD) in Kenya.

The **1961 constitution** said that all Somalis, no matter where they lived, were citizens of Somalia. Somalis wanted their people living in other countries to have the right to choose their future.

In 1961, during talks about Kenya's future, Somali leaders from the NFD asked Britain to separate their area before Kenya became independent. A British investigation found that most people in the NFD wanted to separate, but the Kenyan government didn't act on this.

When Kenya became more centralized in 1964, tensions grew with the Somalis. Many Somalis started fighting back against the Kenyan police and army from 1960 to 1964. The Somali government denied training these fighters but admitted that they were influenced by Somali radio broadcasts.

Somalia also rejected treaties that recognized Ethiopia's claims to certain areas, arguing that those agreements were made without their say-so and violated their rights.

After independence, there were small clashes between Somali nomads and Ethiopian police. By February 1964, fighting broke out along the border, leading to air raids by Ethiopia. A ceasefire was reached in April 1964, creating a no-fighting zone to prevent more conflicts.

Ethiopia and Kenya formed a defense pact in 1964 because they felt threatened by Somalia. Many African countries were worried about Somalia's claims, fearing they could lead to problems in their own regions. Somalia's actions also challenged the authority of important leaders in Kenya and Ethiopia.