

KENYA-SOMALIA GRAY ZONE DYNAMISM: ARE RESPONSE MECHANISMS EQUIPPED WITH APPROPRIATE DOCTRINE?

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Are response mechanisms to modern peace and security threats adequately equipped to tackle gray zone conflicts? Attempts to address this question entail both confronting the old pre–Cold War peace operation capstone doctrine (“holy trinity”) and constructing the characteristics of a new model capable of tackling the unique features of gray zone conflicts. This article analyzes the diplomatic relationship between Kenya and Somalia, which exemplifies the characteristics of gray zone threats. The article contends that the use of the “holy trinity” doctrine in treating such unconventional warfare tactics does not adequately discriminate between gray zone dynamism and conventional conflict typologies, and the results do not always allow certainty about relationships between states. Furthermore, the uncertainty of gray zone dynamism makes it difficult for analysts to conduct accurate conflict diagnostics using the current framework based on the “holy trinity” capstone doctrine. Using the Kenya–Somalia relationship as a case study, this article constructs a “doctrinal quadrality spectrum” (DQS) framework for conflict diagnosis in order to avoid the binary limitation of a black-or-white decision that often does not fit the gray zone dynamism of modern warfare.
