This book discusses how the peacekeeping operations in the Horn of Africa are involved in state construction of the either deconstruction or reconstruction variety. Both peacekeeping and state building are considerably complex processes, which are rendered even more daunting due to several factors. First, the ongoing state building initiatives are taking place at a time when the attributes conventionally associated with the state are experiencing significant shifts, thereby rendering them similar to an attempt to hit a moving target. Second, this already difficult undertaking is further compounded by the fact that conflicts among and within the states of the Horn display a history of closely resonating with each other. Hence, the book argues that the ongoing case-by-case or country-by-country attempt to either shore-up extant nation-states or to oversee the emergence of smaller replicas should give way to an alternative region-wide approach to overhaul each state in order to qualitatively transform state-to-society relations. The book discusses those factors that should be articulated in order to achieve such an overhaul of the state. These are: the appropriate size of forums for political participation; the role of the positive aspects of tradition in rooting political institutions in the consciousness of grassroots communities; appropriate versions of democracy and democratic citizenship as well as how to legitimate military and security institutions in the eyes of all citizens. The overall hope is to make a modest contribution to the emerging field of theorizing state building. The book concludes by summarizing four imperatives that need to be addressed for sustainable peace and stability to prevail in the strife-ridden Horn of Africa region.

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