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INSTITUTE OF DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

PROTRACTED CONFLICTS IN MINERAL-RICH AFRICAN STATES:

A CASE STUDY OF DRC

LYDIAH WARUGURU WANG'OMBE

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Supervisor:

DR. ANITA KIAMBA

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DECLARATION

I, Lydiah Waruguru Wang’ombe hereby declare that this research project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.

Signed..... Date.....

LYDIAH WARUGURU WANG’OMBE

REG NO: R52/86927/2016

This project has been submitted for examination with my approval as University Supervisor;

Signed..... Date.....

DR. ANITA KIAMBA

DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to my family for the love, support and encouragement they have given me. It is a great blessing to have you in my life for your endless inspiration and believe in me. Thank you all.

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I extend my sincere acknowledgement to Dr. Anita Kiamba, my supervisor for her professional guidance and advice that have been vital for this study. I also appreciate my dear family for consistent support and help during my studies. Above all, I am grateful to the Almighty God who makes everything possible.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AFDL:	Alliance Forces Democratic Liberation
CNDP:	National Congress for the Defence of the People
DRC:	Democratic Republic of Congo
FARDC:	Forces Armies of Republic Democratic of Congo
FDLR:	Forces Democratic Liberation of Rwanda
FP:	Force Publique
ICGLR:	International Conference on the Great Lakes Region
ICRC:	International Committee of the Red Cross
IRC:	International Rescue Committee
M23:	Mouvement of 23 Mars
MNC:	Multi-National Corporations
MONUC:	United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
OAU:	Organization of African Union
RPA:	Rwandese Patriotic Army
SADC:	Southern African Development Community
SPSS:	Statistical Package for Social Science Research
UN:	United Nations
UNHCR:	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNITA:	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to examine the nexus between the protracted conflicts and mineral resources in the mineral-rich African states. The focus of this research is Democratic Republic of Congo as the case study. The research seeks to unveil the extent to which the presence of mineral resources has contributed to the conflicts in DRC. The research investigates how the mineral resources of DRC have been contributed to the chaos particularly in the Eastern region yet mineral resources are a source of prosperity and economic development. On a broader perspective, it is expected that a country with rich and valuable mineral resources to be economically, politically and socially stable, but it has been different for DRC. The study uses the social conflict theory. This theory states that the members of a society, whether as a group or individuals, are inclined to interacting through conflicts rather than a consensus. This theory is evident in the case of protracted conflicts being experienced in DRC whereby the mineral resources have intensified struggle for control of mines, retention of power and wealth. The inequitable distribution of resources as well as competition for the limited resources perpetuates violence and the dominant group takes control. According to this theory the members of a society who are divided by their conflicting interests align themselves to the side that promises to protect interests. The study affirmed two of its hypotheses that are abundance of mineral resources as the central actor of the protracted conflicts and that protracted conflicts in DRC have contributed to poor economic growth and decline in social development. Throughout the study, the researcher has sought to expound on how the abundance of the mineral resources have negatively affected the country by propagating unending conflicts. This research found that the conflicts emerged with political instability that was characterized by a dictatorial regime, mismanagement of resources, poor governance, widespread corruption and unaccountability at public institutions. Also, the research found that the involvement of the neighboring countries have had a far-reaching effects on DRC. The invasions that started by Rwanda and Uganda whose intentions was to pursue Hutu militants, future potential threat, and overthrowing of President Mobutu threw things out of proportion due to the two Congo wars. From that incident, one event led to another as discussed in detail within this study and had negatively impacted DRC as the tussle for power increased and different rebel groups have mushroomed in the Eastern Congo. The recommendations for this study to the protracted conflicts in the mineral-rich in DRC are revolves around peace building process than can lay down foundation for development. For stability to be attained there is a need for implementation of peaceful accord by the parties to avoid escalating the wars through deployment of soldiers to stamp out the rebel groups. Since the resources being exploited are used to fund the illegal activities of the rebel movements, the government should establish measures of controlling smuggling and take control over the mines. The government should also advocate for regional economic integration which abides by the laws of all the members of the Great Lakes Region. By providing initiatives to revive trade and interaction beyond the borders under strict legal guidelines, it will reduce the increased illegal trade. The government should engage all the stakeholders in the negotiations for peace such as the religious leaders, leaders of armed groups, civil society and community organizations.

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background of Study

The mineral resources have an intrinsic value if extracted with economic interest as these naturally-occurring materials of the earth's crust have potential value in them. The creation of mineral resources begins with geological processes on the inorganic substances that are later transformed into the mineral resource deposits.¹ The cultural practices and the developed human needs that these deposits have managed to satisfactorily meet has over time defined their usefulness and hence given them the value and the worth that the mineral resources bear. These mineral resources have revolutionarized the world as they are used in economic and industrial development. For instance, the mineral resources are used in construction of railways, buildings and building of cars and computers. Industrialization has led to the development of modern communication system, transportation and urbanization and it is attributable to the availability of mineral resources alongside other factors.² The mineral resources have brought enormous changes across the world and have shaped the economies of many countries either as producers or users of the mineral resources.

The nations endowed with mineral resources have become areas of interest for their domestic source of supply across the world. Many African countries are rich in minerals which attracted the colonialists in the early 20th century among them being South Africa and DRC. The industrialization revolution mainly in Europe created need for mineral resources and it triggered the nations such as Britain, France and Germany to

¹ Dunning, T., 2005. Resource dependence, economic performance, and political stability. *Journal of conflict resolution*, 49(4), pp.451-482

² Bergstrom, J.C. and Randall, A., 2016. *Resource economics: an economic approach to natural resource and environmental policy*. Edward Elgar Publishing

extensively explore overseas for minerals that could transform their economies. The establishment of colonial states was influenced by the presence of mineral resources alongside other natural resources. Democratic Republic of Congo is a country that emerged as a colonial state due to its rich mineral resources by the Belgians.

The sustainable mineral resources play a critical role in shaping the economic development of a nation in the modern world. The availability of valuable mineral resources of any country is a promise of a sustainable socio-economic infrastructure.³

To realize the full potential of the richness of the mineral resources, the development activity has to be accompanied with the capacity to explore and exploit the minerals, have the technological proficiency as well as wisdom to manage and utilize the resources. Unless the country has the capacity to exploit, utilize and manage the mineral resources for economic benefits, then despite endowment with adequate mineral resources it is bound to struggle in attaining sustainable development which is an indication of its richness in mineral resources. Else, the country may plunge into conflicts of different nature that range from political, economical and social backgrounds. The economic conflicts emerge when the locals and the mining companies clash over the divergent interests in the mines. The conflicts of this nature are fueled by people seeking employment, unsatisfied with the effect of the mining operations, claims of land rights and lack of progressive development in the region.⁴

The political conflicts in relation to natural resources are aggravated by; mismanagement of resources obtained from exploitation of minerals, struggle to control mineral resources, inappropriate use of minerals to influence power such as granting

³ Dunning, T., 2005. Resource dependence, economic performance, and political stability. *Journal of conflict resolution*, 49(4), pp.451-482

⁴ Ross, M.L., 2004. What do we know about natural resources and civil war?. *Journal of peace research*, 41(3), pp.337-356.

licenses unscrupulously to mining companies and corruption. The magnitude of politics on mineral resource exploitation is huge as the government has control over the state and it acts as the custodian of country's resources. Therefore, there is high tendency of inflicting unfavorable rules that will benefit a few individuals in positions of power and disregard the interests of people who they are supposed to represent. In worse case scenarios experienced by mineral-rich states, the assumption of power by dictators for example through a military coup can lead into controversies in equal distribution of resources and marginalization of local communities under such regimes. DRC is a victim of political-affiliated mineral resources that have plunged it into prolonged conflicts that have destabilized the country despite its richness in mineral resources.⁵

Some of the valuable minerals that DRC has large deposits include: diamonds, tin, cobalt, copper, gold and coltan 1 that have a high demand in the modern world. How the country manages such kind of huge wealth in terms of mineral resources has come under scrutiny.⁶ The plans for exploiting the minerals since independence have the center of heated topics and debates that has caused divisions not only among the country's leaders but also among corporations, tribes and groups. The use of state-owned industries under President Mobutu era did not resolve the issues of dissatisfaction and later there were other options such privatization of the mines which did not work either. The locals went on to struggle to be a part of the huge but mismanaged sector through small-scale mining as artisans and workers.⁷

⁵ Fairhead, J., 2001. International dimensions of conflict over natural and environmental resources. *Violent environments*, pp.213-236

⁶ Epstein H., M., ed. *Revolt in the Congo, 1960-1964* (New York: Facts on File, 1965); G. Abi-Saab, *The United Nations Operations in the Congo, 1960-1964* (London: Oxford University Press, 1978).

⁷ de Koning, R., 2011. Conflict minerals in the democratic republic of the Congo: Aligning trade and security interventions. Stockholm International Peace Research Institute policy paper 27.

The instability in DRC has been characterized by insecurity, violent attacks on civilians, disrupted lifestyle, displacements, sexual violence and killings. These challenges have deprived the citizens the real taste of independence which comes with peace, sustainability, prosperity and ability to benefit from its full independence like other African states. When the Congolese thought that the end of Mobutu rule and ushered the leadership of President Laurent Kabila that would be a new journey to peace and stability, it turned out to be a beginning of new cause of civil unrest, armed conflicts and more complex conflict that involved most neighboring states. This instability and lack of state sustainability in terms of the economic, social and political structures can be attributed to the negative effects of the colonialism that never paved a way for better African leadership.

1.2 Problem statement

The presence of mineral resources to any country is a source of prosperity as they steer forward economic growth and development. Most states with minerals across Africa have enjoyed spontaneous economic growth in terms of infrastructure and industrialization for instance South Africa whose diamond and gold deposits have enormously contributed to its growth. However, the case of DRC is different whereby a country believed to be the richest African state with minerals being stuck in unending conflicts that have often been attributed to its mineral resources. The nation has and is presently undergoing tumultuous moment under crisis of civil wars that has left millions of its residents dead, maimed and misplaced. This study is driven by the need to unveil how a country with plenty of mineral resources plunges into such level of poverty, humanitarian crisis and civil wars. Not only is DRC a home to a wealth of highly sought minerals but it also has a hot and humid climate that is favorable for agriculture as it

comprises approximately 80 million hectares of farmland.⁸ The research set out to determine how such wealth could be turned into a misfortune and nightmare for a country that has endured extreme detriments of multiple conflicts since its independence.

Based on a recent reports on the DRC refugee problem by February 20, 2018 thousands of DRC residents have fled their homes into the bordering countries in Uganda and Tanzania to asylum which is extending the crisis to these countries⁹. Furthermore, the increasing inflaming tensions between Rwanda and DRC have led to insecurity in the Eastern DRC which is mainly under militia groups such as M23 that has been fighting the government in attempt to waylay the nation's mineral resources.¹⁰

A recent case occurred in 2018 in Goma, Rutshuru territory, where ethnic clashes emerged and they resulted into the death of 23 people. Until end of March 2018, over 41 people have been killed due to eruption of ethnic conflicts between two communities, Lendu and Hema in the northern region. Most of the villages such as Kikuku, Mutanda and Bwalanda in the eastern Congo are conflict-scarred whereby dozens of people were killed in 2017.¹¹ Approximately 15 peacekeepers from the UN camp got killed in the encounters while other 50 soldiers were wounded in the North Kivu attacks that occurred in December 8, 2017.

The extended conflicts have bled ethnicity among the residents whereby one community rises up against another as a rival group yet they are nationalities of the

⁸ Global Witness. 2006. *Digging in corruption. Fraud, abuse and exploitation in the Katanga Copper and Cobalt mines*. Washington, DC: Global Witness Publishing Inc.

⁹ Ahimbisibwe, F., 2018. *Uganda and the refugee problem: challenges and opportunities* (No. 2018.05). Universiteit Antwerpen, Institute of Development Policy (IOB).

¹⁰ Rackley E. 2006. Democratic Republic of Congo: undoing government by predation. *Disasters*, 30 (4): 417–432.

¹¹ Masudi N. 2017. *Economie mondialisée, coopératives délaissées: Sociologie du développement et de la coopération en République Démocratique du Congo*. Paris: L'Harmattan.

same society. The previous studies have centered on the actual causes of the conflicts but have not investigated the relationship between the abundance of mineral resources to such emergent issues that are pose security concerns for the civilians. The presence of mineral resources has been influential in the confrontations of the interested groups whereby from one end there is an illegally armed group that has nothing to lose but secure mines. On the other end there are the armed government soldiers working along the UN peacekeepers trying to restore peace and recover the mines that are being used by the armed groups to fund their illegal activities. These deadly confrontations have been in existence in more than two decades of armed conflict particularly in a mineral-rich provincial capital of eastern DRC. There have been continuous conflicts especially in the Eastern Congo since the 1998-2004, a wave of conflict that is commonly referred to as Second Congo War that left over 5.4 million dead from the war, diseases and starvation.¹²

1.3 Objectives of the Research

The central objective of this study is to explore the complexity of the protracted conflicts in the mineral-rich DRC. The specific objectives for the study are:

- i. To assess the relationship between abundance of minerals and the protracted conflicts in the mineral-rich DRC.
- ii. To determine the social, economic and political effects of the protracted conflicts to Democratic Republic of Congo
- iii. To provide measures of intervention to the protracted conflicts in DRC

¹² Pech, L., Büscher, K. and Lakes, T., 2018. Intraurban development in a city under protracted armed conflict: Patterns and actors in Goma, DR Congo. *Political Geography*, 66, pp.98-112.

1.4 Research Questions

- i. What is the relationship between the protracted conflicts and mineral resources?
- ii. How has the vast minerals resulted in protracted conflicts that have turned into civil wars of DRC?
- iii. How has the protracted conflicts impacted the economic, social and political development of the country?
- iv. How has the protracted conflicts in DRC directly affected the Congolese citizens?
- v. What intervention mechanism can be deployed by the government to resolve the DRC conflict?

1.5 Justification of the Study

The focus of the study is to provide inclusive outcomes on how the presence of minerals that should be a blessing for the nation but have turned into a curse has contributed to protracted conflict. The influence of the rich mineral resources to the protracted conflicts and the impact it has had on DRC is what this research critically seeks to establish. The unending conflicts have consequently destabilized the country by heightening insecurity, awakening inter-ethnic conflicts, abuse of human rights and mass kills.¹³ This study will help to develop policies and approaches that will aid in conflict resolution in DRC through engaging all the parties; the rebel groups, the corporate organizations, the government and the neighboring countries. Most of the previous studies on DRC crisis have focused on the causes and the effects of the crisis with little research being conducted to link the mineral resources to the protracted

¹³ Adoba, I, 2009. The Politics, Causes and Consequences of Intra-State Conflicts in Africa: A Critical Look into the Conflict of (DR) Congo.

conflicts. This research includes three key areas of relevance; theoretical relevance, social value and policy relevance.

1.5.1 Theoretical Relevance

This study is focused on providing interventions and conflict resolution mechanisms that can aid transform the mineral rich DRC to a self-sustaining prosperous nation. The continued conflicts in DRC have fielded extensive social evils such as child labor, sexual violence on women, violation of basic human rights, and has ultimately intensified ethnicity.¹⁴ Through this research, the complexity of the DRC conflicts that are linked to the presence of abundance of mineral resources will be analyzed and evidence provided with the case of DRC's ongoing conflicts. The nature and magnitude of the protracted conflict was investigated and their contribution to the extended periods on instability in the country. For instance, the research was able to validate the abuse of power by the law enforcers with the increased claims of abuse of human rights by the people employed by the state to protect the civilians. The study will fill the gap where there is little evidence to prove the co-relation between protracted conflicts and abundant mineral resources.

1.5.2 Social Value

This research study will assist in clarifying the social and economic challenges that are contributed by conflicts and offer alternative solutions that can help minimize the violence. The consequences of conflicts are harm inflicted on the people and are accompanied by displacements, deaths and destruction of properties as evidenced in DRC. This research will be centered on determining the social-economic sectors of the

¹⁴ Jackson, S., 2003. *Fortunes of War: The Coltan Trade in the Kivus. Power, Livelihoods and Conflict: Case Studies in Political Economy Analysis for Humanitarian Action*. London: Humanitarian Policy Group.

residents of DRC and ultimate effect on their livelihoods. The evils that are manifested by occurrence of these conflicts are social problems such as ethnicity. Notably, the social lives of the residents have heavily been disrupted by the protracted conflicts which have corrupted social cohesion as well as economic development. The researcher will extensively discuss how the protracted conflicts have affected the nation based on its economic productivity and how mineral resources have turned the country into a turmoil rather than prosperity.

1.5.3 Policy Relevance

The protracted conflicts are strongly attached to the system of administration of DRC and most of the concerns on insecurity, exploitation of resources and governance are influenced by the political system. The government has not been effective in drafting and implementing policies that promote development of the resource-rich nation. The weak administrative systems have paralyzed rule of law and justice in the country which has heightened insecurity, corruption and looting. This study will provide details of how the poor policy frameworks in DRC have constantly failed to impact the nation but on the contrary contributed to the protracted conflicts. Therefore the government will use the findings to implement appropriate strategies for containing protracted conflicts and generate new policies for effective exploitation of mineral resources.

1.6 Literature Review

1.6.1 Introduction

This literature review will focus on the natural resources conflicts and their effects on different economies in African States and draw a comparison to the conflicts in DRC. The research unveils the connection between the mineral resources and the protracted conflicts. The researcher will review other studies on the protracted conflicts in DRC

and works of other scholars on African countries with mineral resources that have either endured prosperity or faced conflicts. Furthermore, this section will explore how the emergence of conflicts has negatively affected the livelihoods of the civilians particularly due to political violence and invasions by the militia groups.

1.6.2 Resource-related conflicts in the mineral-rich Africa

The ongoing conflicts in most African countries endowed with rich mineral resources may not be centrally due to the competition for the control but other related aspects such as mismanagement and poor policies. Notably, mineral resources cannot entirely be claimed to be the origin of the conflicts because there are countries that are endowed with mineral resources that have flourished from them.¹⁵ Therefore, there are other factors surrounding the ongoing fights in most mineral-rich African states that have been in constant wars although the mineral resources are a part of it. Importantly, the presence plenty of wealth in terms of mineral resources in the low-income African states with poor leadership and corrupt systems increases the risks of outbreak of conflict that can take many years to resolve and establish stability.¹⁶ Most regimes in the conflicting mineral-rich states often exploit the resources and use the money to cement their power. The revenues gained from the exploitation of these resources are often used to finance illegal activities that suppress the civilians and people of diverse opinions with the government. Since criticism is hardly tolerated in such regimes, the opposition is fought by the government of the day as they are seen as a threat through mobilizing the public to reject suppression and illegitimate conduct of the government of the day.

¹⁵ Ross, M.L., 2004. What do we know about natural resources and civil war?. *Journal of peace research*, 41(3), pp.337-356.

¹⁶ Moore, D., 2003. The Political Economy of the DRC Conflict. Retrieved from: <http://www.igd.org.za/pub/OP/OP37.Chap2Moore.html>

Ross claims that whenever the conflicts are triggered, they often go for years before a solution is found as the divisions between in the country destroy its prior achievements. Ross claims that peace and stability play a key role in development of any nation regardless of its mineral wealth, and this claim has been affirmed by some states that have prospered despite lacking valuable mineral resources. For this reason, to some extent the abundance of mineral resources has been seen more of a curse than a blessing to some countries that have never realized peace due to competition for a share of mineral resources.¹⁷ The minerals are seen by the locals as a primary source of income and in the event on misappropriation or unequal distribution, the people start aligning themselves to groups that promise to protect their interests. In the event of an unstable government, the radical groups that often tribal in nature turn into rebel groups that are sustained by funds from the illegal trade and collecting taxes from the public.

Cuvelier, Vlassenroot & Olin claim that the origin of conflicts in most countries might be attributable to the abundance of resources but what make the major difference are the systems of governance in place. Some of the countries with large mineral resources within Africa are South Africa, Namibia, Niger, DRC, Zambia, Ghana and Guinea. In most of these mineral-rich states, the nations have prospered economically from effective exploitation of these resources. South Africa's gold and diamonds, Zambia's copper, Namibia's uranium, Niger's uranium, Guinea's bauxite, Nigeria's oil and Botswana's diamonds and coal have significantly impacted the economies of the respective countries.¹⁸ It is important to understand that as much as the minerals may bring forth prosperity to a nation, the presence of the minerals can be a beginning of

¹⁷ Ross, M.L., 2004. How do Natural Resources influence Civil Wars: Evidence from 13 case studies. Retrieved from: <http://www.polisci.ucla.edu/faculty/ross/>

¹⁸ Cuvelier, J., Vlassenroot, K., & Olin, N. 2014. Resources, conflict and governance: A critical review. *The extractive industries and society*, 1(2), 340-350.

wars when disagreements on exploitation and equitable distribution of revenues emerge. Often the discovery of minerals in politically unstable government is more vulnerable to outbreak of violence. For example, in South Sudan, the youngest country in the world, after attaining independence the disagreements on exploitation of resources, leadership and management of the state resulted into war a rift between the President Kiir and the Vice-President Machar. Thereafter, the camps aligned on either side started the fights which have destabilized the country that had fought for years to attain its independence and was seen as a beginning of a new era that would bring forth prosperity. The conflicts are being aggravated by illegal exploitation of minerals in the state and the rise of militants in the nation deprives it the hope of attaining peace and full stability in the near future.¹⁹ A good system of governance is a pillar for a nation's prosperity as it can promote growth despite the presence conflicts that are associated with resource distribution as long as the conflicts are not allowed to get out of hand.

Collier and Hoeffler stated that there is a close link between mineral resources and protracted conflicts. Collier and Hoeffler's study revealed that when a nation heavily relies on a particular resource there can be crisis in the event of exhaustion, competition or mismanagement. The overdependence on the mineral resources which are highly valuable can be an indicator of a factor that can easily trigger violence. For the case of DRC, the country has been under the complexity of exploitation of minerals since the times of Congo being a Free State under Leopold II and then the Belgium colonial masters. The historical context shows that DRC has been treated as a rich state whose value has for a long time been based on its mineral resources. Every nation or corporation in any business dealing with DRC it is because of its mineral resources,

¹⁹ Omeje, K., 2017. Extractive economies and conflicts in the global south: re-engaging rentier theory and politics. In *Extractive Economies And Conflicts In The Global South* (pp. 19-44). Routledge.

therefore the competition for such resources is the origin for the unending conflicts. This led the authors to conclude that “objective political grievances have no direct link to the onset of conflict” and “where there are accessible natural resources and a mass of ill-educated youth; rebel movements have a powerful incentive to use violence to acquire wealth and the opportunity and means to do so”.²⁰ According to Amnesty International Report, the connection between the conflicts and mineral resources are imminent in countries that do not have a democratic system of government because the public is often oppressed by the dictatorial leadership in place.²¹

1.6.3 Effects of Resource-related conflicts

The competition for control over resources in the mineral-rich countries has always been a contentious issue. For the African states, the outcomes of exploitation and control of these natural resources has greatly relied on the influence of the colonial masters. DRC has been a victim of internal and regional conflicts, repressive dictatorship, colonial domination all actors aimed at gaining a share of nation’s riches which have hindered its social-economic development.²² The incidents of resource-based conflicts have extensively been evidenced in the country. Rackley claims that most of the conflicts arise over mineral resources mainly because of two key reasons. The competition over the limited mineral resources as the population is scared that the minerals are diminishing and mismanagement of plenty of mineral deposits whereby the rebel groups emerge to preserve some mines for their selfish interests.²³ However, the author believes that adequate management of mineral resources is the way to

²⁰ Collier, P. and Hoeffler, A., 2001. Greed and Grievance in Civil War [online]. Available from: <http://www.worldbank.org/research/conflict/papers/greedandgrievance.htm>

²¹ Amnesty International. (2013). Democratic Republic of the Congo: Children at war. <http://www.amnesty.org>

²² Ibid

²³ Rackley E. (2006). Democratic Republic of Congo: undoing government by predation. *Disasters*, 30 (4): 417–432.

minimize occurrence of conflicts in the countries that are endowed with such valuable resources yet they are in deplorable conditions and political unrest. It is important to understand that it is not only abundance of mineral resources that trigger violence, but also scarcity or limited mineral resources can fuel conflicts. However, the conflicts in the states with plenty of minerals are bound to be longer as the rebel groups gain sustenance from the funds acquired from illegal trade.²⁴

The outcomes of DRC conflicts on the nation have been extreme and are characterized by loss of lives through the violent attacks, displacements, insecurity, destruction of property, and abuse of human rights through social evils such as raping and maiming. Besides the mass killing estimated at over five million the war in the DRC is characterized by unprecedented acts of violence and rape against women and girls.²⁵ Sexual violence in the country has been predominant in the warring regions as the vulnerable groups for instance the children and women who get easily violated through evils such as mistreatment, displacement, beating and rape while the children are exposed to forced labor in the mines. There have been cases of the military been accused of perpetrating evils such as raping the women during the operations.

According to Global Witness, the prolonged wars have deteriorated the economy as more exploitation to its mineral resources as the crisis escalates particularly in the eastern part. The authoritarian repression that had been in power for three decades and contributed very little to the economy, occurrence of civil war could only worsen the situation. The complexity of the situation is that the country is geographically big and

²⁴ Ross, M.L., 2004. What do we know about natural resources and civil war?. *Journal of peace research*, 41(3), pp.337-356.

²⁵ Human Rights Watch 2002. The war in the war: sexual violence against women and girls in the eastern Cong. <http://www.hrw.org>

the government lacked the capacity to control the entire nation effectively.²⁶ The economic instability that DRC has plunged in are characterized by large debts to the international financial institutions such as IMF and World Bank, weak currency and poor circulation of money in the economy. These challenges have resulted into investment uncertainty as the foreign investors are afraid of economic crisis and the government inability to earn revenue because of low expenditure. The economy of the region of the countries in the Great Lakes region has also been affected due to the ongoing wars. DRC is a trading partner with states such as Uganda, Sudan, Chad, Burundi, Rwanda, Central African Republic and Angola. The ongoing conflicts have hindered business among the countries therefore detailing economic growth.

1.6.4 Actors in the protracted conflicts in DRC

The second Congolese war that commenced in August 1998 triggered fresh conflicts as the Rwandan and Ugandan fronts sought to overthrow President Laurent Kabila. The war involved nine African countries and it resulted to the death of over 3 million people. The previous research by Sithole claims that there is a strong connection between the protracted conflicts and the natural resource as the warring parties have an interest in the minerals. The continued wars give the interested parties an opportunity to exploit the country of its minerals.²⁷ The money earned from the minerals is used to fund the network of rebel groups, warlords and corrupt government officials to empower the trade that constantly exploits the country of its wealth of mineral resources.²⁸

²⁶ Global Witness (2006). *Digging in corruption. Fraud, abuse and exploitation in the Katanga Copper and Cobalt mines*. Washington, DC: Global Witness Publishing Inc.

²⁷ Sithole, E. 2017. *Democratic Republic of Congo A Fertile Ground for Instability in the Great Lakes Region States*. US Army Command and General Staff College Fort Leavenworth United States.

²⁸ Guaqueta, A., 2002. *Economic Agendas in Armed Conflict: Defining and Developing the Role of the UN*.

According to a study by Vogel & Raeymaekers on the relationship between the conflicts and the mineral resources, the increased conflicts by the armed groups is maintained by the illegal exploitation and smuggling of these minerals. It is believed that these conflicts are related to the presence of minerals that leads into competition from different self-interested parties seeking to control the mines.²⁹ The claims on mineral resources' contribution to igniting civil wars still pre-exist in the country that has been unstable since its independence. The geopolitical interests of the Western not only on the economic front of the mineral-rich country but also seeking to control invasion of communism has played a role to her instability.³⁰ Furthermore, the neighboring countries such as Uganda and Rwanda that have interests in the country's mineral resources are indirectly supporting the militia groups to destabilize the government with the sole motive of illegal exploitation. Additionally, decades of poor governance under greedy and power-hungry political leaders alongside their corrupt systems of leadership is attributable to the protracted conflicts.³¹

1.7 Theoretical Framework

The social conflict theory is a relevant model that forms a backdrop for this study. The social conflict theory seeks to explain how the unequal distribution of resource leads to conflict between those who own and manage valuable resources, on the one side and those who seek to increase their share of those resources. According to Farley, conflict model emerged as a result of Karl Max's work but it was promoted through the works of Dahrandorf R and Mills Wright. Farley believes that the social conflict theory is

²⁹ Vogel, C., & Raeymaekers, T. 2016. Terr (it) or (ies) of Peace? The Congolese Mining Frontier and the Fight Against "Conflict Minerals". *Antipode*, 48(4), 1102-1121.

³⁰ Kyamusugulwa P. and Hilhorst D., 2015. Power holders and social dynamics of participatory development and reconstruction: cases from the Democratic Republic of Congo. *World Development*. 70:249–259.

³¹ Zarb, N. 2012. *Protracted Conflict and Food Insecurity in Africa: Case Studies of Democratic Republic Of The Congo and Somalia* (Doctoral dissertation).

anchored on the fact that society is naturally inclined towards conflict due to unequal inclination in distribution of its power and wealth. Thus, the conflicting interests between different social groups leaves the society fragmented and aligning to the side that promises to capture its interests. Also, Farley argues that the dominant groups use coercion and repression to impose its agenda on the people under them.³²

The conflicts present the dominant groups to use power and wealth being created from unequal exploitation of resources to dictate the systems under which the society is led mainly through manipulating social change that favors their activities.³³ Social conflict theory as posited in this work explains the power relationships in modern society as one controlled by a tiny group of elite class. In this sense, a small minority, consisting of members of social elites clings to power and influence no matter the outcome of elections in a country. The elites in every society have certain innate characteristics that make them that powerful.

In this case of DRC, the society's structures unveil that leadership is centered on corrupt political systems whereby the politicians use power and wealth to manipulate and control the masses. Under the presidency of Mobutu, his government enjoyed the support and protection of western allies such as France and American support during the cold war to keep it away from the Soviet Union. The self-centered interests of these allies of DRC were not geared towards helping the nation to become economically stable but to benefit from its valuable mineral resources. Since the war began, the country has been dogged by violence which has resulted to deaths, continued human rights abuses and widespread ethnic clashes most of which are perpetrated by rebel

³² Dahrendorf, R., 1958. Toward a theory of social conflict. *Journal of conflict Resolution*, 2(2), pp.170-183.

³³ Ibid

movements. The protracted conflict fought between 1996 and 2002, the range within which this study is hinged, largely depict elements of the social conflict theory as posited above. The crisis largely became a scramble to control resources by both elitist states and individuals. On the other hand, the less privileged was also determined to demand their fair share of the national cake. These were factors that helped to escalate and sustain the crisis.

1.8 Hypotheses

1. The abundance of mineral resources in DRC is a central actor of the protracted conflicts experienced over the years since independence.
2. The protracted conflicts in DRC have contributed to poor economic growth and decline in social development.

1.9 Research Methodology

The study employed mixed methods whereby both quantitative and qualitative data was collected and analyzed. For the primary data, a research assistant was involved in collection of data through interviews and use of focus groups. The research assistant engaged 30 respondents from Goma in South Kivu province of eastern Congo. This study also utilized secondary data whereby sources were books, journals, government publications and reports.

1.9.1 Research Design

A research design is significant in a study as it provides the structure and the plan that can be utilized by the researcher to get the answers to the research questions. It provides to the researcher a plan on how data will be collected, measured and analyzed.³⁴ This

³⁴ “Kothari C. R. (2004) 2nd revised edition Research Methodology Methods and Techniques, New age International (p) Limited, Publishers: New Delhi, India”

study deployed the case study approach whereby the researcher directed their focus on a geographical scope as an area experiencing conflicts was used to represent the entire state. For this study, the researcher investigates the state of conflicts that has been ongoing in Eastern DRC. According to Yin a case study presents an inquiry that investigates a phenomenon in its real life situation and where sources of evidence are used.³⁵ A case study enables the researcher to integrate both quantitative and qualitative data to aid in understanding the phenomenon studied. This approach assisted in assessing the outcomes as well as the process of the phenomenon by deploying techniques such as reconstruction, observation and analysis of the case study.³⁶

1.9.2 Data Collection

The commonly used data collection instruments are: questionnaires and interviews schedule. The mixed methods technique of collecting data was employed in the research. The secondary data was sourced from mainly from previous published researches which include journals, websites and books on the subject of DRC conflict. This method involved in-depth reading on the relevant materials and analyzing of the subject matter in a detailed way to beef up this study. For the primary data, a research assistant will be involved to interview the participants in a bid to establish how mineral resources have plunged the country into protracted conflicts. Also, observation of the events on the study area was significant for this study. A questionnaire comprises a set of well-structured questions that served as a crucial research tool for the study.

³⁵ “Yin, R.K., (1984). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Beverly Hills, Calif: Sage Publications”.

³⁶ Tellis, Winston, (1997). *Introduction to Case Study. The Qualitative Report*, Volume 3, Number 2, July. (<http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR3-2/tellis1.html>).

1.9.3 Data Analysis

Data analysis of the information gathered from the questionnaires will be done through various approaches. The technique that will be used to analyze the qualitative approach will be to break down the information in the form of themes, generalize common themes and point out differing themes as well. For the quantitative approach, data will be analyzed using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences. As an integral part of academic study, data analysis would ensure quality and relevance of the survey. When transcribing the data, systematic identifying of categories from all the data for simplicity in presentation of data. The results of the study helped to determine the relationships between variables which is vital in hypothesis testing.

1.9.3 Limitations of the Research

This study encountered constraints particularly time factor that occurred in two main ways. The research was to be conducted within two months which did not provide adequate time for the research. Also, the limited timeline forced the researcher to integrate published and unpublished secondary and primary data sources into the study. Given that most part of the study area, Eastern Congo, is under same situation of conflict it meant that the scope of the research is wide. Therefore, the researcher had the challenge of have possible conclusive data from the field.

10.0 Chapter Outline

Chapter one has looked at the background of the study, problem statement, objectives and methods for data collection on the DRC protracted conflict. The researcher has identified the general objective of the study as an investigation on the protracted conflicts in the Democratic of Congo in relation to its abundant mineral resources.

Chapter two will investigate the connection between protracted conflict and the mineral resources in DRC.

Chapter three will examine the social, political and economic effects of the protracted conflicts to DRC. Significantly, through this section the implications of the protracted conflicts to the social and economic sectors of the country will be assessed.

Chapter four will extensively discuss the intervention measures for the ongoing conflicts by stating the role Congolese government and other institutions such as NGOs have in the protracted conflicts and the measures undertaken to harness the crisis.

Chapter five presents the summary for the research. It also presents the findings, conclusion of the study and the recommendations of the researcher in addressing the research problem on the protracted conflicts of the mineral-rich DRC.

Chapter Two

Relationship between abundance of minerals and the protracted conflicts

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the relationship between natural mineral resources of DRC and the ongoing conflicts that have destabilized the country economically, socially and politically. The researcher seeks to understand the contribution of the rich mineral resources to this mystery of civil wars, humanitarian crisis and violence. The research has sought to explain how abundance of mineral resources have influenced or rather fueled the ongoing conflicts in DRC. The origin of the conflicts in DRC has been discussed which began during King Leopold II rule, then Belgian colonialism and continued in the post-colonial rule. It also discusses the involvement of the neighboring nations that have directly and indirectly been involved in the DRC crisis. Furthermore, the emergence of rebel groups and their violent activities in the Eastern Congo and their contribution to the protracted conflicts have been analyzed as well.

2.2 Origin of DRC Protracted Conflicts

Since attaining independence in 1960, DRC has been undergoing mild conflicts until 1998 when severe civil war broke out. While under leadership of President Joseph Kasavubu, the government experienced turmoil as war broke out between him and Patrice Lumumba who was at the time the prime minister. In 1965, a coup d'état that was led by General Joseph-Desire Mobutu was successfully conducted and Mobutu became a president.³⁷ When Mobutu ascended to power, the Congolese had hope that the country would stabilize and would mark a beginning of new era. However, no sooner had President Mobutu had taken over presidency than he started cementing his

³⁷ Pellillo, A., 2012. Conflict and development: Evidence from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Unpublished manuscript.

power through suppressing opposition, accumulating wealth and turning his regime into a dictatorship. Not until 1994 when Rwandan genocide occurred, that DRC unstable and volatility state got tested and it eventually led to the end of President Mobutu's reign. The eruption of the genocide led to immigration of the Hutus into Eastern DRC after they were overwhelmed and the government was taken by the Tutsis who they had greatly massacred. Most Hutus crossed over to DRC to seek refuge as their country rampage into bloody violence.³⁸

After the 1994 Rwanda Genocide, the Eastern DRC provided asylum to over 1.2 million Hutus who escaped from Rwanda in fear of retaliation by the Tutsis who had taken power through Rwandese Patriotic Army (RPA).³⁹ The refugee camps were filled with Hutus most of who were armed soldiers that used to serve in the government and it posed a threat to Rwanda as there were fears that they would retaliate. This migration had an impact on the socio-political system of DRC and intensified the tension in the country that put pressure on Mobutu who the country had got tired of his dictatorial rule. In the Eastern region the competition for control of resources became evidence now among the new arrivals, Hutus, the locals and the Tutsis that had earlier migrated to DRC.⁴⁰ The Rwandan government under President Kagame seeing the danger the Hutu immigrant posed in the near future with the help of Uganda decided to pursue them. Amidst this tense situation, the then DRC president, President Mobutu, had authorized for various government-sponsored groups to alienate the Banyamulenge minority by treating them violently and stigmatizing them. Banyamulenge were the

³⁸ Austesserre, S. 2012. Dangerous tales: Dominant narratives on the Congo and their unintended consequences. *African Affairs*, 111 (442):1–21.

³⁹ Wood, W.B., 2001. Geographic aspects of genocide: a comparison of Bosnia and Rwanda. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 26(1), pp.57-75

⁴⁰ Onyango-Obbo, C., 1999. What's the Beef with Uganda, Rwanda, in DRC? *Monitor* (Kampala), 11 August.

Tutsis from Rwanda who had migrated to DRC's eastern part long ago due to the Hutu's oppressive regime in Rwanda and had settled in the Eastern Congo.⁴¹

The RPA soldiers started invading Congolese territory in September of 1997 as they armed the Banyamulenge as they sought to protect them and pursue the Hutu insurgents, ex-FAR soldiers/Interahamwe. The RPA attacked South Kivu and through a coordinated move they joined efforts with the Ugandan troops in the mission to capture the ex-FAR soldiers and bring them to justice in Rwanda. In their mission, they decided to join a rebel group of President Mobutu regime that was led by Laurent Kabila and they decided to seize power from Mobutu who had been weakened by loss of support by the West and USA. The rebel movement that had been created by Kabila was called AFDL. Kabila saw an opportunity to seize power and overthrow President Mobutu under the support of Rwanda and Uganda. This contest commenced the first Congo war which happened between 1997 and 1998 after which President Mobutu was overthrown and went to exile as Laurent Kabila ascended to power. However, no sooner had he ascended to power than he realized the intentions of Rwanda and Uganda in exploiting the DRC resources and he sought to expel them out of the country. President Kabila sought help of Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia to push Rwanda and Uganda out of DRC, which resulted into the second Congo War that started in 1998 and outlived him as it continued until 2008, 7 years after his son Joseph Kabila had replaced him as the president after being killed in 2001.⁴²

According to Autesserre the DRC has been a battle ground due to external factors such as invasion by Rwandan and Ugandan troops, dictatorial leadership of Mobutu that led

⁴¹ Prunier, G., 2009. Africa's World Wars: Congo, the Rwandan Genocide, and the Making of a Continental Catastrophe. Oxford University Press.

⁴² Understanding Conflict in Eastern Congo, 2013. *The Ruzizi Plain Crisis Group Africa Report N°206*, 4.

to the coup by Kabila and exploitation and mismanagement of public resources through corruption and embezzlement of funds.⁴³ Autesserre argued that the prolonged conflicts have managed to run for decades due to the presence of valuable mineral resources that have been used illegally to fund the wars otherwise the war would have ended with the depletion of resources. Therefore, the deep-rooted conflict the DRC has endured is due to the rich resources that fund the wars. Further, Autesserre contends the country is still under-developed despite its huge wealth due to mismanagement of the mineral resources, poor governance, dictatorship and corruption. Furthermore, Stearns claims that DRC is an example of a large country that is rich with valuable mineral resources but the external influence, selfish corporate and personal interests locally and internationally have made the country volatile as the ‘enemies’ took advantage of the poor governance to benefit themselves. The actual problem of DRC originates from its poor governance, victimization through support of a dictator by the West and US which have a great influence on the global economy.⁴⁴

2.3 Influence of Abundant Mineral Resources

DRC is gifted with large quantities of natural resources in Africa yet the country has experienced conflicts since its independence. However, the country has undergone bloody conflicts in the last twenty years in addition to dictatorial leadership under President Mobutu since 1960s. The complexity of violence in DRC can be articulated to several factors such as poor leadership, invasion by neighboring countries, influence of external forces for example cold war and mismanagement of public resources. One of the mostly argued causes of the current violence being experienced in the DRC has

⁴³ Autesserre, S. 2012. Dangerous tales: Dominant narratives on the Congo and their unintended consequences. *African Affairs*, 111(443), 202-222.

⁴⁴ Stearns, J., 2011. *Dancing in the Glory of Monsters: The Collapse of the Congo and the Great War of Africa*, (New York: Public Affairs), p. 191.

its origins in the influx of refugees from the neighboring country of Rwanda.⁴⁵ The emergence of Rwandan genocide in 1994 forced the members of the Hutu community to seek refuge in eastern DRC since the Tutsi-led government was a threat to them. Most of these Hutu refugees who fled to eastern DRC were responsible for the massacre and went ahead to form a rebel movement, the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) which consequently increased insecurity in the region⁴⁶. The rebel group was formed to fight against the Tutsi government but intensified insecurity in eastern Congo leading to constant attacks on the civilians. Rwanda's military pursued the rebels in DRC with help from Uganda and after joining hands with Laurent Kabila they toppled President Mobutu.

DRC is a very wealthy nation that is endowed with large quantities of valuable mineral resources. Besides the vast mineral resources, DRC boasts of other natural resources such as forestry, water resources and large hectares of arable land that is approximated to 80 million.⁴⁷ With all these resources, the mineral resources have stood out for their country due to rich reserves of minerals such as diamond, cobalt, tantalum, copper, gold and coltan. The need for coltan has greatly increased because of its use in the technology industry whereby it is used in the electronic devices such as computers and cell phones.⁴⁸ Significantly, the report also claimed that DRC has reserves of untapped mineral resources of a valued over \$24 trillion. Being among the wealthiest nations across the globe, in terms of its potential of mineral resources has not set DRC into the

⁴⁵ Nibishaka, E., 2011. Natural Resources and Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC): The failure of post conflict reconstruction strategies.

⁴⁶ Moore, D., 2003. The Political Economy of the DRC Conflict. Retrieved from: <http://www.igd.org.za/pub/OP/OP37.Chap2Moore.html> [Accessed September 5 2018]

⁴⁷ Spittaels, S., 2010. The complexity of resource governance in a context of state fragility: an analysis of the mining sector in the Kivu hinterlands. International Peace Information Service publication

⁴⁸ World Bank, 2008. *Democratic Republic of Congo: Growth with governance in the mining sector*. Oil, Gas, Mining and Chemicals Department, Africa Region, Report No. 43402-ZR. Washington, DC: World Bank.

path of economic growth and prosperity despite all this wealth. On the contrary, the presence of this wealth of mineral resources has plunged it into the gloom of unending conflicts that are attributable to both internal and external actors each with an interest in having a share of the nation's resources.

With the richness of the minerals that DRC possesses, it has the potential one of the successful countries in Africa. However, this dream is far from being achieved with the constant conflicts that have become order of the day in the region. Illegal exploitation of the minerals and smuggling under the control of armed groups and corrupt government has plunged the country into violence due to competition for resources. The immigrants such as the Hutus and the Tutsis as well as the Ugandans have formed armed groups that have suppressed the initial inhabitants turning them into workers in the illegally acquired mines. The vast country has become a challenge for the government to gain full control of and has contributed to the expansion of the armed rebel groups particularly in the Eastern DRC.⁴⁹ Inability of the government to gain control over this areas means that the rebel groups continue to exploit the mineral resources illegally and fund their activities which has caused insecurity in the region.

2.3.1 Belgian Colonial Rule

When the scramble for Africa commenced, King Leopold II expressed his interest in controlling DRC and his claim was recognized during the 1884 Berlin Conference. King Leopold became a sole proprietor of a country endowed with mineral resources and had a great territory greater than any European country⁵⁰. Armed with high and great ambitions for DRC, King Leopold set out to colonize Congo under the support of

⁴⁹ Sasch, J.D. and Warner, A.M. 1995. Natural Resource Abundance and Economic Growth. NBER Working paper No. 5398, December.

⁵⁰ Nzongola-Ntalaja, G., 2004. *From Zaire to the Democratic Republic of the Congo* (No. 28). Nordic Africa Institute.

Belgian government. In the early 19th century, the automobile industry was taking shape quickly during the industrial revolution and rubber is used in making tires. Congo had a huge supply of natural rubber and the Congolese people who were enslaved to work under the colonial master to harvest it. Leopold was obsessed with this commodity that had a high demand at the international market. Besides, this would make a very profitable venture given that the prices for rubber were high and the profit returns were more than 700 percent increment. To ensure steady flow of rubber, Leopold worked with *Force Publique* (FP) that comprised of 350 European commanders and an army of 12,500 African soldiers⁵¹.

Since Leopold had no interest of Africans at heart but fulfill his personal ambitions demanded improved productivity and it pressured his army that turned prerogative on the African slaves. The extreme form of power made the FP employ violent means to terrorize the local population “forcing them to gather wild rubber and cutting off hands when quotas were not met. At one point hands were cut off by such voluminous amounts that the severed limb took on a value of its own”.⁵² The extreme atrocities under the soldiers of King Leopold II led to DRC being handed to Belgium government in 1908. Belgium deployed the ‘divide and rule’ principle to control DRC whereby the Africans were made to feel like the colonial masters cared for their interests. On the contrary, the colonialists used companies to extract minerals and use them for economic development of their countries. The first 20 years of Belgian colonial rule in Congo was similar to that of Leopold. The Belgian government continued to exploit DRC by

⁵¹ Frankema, E. and Buelens, F. eds., 2013. *Colonial exploitation and economic development: The Belgian Congo and the Netherlands Indies compared* (Vol. 64). Routledge.

⁵² Ewans, M., 2003. Belgium and the colonial experience. *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 11(2), pp.167-180

having all the raw materials and mineral resources exported for manufacturing in Belgium.⁵³

2.3.2 USA

Before the Cold War era the US policy makers consistently ignored the continent of Africa. It was not until 1957 when Richard Nixon and Senator John F. Kennedy of Massachusetts recognized the importance of Africa. The changes that were occurring in Africa were important to the East-West relations.⁵⁴ They warned that the new independent states would either turn to Moscow or to Washington. President Eisenhower then created a separate Bureau of the African affairs within the state department to deal with Africa issues. Fear of the Soviet Union caused the US to change her attitude towards Africa in the Cold War era. It is such circumstances that led to some of the unfortunate decisions made over the DRC as the African state entered into a phase of neo-colonialism.⁵⁵ The Soviet Union supported Lumumba as the legitimate leader of the country and the US challenged it. The intensity of the Cold War and the contest of Soviet Union and United States over impacting their ideologies of communism versus capitalism respectively made US to support DRC to avoid take over by the Soviet Union.⁵⁶

Kasavubu on becoming the president of DRC in 1960 he centered his efforts in eradicating any radical elements so that he could get the support of United Nations. On the other hand, Lumumba who was the prime minister and an ultra-nationalist at the time was more radical and had won the support of the Congolese people but was out of

⁵³ Shekhawat, S., 2009. Governance crisis and conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo. *University of Mumbai, Working Paper*, 6, pp.7-17.

⁵⁴ Gibbs, D.N., 1995. Secrecy and international relations. *Journal of Peace Research*, 32(2), pp.213-228.

⁵⁵ Ibid

⁵⁶ Reno, W., 2006. Congo: From state collapse to 'absolutism', to state failure. *Third World Quarterly*, 27(1), pp.43-56.

favor with the business leaders from the West who had strong interests in diamond mines. The United States was afraid that Lumumba was secretly getting support from the Soviet Union but it remaining adamant of removing him from power. However, the insecurities of President Lumumba about Kasavubu led him to throw him out of power and it created a conflict at the helm of country's power and amidst the misunderstanding Mobutu who was then the army commander led a revolt that took over power from Kasavubu.⁵⁷ On ascension to power, USA and the western governments decided to support Mobutu given that Lumumba had allies from the Communist nations and the Soviet Union.⁵⁸ Lumumba was later assassinated during the Katangan rebels that were led by Mobutu in a plane crash.

Different scholars believe that the failure of King Leopold II and the Belgian government to focus on establish pillars of growth in the post-colonial era such as through education robbed the country its future leadership. As a matter of fact, when DRC is compared to other African states that had different colonial masters for example the British; the colonialists provided a platform for the future African leaders to establish a footing. However, for DRC it was entirely about the business of exploiting the rich mineral resources of the country without minding how the state will run after independence.⁵⁹ Probably, the Belgian colonialists thought that they will be in-charge of DRC as an overseas state that can fully rely on it even after the s called 'independence' that they did not have hope it would make them fully exist on its own. Presently, the widespread political violence has been attributed to refusal of the current president, Joseph Kabila, to step out of office and allow democratic elections after

⁵⁷ Turner, T., 2007. *Congo Wars, Conflict, Myth & Reality*. London: Zed Books.

⁵⁸ Gibbs, D.N., 1995. Secrecy and international relations. *Journal of Peace Research*, 32(2), pp.213-228.

⁵⁹ Zarb, N. 2012. *Protracted Conflict and Food Insecurity in Africa: Case Studies of Democratic Republic of The Congo and Somalia* (Doctoral dissertation).

-serving his two-five-year constitutional term. The clashes and protests have raged across the country with the security forces being used by the government to silence, repress, and intimidate the political opposition calling for general elections.⁶⁰ The efforts by the human rights and pro-democracy activists have failed to convince the Kabila administration into granting the nation general elections.

2.3.3 France

In recent years, DRC has taken pride in its standing as the second-largest French-speaking country, after France itself. The cordial relationship between the two countries was cemented during President Mobutu era as an alternative for the thorny relationship of the Belgian colonial masters. Upon independence, France had chosen to support the federalists and conservatives of Belgium colonialist which was against Lumumba's leadership that was viewed as radical. When the Katangan secession had been defeated in the December of 1963, France signed a treaty of cultural and technical cooperation with DRC. The French saw DRC as the center of control and future influence to the central African states that included its former colonies such as Equatorial Guinea and Central African Republic. As an evidence of the relationship, in 1973 France became an important military partner of DRC, the then Zaire. The relationship between Zaire and France was evidenced by the technical military support given to President Mobutu by the French government.⁶¹

France was in consistent help of DRC under the Mobutu Regime even after their ties with Belgium and USA declined. In 1976, an ultra-modern satellite telecommunications system was officially opened in Zaire after being built by France government in exchange for copper prospecting rights to a French company. When Shaba Region was

⁶⁰ Ibid

⁶¹ Gondola, C.D., 2002. *The history of Congo*. Greenwood Publishing Group.

invaded in 1977, France helped President Mobutu in suppressing the invasions through mobilizing Moroccan troops to help in the fights and offering its troops that trained the Congolese army. However, upon the killing of the French ambassador during the protests that emerged in 1993, they strained the relationship of Mobutu and the French government. The French government sent its troops to the country to evacuate its nationals and after the incident France cut its support for Mobutu.⁶²

2.3.4 Multinational Networks

The transnational networks have had a role in the DRC's protracted conflicts as they sought to safeguard their interests alongside the foreign sovereign countries. The interests of these transnational networks became evident after the independence whereby corporations befriended the government to be granted permission to exploit the mineral resources of the country⁶³. Most of these networks were illegitimate and their unscrupulous deals with the government of the day resulted into economic crisis in DRC that crippled the country. Most of the networks were both illegitimate and unlawful as mining licenses were awarded instead of revenue generated getting to government coffers it ended to pockets of a few individuals. This became even more instructive when mining trans-nationals from around the world coupled with South African counterparts in a new rush for exploration rights as well as concessions not only in DRC but in other African nations. These foreign companies were focused on attaining fresh opportunities for exploiting the minerals in Africa after the cold war.

⁶² Nzongola-Ntalaja, G., 2002. *The Congo from Leopold to Kabila: A People's History*. (London and New York: Zed Books), p. 2.

⁶³ Sherman, J., 2001. Private Sector Actors in Zones of Conflict: Research Challenges and Policy Responses. Retrieved from: http://www.ipacademy.org/PDF_Reports/Pdf_Report_Private_Sector.pdf [Accessed September 16, 2018]

One of the strategies the multinational companies pushed for was privatization which would grant them rights to acquire mines and possession of other resources in Africa.⁶⁴ Notably, the economic mess under poor governance has not managed to rob the country its potential in terms of mineral resources, DRC has always been attractive to mining trans-nationals due to its massive endowment in minerals. DRC stands among the leading countries across the globe with comparatively large deposits of minerals such as coltan, gold, cobalt and copper. Thus, besides the protracted conflicts the multinational mining companies continued to seek opportunities to acquire minerals from the country and their greed has resulted into some trading with the rebel groups. These transnational networks mostly did not uphold any respect for diplomatic procedures by engaging in trade that is funding the rebel groups that have instigated political instability particularly in Eastern Congo. The failure of some companies to honor territorial integrity or national sovereignty forms part of the complexity in contest by the multinational corporations to gain a share of the DRC resources irrespective of credibility of the channels. The invaders and warlords across the territories are used to traffic minerals that are illegally mined and smuggle arms that are used by the rebel groups such as the AFDL.⁶⁵

2.4 Neighboring States

The study found out that the protracted conflicts in DRC have been aggravated by the involvement of neighboring countries, all of which had their own interests. Most of the DRC neighbors took advantage of the political instability of DRC with the objective of safeguarding their interests and as a gateway to the country's mineral resources. The

⁶⁴ Eichstaedt, P., 2011. *Consuming the Congo: War and conflict minerals in the world's deadliest place*. Chicago Review Press.

⁶⁵ Baaz, M.E. and Verweijen, J., 2013. The volatility of a half-cooked bouillabaisse: Rebel–military integration and conflict dynamics in the eastern DRC. *African Affairs*, 112(449), pp.563-582

initial involvement of Rwanda was to alleviate a potential risk of attack from Hutu insurgents who had crossed over to seek refuge in DRC after being overwhelmed by the Tutsi-led government.⁶⁶ In attempt to stamp out the armed Hutus from the camps, they invited Uganda into the mission of alleviating a potential danger of further massacre after the 1994 genocide.⁶⁷ Another player that got involved was an opposition leader, Laurent Kabila who got support from Ugandan and Rwandan troops to topple the unstable government of President Mobutu. After ascension to power, President Kabila one year down the line, 1998, sought support from Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia, members of SADC, to support him with military to flush the Rwandan and Ugandan troops out of DRC as they had threatened to oust him out of power. The involvement of these countries in the politically unstable DRC, each with their actual and hidden motives made the situation complex and their participation is part of the prolonged conflicts in DRC.

2.4.1 Rwanda and Uganda

The involvement of Rwanda into DRC as border countries is huge, as the eruption of 1994 genocide completely changed the situation of both countries. For Rwanda, it marked the new era of liberation after the genocide but to DRC it embarked into a journey of civil wars that have been termed as Africa World War. Rwanda sought to intervene in Congo in late 1996 with the objective of suppressing the potential threat of counter-attack that was posed by over 10,000 of the Rwandan Hutus that perpetrated the 1994 Rwandan genocide that left over 800,000 people dead most of who were

⁶⁶ Prunier, G., 2008. *Africa's world war: Congo, the Rwandan genocide, and the making of a continental catastrophe*. Oxford University Press

⁶⁷ Newbury D., 2001. 'Pre-colonial Burundi and Rwanda: Local Loyalties, regional royalties' *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 34:2, 255-314, here: p. 263

Tutsis.⁶⁸ The Hutu militants who has served as soldiers in the army but engaged in the genocide crossed to Eastern Congo alongside other refugees and perpetrators of genocide. President Mobutu stated using the Hutu to fight the rebellious groups that were operation in Eastern Congo. Rwanda sought to move swiftly to halt occurrence of another genocide that could be targeting the precariously situated Congolese Tutsi communities that were already living in DRC.⁶⁹

According to a research by de Koning, the neighboring countries have participated in illegal exploitation of DRC natural resources. For instance, the researcher notes that Rwanda which has no diamond reserves of its own had commenced exporting diamonds after it became involved in the war. The researcher stated that the Rwandan military financed its involvement in the DRC through commercial exploitation of resources. Additionally, the involvement of Rwanda into the war paved a way for shareholding in businesses operating in the DRC and payments from the rebel group RCD-Goma. The report claims that Rwanda had fielded a ground for its senior business individuals in DRC.⁷⁰

Conversely, Uganda which was a compatriot in invasion of DRC ensured the operations of its business people in DRC generated revenue for their government despite the source of that revenue being illegal exploitation of another country's resources. The money was brought in through backdoor networks that deprive the government revenue since there is no taxation effected on the resources. Uganda is a beneficiary of the diamonds and gold that are smuggled through its borders and this claim has been evidenced by

⁶⁸ Newbury D., 2001. 'Pre-colonial Burundi and Rwanda: Local Loyalties, regional royalties' *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 34:2, 255-314, here: p. 263

⁶⁹ Onyango-Obbo, C., 1999. What's the Beef with Uganda, Rwanda, in DRC? *Monitor* (Kampala), 11 August.

⁷⁰ de Koning, R. (2011). Conflict minerals in the Democratic Republic of the Congo: Aligning trade and security interventions. Stockholm International Peace Research Institute policy paper 27.

country's exportation of the minerals yet it had no such deposits. Additionally, Uganda began exporting gold and diamonds after being involved in the war. In the eastern Ituri region, it is believed that Uganda supports the rebel groups that are involved in exploiting minerals in the region since the regions has rich reserves of gold.⁷¹

2.4.2 Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia

After falling out with Rwanda and Uganda President Kabila wanted them out of DRC and so he devised a strategy to push them out of his country. President Kabila sought the help of Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia which sent their troops to aid DRC army into fighting Rwanda and Uganda out of the country. Little did President Kabila understand that all these countries willing to offer military help had interests on the DRC's mineral resources. By agreeing to counter the East African countries as they believed they were offering support to fellow member of the South African Development Community (SADC), it led to the emergence of the 1998 Congo War. Most of the victims of this war were the Congolese civilians who were displaced from their homes, led to deaths and destabilized the country. The second war strengthened the rebel movements that established territories in the Eastern Congo and have been causing constant attacks on the residents in those areas. The three countries had justified their decisions to support DRC that they could not withstand an external aggression, and that they were acting in accordance with the stipulations of the international law of the then OAU, now renamed AU, and the UN.⁷² While this justification was reasonable, undoubtedly, the personal idiosyncratic interests of the leaders concerned and the geopolitical and economic interests of their countries had an impact on the conflict by deciding to intervene. For instance, Zimbabwe under leadership of President Mugabe

⁷¹ Reyntjens, F., 2009. *The Great African War: Congo and regional geopolitics, 1996-2006*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁷² Ballentine, K. and Nitzschke, H., 2005. The political economy of civil war and conflict transformation. *Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management, Berlin*.

sent his troops in the war with the claim that their decision was a joint defense action by the SADC bloc to counter any external threat on their member “Organ for Politics, Defense and Security”. These legal particulars appeared to be suitable cover for Zimbabwe’s real geopolitical intentions as well as economic interests of the governing elite.⁷³

Angola was the leading country willing to support Kabila during the time when the conflict appeared most tedious for the DRC’s leader. Jose Santos Dos Santos who was president of Angola offered military help to Kabila. This help would help Kabila to salvage his regime from the external aggression. Dos Santos had several reasons for supporting Kabila’s DRC. Angola was focused on crushing a rebel group that used to attack it from western borders of DRC and the rebel group was called National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) which was led by Savimbi Jonas. President Santos was afraid of his combatant, Savimbi, taking advantage of the unstable DRC to launch an attack on his oil-rich province of Cabinda. Moreover, he was sure that the invasion of Uganda and Rwanda would offer Savimbi an opportunity to airlift arms that could be used to launch attack on Cabinda in the event of a rebellion⁷⁴. The reason for the Angolan support was selfish interest of its president to protect the security of its territory particularly its oil-rich country and to beat back a more powerful UNITA.⁷⁵

2.5 Rise of Rebel Movements

The rebel movements comprise of the Congolese local militia and armed groups from the neighboring states specifically Uganda and Rwanda. The armed groups are

⁷³ Tamm, H., 2016. The Origins of Transnational Alliances: Rulers, Rebels, and Political Survival in the Congo Wars. *International Security*, 41(1), pp.147-181

⁷⁴ Ibid

⁷⁵ Rutatina, R., 2003. *The Causes, evolution and resolution of the conflict DRC, 1996-2002*. Unpublished master’s thesis, University of Ghana, Legon, Accra, Ghana.

constantly involved in the illegitimate mineral trade, gain profit from the DRC's minerals. The rebel movements mushroomed during the second Congolese war as the country got divided into four different sections. The rebel movements have remained strongly in control of the Eastern Congo whereby they manage the mines and use the proceeds to support their illegal activities such as acquiring arms.⁷⁶ This exploitation of the country's mineral resources has plundered it of the revenues that can be used to reconstruct the state and stabilize the economy even after the end of Mobutu's dictatorial regime. Some of the minerals that are extracted from the Eastern DRC are cobalt, gold, diamond, tungsten, tin and tantalum. According to Vogel, the armed rebel movements are not entirely focused on extracting the minerals for any economic importance such as community development but only to acquire finances that can help protect their territories by purchasing more arms⁷⁷. Thus, the government is compelled to deploy approaches that will enable them to recover the mines so that the resources can be used for economic benefits rather than funding the war. Additionally, Kelly believes that even in the event of mineral resources the rebel movements would find other resources to expropriate given that diverse Congo has a wealth of other resources such as forestry and favorable climate for agriculture.⁷⁸ Mining for economic profitability is not the primary objective of the rebel movements in Eastern Congo but to retain their authorities and suppress the residents.

2.5.1 M23

M23 (Mouvement du 23 Mars) is an armed movement that was formed in April 4, 2012 and it is based in eastern Congo that controlled the provincial capital Goma after

⁷⁶ Baaz, M.E. and Verweijen, J., 2013. The volatility of a half-cooked bouillabaisse: Rebel–military integration and conflict dynamics in the eastern DRC. *African Affairs*, 112(449), pp.563-582.

⁷⁷ Vogel, C., & Raeymaekers, T. 2016. Terr (it) or (ies) of Peace? The Congolese Mining Frontier and the Fight Against “Conflict Minerals”. *Antipode*, 48(4), 1102-1121.

⁷⁸ Kelly, J., 2010. *Rape in war: Motives of militia in DRC*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace.

overpowering the Congolese army in 2012 with its army of 2,000 militants. This group was formed by ex-CNDP soldiers who started resistance against the government in claims that the President Joseph Kabila government had failed to honor the 2009 peace agreement with the CNDP.⁷⁹ The M23 rebel group launched its attacks on the Congolese army and the UN peacekeepers to keep them off from operating within their acclaimed territories in Eastern Congo. The Congolese army was forced not to deploy a violent confrontation as it would lead to victimization of the civilians among whom the M23 militants hid. The M23 rose to become among the formidable armed movements that perpetrated violence through maiming, sexual violence on women and displacements of the locals from their original homes. As the group grew up it occupied new territories such as Rutshuru area which borders Uganda in North Kivu.

The M23 rebel movement has been linked up with external support by Rwanda and Uganda whereby it received military equipment and support. There are claims that M23 has made agreements with other rebel groups to work together to control mineral-rich areas in Eastern Congo such as Kasai-Occidental, Ituri, South Kivu and North Kivu. Their brutality ranges from recruiting children as soldiers, executing the prisoners of war and sporadic attacks on the civilians to keep them under their control. The M23 proved that it was a serious group that had resources when in 20th on November 2012 it captured Goma city and held it under its control until 5th November of the following year (2013) when it was recovered. The mission was carried out by the military forces of Congo whereby it was aided by a UN brigade made of 3,000 soldiers from Malawi, Tanzania and South African.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Guy, K.M., 2014. Mai-Mai militia and sexual violence in Democratic Republic of the Congo. *International journal of emergency mental health*, 16(2), pp.366-372

⁸⁰ Nangini, C., Jas, M., Fernandes, H. and Muggah, R., 2014. Visualizing Armed Groups: The Democratic Republic of the Congo's M23 in Focus. *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development*, 3(1).

2.5.2 FDLR

The Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda (FDLR) was a rebel movement that was formed by the Hutus ex-FAR who had crossed into Eastern Congo mainly operating in North and South Kivu, after fleeing from the Tutsi-led government. The members of this rebel movement had been involved in the 1994 genocide and stated the rebel group to protect themselves from being pursued by the Tutsis who may be planning to take revenge in future.⁸¹ They are a group of Rwandan Hutu exiles who are dissidents of the Rwandan Liberation Army and who became the FDLR in May 2000. The emergence of the FDLR is under the influence of President Laurent-Desire Kabila seeking to create paramilitary groups against the Congolese quest for democracy. However, after Laurent Kabila's killing, the predecessor, Joseph Kabila, declined to support FDLR and he ordered their disarming and return to Rwanda. The FDLR could not return to Rwanda as they were wanted for perpetration of the Rwanda genocide, so they turned into an armed group that would later be responsible for looting, rape, killings, kidnappings and recruiting child soldiers. The rebel group is also part of the illegal trade of wood and charcoal mainly in North Kivu. There have been claims that FDLR makes millions of dollars through trafficking gold and diamonds to rich countries such as United Arab Emirates through Burundi and Uganda. This radical group that operates at the borders is armed and has a history of mutiny given that most of the members were involved in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. FDLR is among the largest armed groups in eastern DRC that is involved in pillaging of resources and violence that targets the women and children and it has been associated with multiple incidents of sexual violence, abductions, killings and forced displacements.⁸²

⁸¹ Baaz, M.E. and Verweijen, J., 2013. The volatility of a half-cooked bouillabaisse: Rebel–military integration and conflict dynamics in the eastern DRC. *African Affairs*, 112(449), pp.563-582.

⁸² Kelly, J., 2010. *Rape in war: Motives of militia in DRC*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace.

2.5.3 Mai-Mai

The Mai-Mai is an armed rebel group of locals of Eastern Congo that have been against central government in the 1960s due to the poor governance, corruption and marginalization in terms of social-economic development. The Mai-Mai is an ethnically organized group by the militias that are formed with the objective of protecting the social welfare of certain local groups. The group was formed to counter the Banyamulenge group of Tutsi who had migrated to Eastern DRC and were posing a threat to the locals. However, it has turned to a radical extremist group that exploits the vulnerable groups by recruiting child soldiers and perpetrating sexual violence against women. The interest of the Mai-Mai is not to cause attacks on the people but to counter any foreign threat and provide security to the local community. Mai Mai is involved in a web of illegal activities such as recruiting child miners, smuggling of arms and trade of minerals in the black market as well carrying coordinated attacks on the Congolese military to dispel them from their territories.⁸³ The Mai-Mai has been a radical movement that has caused displacement of people in North and South Kivu as they fight other armed groups to secure mines. Although the activities of the group are in the grassroots, the Mai-Mai remains under secrecy while protecting its community from constant attacks by other label groups. The Mai Mai use guerilla tactics to coordinate their attacks in Katanga, North Kivu and South Kivu provinces. This militia group has been associated with the increased violation of human rights mainly sexual violence in the region whereby over 15,000 of rape cases have been reported in 2013.⁸⁴ The extremity of sexual violence has resulted into psychological and physical trauma, neglect and social ostracism among the violated women and girls.

⁸³ Guy, K.M., 2014. Mai-Mai militia and sexual violence in Democratic Republic of the Congo. *International journal of emergency mental health*, 16(2), pp.366-372.

⁸⁴ Ibid

2.6 Conclusion

DRC has become a victim of circumstances due to interested parties that have sought every opportunity to exploit it of its rich mineral resources. The dictatorial regime of President Mobutu Sese Seko ushered rebellion, ethnic conflicts, corruption and ultimate emergence of civil war. The occurrence of civil war cannot entirely be blamed on DRC since it became a victim of the Rwanda genocide after allowing refugees to take refuge within its borders. The rise of armed groups in the Eastern Congo that fought to secure mines triggered division in the country as every party has sought to secure a share for the rich minerals of DRC. The involvement of neighboring countries intensified DRC crisis and their intentions for illegal exploitation of DRC's mineral resources only came later upon aiding Kabila to overthrow President Mobutu. Thereafter, the two countries have been accused of sponsoring different armed groups by providing them with arms to attack and secure certain regions in the North and South Kivu that have rich mines. DRC is still struggling to strengthen its economic muscle that will help trigger the country's development in terms of infrastructural projects and provide employment. The different rebel movements continue to pose economic and political threat to the nation as the illegal activities of these groups continue to exploit the mineral resources. Thus, the government has a great task of facilitating reintegration to the society, promoting good governance and culture of peace and to end inter-ethnic conflicts like those being experienced in North Kivu. The aspect of prolonged conflicts shows that there must be a continuous source of funding and support that has sustained these battles.

Chapter Three

Political and Socio-economic Effects of Protracted Conflicts

3.1 Introduction

This chapter critically discusses political, economic and social outcomes of the protracted conflicts in DRC. The unstable state being experienced in the country has greatly affected its economic, social and political growth thereby denying its citizens a bright future filled with peace and hope that they have longed for a long time. The destructive war over the control and exploitation of the minerals in the country has denied DRC a chance to experience self-rule and full independence. The war torn county that has experienced two major wars ever experienced on the continent has left many citizens dead while others are stuck as refugees in their own country. The depth of the conflict in DRC should be visualized as a regional crisis whereby other countries find the need to advocate for peace in DRC.

Through the involvement of other stakeholders wanting a more stable DRC and a regional trading partner, the players should advocate for national security, state authority, democracy and upholding the human rights. The presence of the vast mineral resources should not be the root cause of the chaos, rather it should be turned into an economic powerhouse to generate wealth and improve livelihoods of the citizens. However, as seen in the deplorable state of the country, these minerals are the primary cause of the ongoing conflicts. Some of the extreme outcomes of these conflicts are the deaths of over 1.6 million Congolese citizens, displacements, abuse of human rights, corruption, insecurity and crime as well as heightened ethnic conflicts.

3.2 Social Effects of the Protracted Conflicts

The war in the DR Congo is counted among the wars with highest number of fatalities in Africa. Besides death and destruction, the war resulted in very large-scale

displacement of persons. Among the great humanitarian costs of the war are the disadvantages the conflicts have brought to the vulnerable groups such as the women and children. The civil wars has resulted into a staggering rise in civilian death, over-stretched humanitarian crises, wielding child soldiering, and sexual abuse of women and girls.⁸⁵ The country has experienced a series of kidnapping and torturing of local civilians and ravaging hunger and diseases across the region. The economic losses of the war cannot be limited to a single aspect of the country's prosperity such as foreign exchange since the conflicts have drained the entire economic system especially with the involvement of the neighboring nations with their selfish interests yet posing as friends to the vulnerable nation.

3.2.1 Humanitarian Crisis

The humanitarian crisis ravaging in the nation reached its peak in the second Congo war in 1998 and run until 2003. The magnitude of this war is felt since it involved five neighboring countries locking horns on the DRC soil. The effects of the war have been wide-ranging as the conflicts resulted into deaths, displacements, destruction of property, sexual crimes and mutilations. The armed groups that are involved in fighting to control resources in the Eastern Congo have often taken advantage of the unstable situation and abused the locals. The children have been taken into captive to be trained as soldiers and work at the mines, while most of the women have been abused sexually. The armed groups are responsible for child trafficking, forced child labour, women abuses and constant attacks on the locals. The antagonism where people's human rights are violated without intervention of the government is an evidence of the terrific state

⁸⁵ Fearon, J. and Latin, D., 2003. Ethnicity, insurgency, and civil war. *American Political Science Review*, 97:75–90.

of the nation that cannot protect its people from internal and external aggression.⁸⁶ The increased rate of displacement from the eastern Congo has resulted into the civilians being trapped in the war zones since they cannot move to the neighboring nations that are undergoing conflicts of their nature. For instance, moving to northern Uganda, Chad, Burundi or Rwanda is not an absolute option for these people. As a matter of fact, most residents have decided to stay and cooperate with the armed groups rather than lose their possessions and property to armed groups that the government has been unable to overcome.⁸⁷

The gender issue is clinical in the crisis especially with the ever increased cases of sexual abuses on women. Failure of the society to protect the women and young girls results into sexual abuse and violence for instance through rape leading to spread of infections such as HIV/AIDs. The prevalence of sexual violence has led to unwanted pregnancies, neglect to women and moral decay. This environment that has no respect for the rule of law that upholds and protects human rights has inhabited women and children discrimination. The fragile state of the most part of eastern Congo that live under the mercy of the armed militia have constantly exposed the women to sexual violence.⁸⁸ The armed militants are using sexual violence as a way of harassment on the residents to scare them to run away or cooperate by working for them. These forms of violence on women and girls do not only affect them physically but the sexual torture

⁸⁶ Porignon, D., Katulanya, I., Elongo, L., Ntalemwa, N., Tonglet, R., Dramaix, M. and Hennart, P., 2000. The unseen face of humanitarian crisis in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo: was nutritional relief properly targeted?. *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*, 54(1), pp.6-9

⁸⁷ Porignon, D., Katulanya, I., Elongo, L., Ntalemwa, N., Tonglet, R., Dramaix, M. and Hennart, P., 2000. The unseen face of humanitarian crisis in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo: was nutritional relief properly targeted?. *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*, 54(1), pp.6-9

⁸⁸ Wilén, N. and Ingelaere, B., 2017. War-torn Congo has been called the "rape capital of the world": here is how fighters think about sexual violence.

has adverse psychological trauma and depression⁸⁹. In some few reported incidents, the sexual violence victims have spoken of the long-term psychological and physical effects sexual abuse and rapes has had on them. In this modern era of civilization, sexual violence ought to be things of the past since there is more awareness and exposure to the world that has become a global village. However, for the case of DRC, the dream of establishing solid governing systems with respected institutions that ensure justice to all members of the society is yet to be reached in a country trapped in a mystery of its mineral resource wealth.⁹⁰

In Eastern Congo, the ongoing conflicts have led the United Nations to name the violence and abuse human rights as the ‘world’s worst humanitarian crisis’ in March 2005. The United Nations being an international organization in charge of protecting the human rights using such extreme words to describe a situation in DRC is an evidence of the detrimental state in the Eastern Congo. The surveys on mortality rate that have been conducted by the IRC have shown that since 1998 there have been over 3.9 million deaths by the time the data was released in 2004. The primary cause of the deaths is the exposure of the residents to diseases such as pneumonia, malaria, diarrhea and malnutrition which have contributed to approximately 90% of the deaths while 10% has been due to violent attacks. By 2007, the research released a report that showed over 5.4 million deaths in DRC that happened since the war broke out in 1998. Additionally, the report showed that over 1.6 million residents had fled from their

⁸⁹ Porignon, D., Katulanya, I., Elongo, L., Ntalemwa, N., Tonglet, R., Dramaix, M. and Hennart, P., 2000. The unseen face of humanitarian crisis in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo: was nutritional relief properly targeted?. *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*, 54(1), pp.6-9

⁹⁰ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2011. Democratic Republic of Congo. IDPs need further assistance in context of continued attacks and insecurity. 14 September 2011.

original homes and were internally displaced while over 310,000 and sought refuge in the neighboring countries such as Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda, and as far as Tanzania.⁹¹

3.2.2 Eruption of Ethnicity

The state of insecurity in the region has paralyzed the growth of the region and marred it with ethnicity as the residents have been forced to align themselves to groups that will protect them. The extremity of the ethnicity has been experienced in areas in North Kivu whereby groups have been engaged in wars to protect their mines. These divisions have given the groups more power and since they offer protection to the communities that work in the mines, they have taken control of their territories. Due to ethnic conflicts, most regions in the eastern part of the country for instance Kasai have allowed ethnic rifts to be the determinant of every groups dominance in the region which has intensified the conflict. The escalation of these conflicts has been evidenced by the rise of over 70 rebel groups that are armed by the revenues generated from smuggling of minerals from the region. These rebel groups are involved in protecting the communities and managing the mines and have been accused with the evil acts of forcing children to work in the mines and giving them meager pay.⁹² These rebel groups have been accused for perpetrating ethnicity among the residents of the region and making them prey of their illegal business which has consequently created tribalism and ethnicity in the region that are run by warlords. For instance, Goma city had been captured and held under hostage by M23 rebel group in 2012 but was overpowered and subsided by the country's army that was supported by UN peacekeepers in rescuing the city. However, the current violence in the eastern Congo region is based on ethnic

⁹¹ Funai, G., & Morris, C., 2008. Disaster in the DRC: *Responding to the Humanitarian Crisis in North Kivu*, 7.

⁹² Gurr, T.R., 2000. Ethnic warfare on the wane. *Foreign Affairs*, pp.52-64.

groups that have formed their armed rebel movements to protect their communities and safeguard their interests.⁹³

3.3 Economic Effects of the Protracted Conflicts

The ever-increasing demand for the minerals in the modern technology world has created a huge demand for these minerals. This economic benefit has aggravated hunger by individuals and companies to seek every way possible to secure mines that produce the precious minerals to meet the global demand. One of the reasons given on the ongoing conflicts is the need to exploit presence of large quantities of mineral resources in the country. Historically, the natural resources-based conflicts originated from its European imperial colonialists and fell into the hands of corrupt African regimes. The large quantities of resources of the country are believed to be the major cause of the conflicts that originate since the country was under King Leopold II, through Belgium colonial era and later other interested states such as USA and France⁹⁴. On the contrary, DRC is among the poorly performing economies in Africa despite being rich in valuable minerals such as gold, cobalt, uranium, copper, coltan and diamond.

The increased demand for these mineral resources that are used in modern technology such as in computer and mobile phone gadgets that require coltan 1 and tin ore have become a perpetuating factor for the conflicts in DRC. This high global demand encourages illegal smuggling of the minerals to bypass the government taxes through unscrupulous channels across borders and it has a hand in purchasing of illegal arms as the minerals are offered in exchange for the arms. These illegal business deals means

⁹³ Clark, P., 2008. Ethnicity, leadership and conflict mediation in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo: The case of the Barza Inter-Communaire. *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 2(1), pp.1-17.

⁹⁴ PACT, 2010. *Pro-Mines Study: Artisanal mining in the Democratic Republic of Congo*. Washington: Pact, Inc.

loss of wealth to the country's economy and the blood money is being used to support and fund the ongoing conflicts in the region.

There have been claims that neighboring countries such as Uganda and Sudan have had a hand in the illegal exploitation of the minerals and smuggling of the arms back to DRC.⁹⁵ Furthermore, besides resulting in the unending conflict also succeeded in discouraging private investment which has stalled any significant development since the wars broke out and the change of Mobutu dictatorial leadership. The economy of DRC has stagnated and it is under crises as there is poor productivity which is attributable to insecurity in the region.

3.3.1 Economic Destabilization

The emergence of the wars has contributed to underdevelopment in DRC which has experienced poor economic growth for years. The number of nations that are trapped in mineral-resource conflicts in the African continent has continued to experience economic decline as the conflicts hinders productivity of its people, corporations in the private sector and ineffectiveness of the government and its civil servants. The current situation of instability that has been raging in DRC continue to affect the nation that has been hoping a 2003 democratic and peaceful election would mark a new dawn of hope for the country. However, the residents feel that President Kabila has failed to live up to that dream yet he had posed as the potential savior to the fragile nation. It is important not to put all the blame on President Kabila who received the country when it had been torn apart by his predecessors and at the time no international financial institution or investor was willing to do business with DRC due to its huge debts to the

⁹⁵ Onyango-Obbo, C., 1999. What's the Beef with Uganda, Rwanda, in DRC? *Monitor* (Kampala), 11 August.

international financial institutions such as IMF.⁹⁶ Furthermore, the chains of economic exploitation in the modern era now by the country led by its own people continue as the leaders are able to stamp out evils such as corruption and violence perpetrated by the armed groups that are competing for exploitation of the available resources. The continued conflicts have plunged a very rich and wealthy country into and trail of economic turmoil and acute underdevelopment.

3.3.2 Poor Infrastructural Growth

The ravaging economic crisis facing DRC has been evidenced by the poor economic growth in industries such as education, healthcare and transport. The lack of development by the government due violence and mismanagement of the resources has rumbled the nation into poor infrastructural growth and inadequate public resources which has consequently affected the lives of the local people. The country is under crisis particularly in the Eastern Congo whereby there is poor infrastructural development as roads no road networks that connect major towns and healthcare which are reliant on the foreign help and charitable organizations. Despite its rich mineral resources, DRC has not gained the momentum and stability to provide essential social services such as healthcare and education facilities for the country. This desolate state of the country has been evidenced by the state of its refugees that are struggling to survive within the camps in the neighboring countries. The DRC situation is still dogged by complex challenges and the earlier the issues on governance, exploitation of resources, respect for human rights and sustainable peace are addressed, the better for the nation and its residents.⁹⁷ Furthermore, the protracted conflicts have led to

⁹⁶ Orogun, P.S., 2002. Crisis of government, ethnic schisms, civil war, and regional destabilization of the Democratic Republic of Congo. *World Affairs*, 165(1), pp.25-41

⁹⁷ Anthony, O., Hope, U.C. and Godwin, N., 2016. Factors limiting the gains of MDGs in the Democratic Republic of the Congo: Key Determinant and Pitfalls for Fragile States. *Africa's Public Service Delivery and Performance Review*, 4(4), pp.639-655.

deterioration of most facilities which have been destroyed during the wars and the roads have worn out especially at a period where the government lacks funds to manage and build more road networks.

The exploitation of the minerals by the regimes of President Mobutu and his successors to cement their power has caused more damage to the nation instead of projecting it to success. The unscrupulous procedures used while giving mining concessions during the two reigns of President Mobutu and Kabila left many corporate and individuals dissatisfied with the illegitimate business conduct. For instance during the Mobutu era the mining concessions were given under the centralized government system that was under authoritarian regime. The revenues that were earned from the mineral resources were used finance the patronage networks of Mobutu rather than being used to develop the nation. On the other hand, when Kabila took over power in 1997, he was filled with insecurity and he used the returns from the government-controlled mines to cement his power which collapsed faster than he had figured out in 2001. Being half-liberal and half-Marxist President Kabila had applied harsher conditions to foreign companies that were favored by Mobutu and gave support to the shadowy investors that did not have adequate resources and expertise for developing mining concessions.⁹⁸ These different strategies by both leaders have hugely impacted its exploitation of the minerals in the country and leaving low benefits from the resources with the capacity to transform the country.

3.3.3 Poverty and Unemployment

The widespread corruption and mismanagement of the resources amidst resistance created by the armed conflicts have derailed the country from improving the people's

⁹⁸ International Crisis Group (Crisis Group), 2012. *Eastern Congo: why stabilization failed, Africa Briefing No 91*. Brussels, Belgium: Crisis Group.

standards of living. Most of government revenue is lost through illegal business deals, corrupt officials and smuggling across the borders. Some remote areas are inaccessible due to poor roads and it makes it hard for locals to do business effectively. Most of the areas in DRC are not connected to the electricity grid in the country and also supply of clean water to most towns and homes is still a challenge. The ineffectiveness of the governments that have been in charge of the country can be attributed to difficulties of this nature. The issues can also be narrowed down to the ongoing conflicts that reduced the national output by propagating violence over the mineral resources in the country. According to the statistics on the ranking of the poorly performing countries conducted by the Human Development Index in 2007, DRC was ranked 168th poorest country out of 177 countries.⁹⁹

According to a research conducted by the World Health Organization on illegal exploitation of resources and its effects on the nations, DRC was rated as the leading country whose protracted conflicts have contributed to its weak economy. Also, the WHO report showed that on a large scale the commercial control is in the hands of the armed groups in the eastern Congo who illegally trade minerals and avoid taxation. The report stated that some government officials as well as the military are involved in the illegal trade and receiving bribes by the traders at the check points to allow the minerals to be smuggled. The government losses a lot of its revenue due to tax evasion by most businesses done illegally as well as through the armed groups that often impose illegal taxes on civilians and enterprises within their territories.¹⁰⁰ The need for security and protection for the locals and their enterprises by the government through the territory is

⁹⁹ McFerson, H.M., 2009. Governance and hyper-corruption in resource-rich African countries. *Third World Quarterly*, 30(8), pp.1529-1547

¹⁰⁰ World Health Organization and UNICEF, 2014. *Trends in maternal mortality: 1990 to 2013: estimates by WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, The World Bank and the United Nations Population Division: executive summary* (No. WHO/RHR/14.13). World Health Organization

still unmet and this makes the illegal groups to take advantage in such regions. The military to some extent have also been involved in the illegal business in areas they have taken control from the armed groups and have been engaged in the illegal exploitation. Therefore, the system of governance lacks transparency and there is corruption to the core which has derailed transformation of moist institutions in the country.

The civilian were exploited as the workers in the mines who were poorly paid, enslaved, abused and at times the pay was not guaranteed. These harsh conditions worsened livelihoods and poor amenities for the locals yet it is within their country where even child labour became rampant. The country is run by corrupt systems of administration all the way down which has derailed any economic progress. When the law enforcers turn into the law breakers, it is an evidence of a failed nation that is doomed for economic slump.¹⁰¹

3.4 Political Effects of Protracted Conflicts

The main structural factor of instability experienced in the country is due to poor government policies, external actors such as the 1994 Rwandan genocide and weakened state institutions. This paternalistic method of political leadership is rooted in the country's history as well as a product of a long and intricate progression of wars and brutal regime. DRC journey to liberation hit a rocky path after Mobutu took over a young country that had just attained independence in 5 years through a military coup. Another aspect that has played a role in the protracted conflict in DRC is bad governance coupled with corruption in the governing institutions such as the security and the Judiciary. The rebel groups explore this weakness to offer alternative

¹⁰¹ Maphosa, S. B. 2012. Natural Resources and Conflict: Unlocking the economic dimension of peace-building in Africa.

government to the people thus fueling the conflict through fighting government troops. Consequently, as an independent state, DRC underwent reigns of dictatorial leadership that subjected it to a vast enterprise of outrageous economic exploitation despite being granted independence like other African nations in the post-colonial era.¹⁰²

3.4.1 Political Instability

The government of Congo government lacked the capacity to control entry of this rebel group that had been flushed out of Rwanda and it went ahead to establish itself as a great threat in Eastern Congo. Since 1998 the DRC has been fighting the rebel groups in attempt to secure its territories and restore peace for its population.¹⁰³ However, the country achieved some milestone in flushing out the major rebel groups from Rwanda and Uganda living in its Eastern region in 2003 through the military help of Zimbabwe, Namibia and Angola.¹⁰⁴ The reported cases of death reached 5 million from the 6 years of waging war against rebels and peace treaties were signed between the transitional government and other parties such as Rwanda and Uganda.

The creation of the first transitional government in 2003 after years of dictatorship did not provide a quick solution to the citizens of Congo. The country continued to struggle even after a democratically elected government in office under President Joseph Kabila due to widespread corruption, weak government institutions and the continued violence that was being conducted by the rebel groups. Democratic Republic of Congo has been in constant wars since 1960s and instability in the country has had extreme effects on the residents. The reports by the UN Refugee Agency have shown that the continued

¹⁰² Tull, D.M., 2003. A reconfiguration of political order? The state of the state in North Kivu (DR Congo). *African Affairs*, 102(408), pp.429-446

¹⁰³ Rackley E. 2006. Democratic Republic of Congo: undoing government by predation. *Disasters*, 30 (4): 417–432.

¹⁰⁴ Jackson, S., 2003. *Fortunes of War: The Coltan Trade in the Kivus. Power, Livelihoods and Conflict: Case Studies in Political Economy Analysis for Humanitarian Action*. London: Humanitarian Policy Group.

inter-communal conflicts that have spread in the region have led to displacement of 13 million¹⁰⁵. These conflicts are believed to be sparked by groups in competition for mineral resources in DRC.

The post-transition process under a democratically-elected government has been unable to establish trust with the rebel movements that operate in most parts of Eastern Congo. The incapacity of the government to establish control in the Eastern Congo still gives room for the rebel movements to perpetrate crimes among the civilians and exploit the country's minerals illegally. During the period of transition, the government has failed to engage the local communities in pacification and development of the regions in North Kivu and South Kivu. For instance, the CNDP have been in control of North Kivu as well as some sections of South Kivu and the rebel group is believed to operate under the aid of Rwandan administration in expropriating the minerals from the mineral rich areas.¹⁰⁶ The country has to endure the wars over conflict over its minerals whereby one dictates control over areas it has widespread support and uses it as leverage for power in the government in a case where this tussle has been ongoing in a decade. Reportedly, the ongoing conflicts have threatened to collapse the country's economy and the annual per capita of DRC went down to \$120 in 2005 compared to \$ 380 in 1985.¹⁰⁷

The leadership of Laurent Kabila has been indifferent from his predecessor since their policies have been ineffective in attaining political stability. President Kabila introduced new systems that did not bear much fruit the devastated nation that was looking forward to a better leadership. For instance, upon his assumption to power after

¹⁰⁵ World Health Organization and UNICEF, 2014. *Trends in maternal mortality: 1990 to 2013: estimates by WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, The World Bank and the United Nations Population Division: executive summary* (No. WHO/RHR/14.13). World Health Organization

¹⁰⁶ Ibid

¹⁰⁷ Country Economy, 2013. *Democratic Republic of the Congo –Population*. Retrieved from: <http://countryeconomy.com>

overthrowing Mobutu in 1998, he banned political parties, a move for introducing one-party rule and to eliminate opposition. Furthermore, Kabila went on to dissolve parliament and suppressed all local bodies forgetting that he had assumed power not through a valid election but using a backdoor through a coup. Also during his short-term in power between 1998 and 2001 there was never a state budget as a plan on how the government intended to utilize its public resources. President Kabila continued the dictatorial rule through a system where presidential decree was the basis for spelling out laws. The international financial institutions ended their collaboration with him as they pursued justice for the massacre of Hutus during the conflict by pressuring him to give a statement and allow for investigations.

President Kabila lacked effective monetary policies that would enhance productivity of the country and he entrusted high positions with close family members and friends which showed nepotism and favoritism as his predecessor Mobutu. The emergence of the second Congo war between 1998 and 2003 was mainly due to Kabila's indecisiveness, insecurities and trust on allies who posed as friends but had selfish interests. The war went on to draw other African states into the conflict, Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia sent their forces in aid of Kabila to help in driving Ugandan and Rwandan troops out of DRC.¹⁰⁸ The conflict gave power to the militia groups that were funded and supported by DRC and on the other end by Rwanda and Uganda in attempt to defend their communities and secure mining locations. However, the urgent need to address the crisis in the country led to signing of cease-fire pact in 1999 and it allowed

¹⁰⁸ Autesserre, S., 2006. Local violence, national peace? Postwar "settlement" in the eastern DR Congo (2003–2006). *African Studies Review*, 49(3), pp.1-29.

the UN peacekeepers to be deployed in the country in 2000 in spite of, the violent conflict continuing to date.¹⁰⁹

3.4.2 Poor Governance and Dictatorship

During the reign of President Mobutu that began in 1965 until 1997, he enjoyed success due to the support that he gained from his Western allies. The United States had an interest in DRC due to its wealth of natural resources and it provided support to President Mobutu to avoid him turning to the communist, the Soviet Union. The support given to President Mobutu enabled him to retain his power and suppress opposition and this turned him into a dictator. For example, during the cold war his dictatorship was seen as an asset to the US and could be manipulated and received favor of reinforcing his power. However, this support was short-lived and he became exposed once the cold war was over and no state, USA or any Western nation, had any interests with DRC. These countries that provided bedrock for Mobutu withdrew their assistance and their relationship only remained minimal diplomatic relations. Since DRC is a huge country, having control over such a country that is as big as Europe became a demanding task for Mobutu as he started losing support slowly beginning from eastern Congo.

President Mobutu lacked the charisma of a national leader that involves fulfilling the basic functions of the country and he treated DRC as his personal property. Mobutu used the government structures as a channel for patronage and a way to enrich himself and his family. The government officials were involved in multiple scandals whereby large amounts of money was stolen mainly through custom revenues and minerals. The corrupt systems under the regime of President Mobutu stole the country's prosperity and the mineral resources were used to enrich a few people in the government. The

¹⁰⁹ Ballentine, K. and Nitzschke, H., 2005. The political economy of civil war and conflict transformation. *Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management, Berlin*

widespread corruption extended to the private sector whereby the private sector became part of the quagmire as every deal relied on bribery. The corruption in the country over the years has derailed economic progress as the money allocated for development is misappropriated by a few individuals. During the last ten years of President Mobutu's reign, most of the civil servants had gone for months without their wages and salaries as the government lacked funds to pay them. This group of civil servants included the teachers, doctors, judges, soldiers, police officers and custom officials despite having to be paid very low salaries.¹¹⁰ Most of these officials had to cope with their situation for survival and some turned to deliver services on basis of bribes.

Since independence DRC has been characterized by dictatorship and violation of basic human rights by successive regimes from Mobutu era all the way to Kabila regime. Election rigging and weak judicial institutions have led to never ending conflict. DRC has large deposits of mineral wealth such as copper, coltan, cobalt, gold and diamond and further explorations have shown that the country has unexploited reserves of natural gas and oil. Despite this promising future, the hopes are crumbled each day by the weak governance and unending conflicts as the government has been unable to tackle the armed groups in the country. The two wars have caused enormous negative effects on the economic, political and social sectors of the country.¹¹¹ Being entangled in these conflicts means the government has been spending most of its revenue in the military to help in countering the combatants and to reinstate the mines that are sources of revenue for these armed groups.

¹¹⁰ International Crisis Group (Crisis Group), 2012. *Eastern Congo: why stabilization failed, Africa Briefing No 91*. Brussels, Belgium: Crisis Group.

¹¹¹ Porignon, D., Katulanya, I., Elongo, L., Ntalemwa, N., Tonglet, R., Dramaix, M. and Hennart, P., 2000. The unseen face of humanitarian crisis in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo: was nutritional relief properly targeted?. *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*, 54(1), pp.6-9

The unregulated mining that is conducted by the armed groups have continued to rob DRC of its minerals through illegal exploitation and rooting through influence of interested states that fund the groups. These illegal activities have been taking advantage of the weak governance systems and lack of influence by the central government in the eastern Congo. The initiatives developed by the government to fight the armed groups have failed and it has tried to integrate the warring groups into the government had such efforts have failed to bear fruits. Furthermore, the problems have been aggravated by the insufficient infrastructural networks such as roads which make most areas inaccessible thus hindering effective administration. In a country that has been lacking effective administration of the natural resources; the rise and mushrooming of small groups with hideous intentions is bound to challenge the authority of state specifically in Eastern Congo. The Congolese have constantly complained of the state's neglect of the eastern region yet it has been exploiting resources from the areas without any realistic efforts of socio-economic development in the region.¹¹² Therefore, such challenges in governance have consequently created gaps through the establishment of illegal armed groups, both local and foreign, who now thrive on these bountiful reserves.

3.4.3 Corruption

The presence of the large deposits of minerals is an evidence that there is hope for DRC's struggles but still it may mean continued challenges if the governance is not changed for the better. For the mineral resources to be turned into a source of revenue that will be used for socio-economic development the regime of the day has to tackle corruption and clean the entire system. The corruption has wrecked the state since most

¹¹² Ballentine, K. and Nitzschke, H., 2005. The political economy of civil war and conflict transformation. *Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management, Berlin.*

institutions offer services to the public through bribes while in the private sector and in the issuing of government tenders and procurements there is greasing of hands and kickbacks. The corruption has led to the embezzlement of the public funds whereby the funds allocated to the development projects are misused for personal gain. The genesis of this corruption syndrome dates back to the government of Mobutu that was ineffective in enhancing integrity, transparency and justice which enabled this social evil to spread its roots through all systems of public service.¹¹³

During the 1960s under Mobutu's regime, the technical advisers from the international community failed to highlight the importance of integrity in country's progress. The ignorance of the president and his greed for power made him believe he was heading the country to the right direction. The failure of the western allies to criticize his dictatorial leadership set the country for country failure and only shows they were up for their selfish interests in the country. The extent to which the Western nations and the colonialists influence the struggling African states is questionable, as their support emerge when the things get worse yet they are in a pole position to show support for the good governance. DRC has become a victim of dictatorial leadership since independence and economic mismanagement which has derailed growth and left a vacuum that the armed groups have rushed to exploit.¹¹⁴ The political repression and administration that lacks capacity to manage the country's resources leaves the nation vulnerable to the internal and external forces that seek to take advantage of such a situation. The extremity of corruption has denied the residents an opportunity to receive public services without being exploited is an indicator of suppression to the local

¹¹³ Matti, S.A., 2010. The Democratic Republic of the Congo? Corruption, patronage, and competitive authoritarianism in the DRC. *Africa Today*, 56(4), pp.42-61.

¹¹⁴ Gambino, T., 2011. Democratic Republic of the Congo: Background Case Study.

residents. The selfish interests of all regimes in the country have been enriching themselves, for patronage and consolidating their power.

3.4.5 Collapse of State Institutions

DRC has been a victim of exploitation by the interested western countries and America which went on to lame the country as they reinstated Mobutu into power as their puppet. The international situation such as the cold war placed the country in a complicated situation where it was played by two super-powers. President Mobutu was blinded by the support he received from the USA through their financing with their intention of securing the minerals of Congo over the Soviet Union. The Cold War patronage exposed the incapacity of President Mobutu leadership to carrying out a patrimonial form of nation that had undergone prior extreme exploitation by its colonial masters and the funding he received were used in suppressing any opposition and to consolidate its power.¹¹⁵ The withdrawal of support by the US and European powers at the end of the cold war saw the control and power of Mobutu over DRC start crumbling.¹¹⁶ Being a victim of the cold war contest between capitalism (US) and communism (Soviet Union) ideologies, it was their desire to safeguard their interests at the expense of DRC that has rich minerals. It is hard to doubt that most Western allies, USA and the East are primarily interested in DRC for its mineral resources rather than for a mutual trade ties.

¹¹⁵ Milliken, J. and Krause, K., 2002. State failure, state collapse, and state reconstruction: concepts, lessons and strategies. *Development and change*, 33(5), pp.753-774.

¹¹⁶ Matti, S.A., 2010. The Democratic Republic of the Congo? Corruption, patronage, and competitive authoritarianism in the DRC. *Africa Today*, 56(4), pp.42-61

3.5 Conclusion

The consequences are poor socio-economic indicators, corruption, poor governance, escalating national crises- high civilian death rate, displacement and humanitarian crisis. The governance crisis that hit the DRC right after independence which almost led to the collapse of the nation-state was real. As a typical developing state caught in the unmerciful ebb of Cold War, the DRC faced similar challenges that almost all countries in Africa faced. The challenge, however, was the management and mismanagement of interests in the country. The root of this problem is traced from pre-colonial times, aggravated by Belgian colonial rule and finally consummated by selfish, power-hungry and greedy Congolese leaders. The ongoing conflicts have at great extent been fueled by the poor administrative regimes of self-centered leaders, the interference by the neighboring states such as Rwanda and Uganda and poor governance that has entertained corruption. DRC has become a victim of different international situations such as the Rwanda genocide and the Cold War. The latter was in support of dictatorial leadership of President Mobutu by the West that offered him support to cement his power. All the factors interplay on the abundance of mineral resources of the country that each party wants to have a share. The civil strife and illegal exploitation by the armed groups most of which are supported by the neighboring states has made it hard for the government to crack down the armed groups suppressing the civilians in Eastern Congo. The foundations of the post-independent DRC were based on abusive and authoritarian regime of Mobutu which entertained corruption and weak government institutions which has been difficult to address by the other governments. The involvement of Rwanda and Uganda in overthrowing President Mobutu marked the commencement of first and second wars in Congo that have drained and destabilized the country. The regime of President Laurent Kabila was not much different to that of

Mobutu as it was weak and corrupt and his insecurities and greed for power made him to ignite the second war than run through from 1998 to 2003. In the eastern Congo, rebel movements continue with their illegal activities of exploiting the minerals and suppressing the civilians.

Chapter Four

Measures of Intervention to the Protracted Conflicts

4.1 Introduction

The preceding chapters have been focusing on the causes of conflict, conflict management and social economic impact on the DRC. This chapter looks critically at poor governance as the primary cause of prolonged conflict and how it enhances other causes of conflict in DRC. Poor governance include weak state institutions such as the uniform force, corruption in government, unfair distribution of vast resources, authoritarian rule and weak legal and justice system in the country. It is through democracy and good governance that the country can be able to manage its security apparatus, resources and social welfare of its citizen's. Since independence DRC has been a victim of dictatorial leadership that has assumed power through military coups until 2006 when they democratically elected President Joseph Kabila. The new regime has earmarked the journey towards recovery from political oppression and establishment of stability in the country although there is a long way to go for the mineral-rich African state.

4.2 Objectives of the Conflict Resolution

One of the priority objectives was to establish a transparent legal system that will enforce the rule of the law in the country ravaging with violence, abuse of human rights and offer justice amidst the corrupt institutions. The need to resolve the protracted conflicts in the country and to offer protection to the vulnerable groups that lived by the mercies of the rebel groups that often abused them. However, the challenge of attaining this goal was in bringing the warring parties together to create a pact to halt violence and allow for them to put down their arms. Fighting impunity in DRC has been a challenge in a state whereby since independence the government has been overthrown

through coup until it made some remarkable progress through democratic elections held in 2006. The reconstruction of DRC's economy has been a challenge for a country still struggling to suppress the rebel movements as well as the burden of huge debts from the international financial institutions. However, there is hope with the large deposits of mineral resources in the country to economic recovery once an effective government is reinstated.

The priority for the country should be to quell violence that is resulting into humanitarian crisis, then manage the rebel groups and halt illegal exploitation of resources. These issues sound easy to implement but there is complexity in attaining them given that the country has been under conflicts since its independence. The violence epitomized with the Rwanda genocide as the Hutu insurgents fled to eastern Congo seeking refuge but the Interahamwe started using the camps as centers to plan and stage attacks on the civilians. The involvement of Rwanda and Uganda in effort to suppress the Hutu insurgents escalated the situation that provided an opportunity for the two fronts to aid, Laurent Kabila, who for a long time opposed Mobutu and managed to overthrow him. The complexity of the current struggles of DRC can be attributed to its historical injustices that may take time to resolve with an effective government in place.

4.3 Approaches for Conflict Resolution

Several conflict management initiatives have been put in place to try and bring about sustainable peace in DRC both local and international approaches under the African Union and United Nations mandate. The three major approaches that have been deployed in effort to halt conflicts and promote sustainability are peace agreements, joint military operations, reconciliation negotiations and political pacts. The international community has aided through brokering negotiations, peace agreements

and reconciliation initiatives that will enable the warring sides to advocate for peaceful modes of resolving conflicts. The peaceful negotiations have sought to identify the root causes of the conflicts, assess the consequences and propose the resolutions for these conflicts.¹¹⁷ The involvement of the countries from the Great Lakes region in addressing the DRC crisis of the protracted conflicts has led to partial resolution through the measures drawn to help halt the violence.

4.3.1 Involvement of International Community

The international community includes the external stakeholders that the country is a party to and in support of which act responsibly to aid it towards attaining its goals. The international community through organizations such as AU or UN is tasked with ensuring the human rights are upheld. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is an organ of the international community that is deeply involved in disseminating healthcare services to the civilians in the event of a crisis. ICRC has actively been involved in providing care at the refugee camps to the victims of the wars that erupted in 1996. ICRC has been radical in offering health care services and food to the internally displaced persons in the camps and the warring eastern part of Congo where most facilities closed down.¹¹⁸ According to ICRC the change of the situation on humanitarian crisis is dependent on the government ability to restore peace and ensure security for its citizens since the numbers of refugees keep escalating. The primary challenge of the organization is to offer adequate care to the large number of refugees and most of the victims of the violence have succumbed to diseases, poor health care,

¹¹⁷ Kevin Shillington, *Encyclopedia of African History* (New York: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2004); Guy Arnold, *Historical Dictionary of Civil Wars in Africa* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1989)

¹¹⁸ Ngatu, N.R., Nojima, S., Boleme-Izankoy, J., Malonga-Kaj, F., Wumba, D.M.R., Kanbara, S., Ikeda, M. and Nakano, A., 2016. Disasters and Related Health Issues in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Epidemiologic Profile and Perspectives for Efficient Health Care Delivery. *Current Politics and Economics of Africa*, 9(2), p.227.

injuries and malnutrition. The extremity of the situation is on the verge of being unveiled with shortage of water, limited aid and increase in number of needy persons.¹¹⁹ The leaders of Southern African Development Community (SADC) tried to intervene to evade the conflicts in 1998 by calling a summit however countries such as Zimbabwe did not heed to that and sent military to DRC to help fight Rwandan and Ugandan forces.¹²⁰ The European Union have played a role in the advocacy for peace by sending diplomats to help strategize on ways DRC can be helped into resolving its issues through supporting the activities of UN and providing donations to aid the humanitarian crisis as well as facilitate economic recovery. The mandate of the UN's peacekeeping mission, MONUSCO, was renewed until March 2017 to protect the local citizens and to provide a secure environment conducive to elections. The mission is providing technical and logistical support in revising the voter registry and supporting African and international efforts. The international community has constantly projected different ways that can be adopted to end the violence that came from the ravaging and innumerable abuses being perpetrated by groups such as the FDLR on the civilians.¹²¹ The creation of MONUSCO has helped the Congolese government improve the steps towards reconciliation, increase security and recapture some of the regions under armed groups.

4.3.2 Government Measures

The main contributions of the government to provide a long-term solution to the protracted conflicts have been advocating for peaceful negotiations and deployment of

¹¹⁹ Beardsley, K. and Schmidt, H., 2012. Following the flag or following the charter? Examining the determinants of UN involvement in international crises, 1945–2002. *International Studies Quarterly*, 56(1), pp.33-49

¹²⁰ Prunier, G., 2008. *Africa's world war: Congo, the Rwandan genocide, and the making of a continental catastrophe*. Oxford University Press.

¹²¹ De Koning, R., 2011. Conflict minerals in the Democratic Republic of the Congo: Aligning trade and security interventions. Stockholm International Peace Research Institute policy paper 27.

military operations. The use of military operations through the Congolese army and the help of UN troops has been the proactive approach used by the government in attempt to counter the conflicts in DRC. However, this approach has been greatly ineffective especially with the growth of the armed rebel movements in the eastern Congo. The 2007 negotiations that were held in Nairobi, Kenya, the parties have opted to try the deployment of the military approach in attempt to quell the violent attacks by the rebel movements. However, the outcomes of the military approach have been mixed as the outcomes have not been very rewarding.

The armed movements being targeted during the military operations being conducted by the government of DRC with the help of UN peace keepers forced them to change their tactics. The armed groups started attacking the civilians who they used to co-exist with and accuse them of working with the state authorities.¹²² These attacks have heightened insecurity and worsened the situation as the locals feel that the government has been engaging in the fight that is not willing to be to the end. By sparking the fights means that the residents remain as the victims of these attacks and yet they have previously lived well without being harmed by the militants. The military operations against rebel movements may be essential, but UN has constantly warned that the confrontation may escalate the situation and advised on the need to use mediation approach and other initiatives that will advocate for peaceful agreements.

4.4 Reconciliation Initiatives

4.4.1 Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement

The magnitude of the conflicts in DRC especially after the two wars forced the UN Security Council and the Western states to take a stance on the need for peace. The two

¹²² Högladh, S., 2011. Peace Agreements 1975-2011-Updating the UCDP Peace Agreement Dataset. *States in armed conflict*, 55, pp.85-105.

Congo wars had destabilized the country and there was an urgent need to resolve the conflicts that began with the top leadership of the country. However, there is a common belief that the efforts by the Western countries to help alleviate the wars could have prevented the wars. The Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement was initiated in the summer of 1999 and it was supported by the Western countries as well as the African states. The agreement sought to end the ongoing conflicts that had been continuing since the 1997 and the 1998 wars broke out and have changed the DRC situation. The Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement took place in Lusaka Zambia. One of the outcomes of the agreement was the sending of UN peacekeepers to a mission in DRC which was dispatched in November of 1999. The peacekeepers worked under a mission known as MONUC that was mandated to monitor the implementation of the agreements laid out in the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. This peace accord that was signed in Lusaka helped to cement the division of the country to three main parts whereby one region was under the national government while the other two parts were under two senior rebel groups, CNDP and FDLR.¹²³

4.4.2 ICGLR

The International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) began in 2000 and it brought 18 countries at a negotiation table to help DRC resolve its conflicts. ICGLR turned out to be the longest pact that took over 6 years of negotiations as the parties convened to forge a way forward for establishing stability in DRC. With the aid of UN and AU delegates the peaceful negotiations enhanced the initiatives for development, security and stability. In December 2006 the PACT was agreed and had brought together the heads of states from the Great Lakes region; Zambia, Rwanda, Sudan,

¹²³ Solomon, H. and Swart, G., 2004. Conflict in the DRC: A critical Assessment of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement.

Central African Republic, Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Angola, Burundi, Republic of Congo and DRC.¹²⁴ The pact was ratified in June 2008 and it is when it started being implemented after ICGLR Secretariat had been set up. The agreement laid ground for reconstruction and development, good governance, mutual defense and rural non-aggression. The ICGLR has contributed to the economic progress of DRC as it works towards attaining full stability under the leadership of President Joseph Kabila. Also, the ICGLR negotiations have helped in reducing the use of aggressive approaches by the government which intensified the conflicts in the remote areas in the Eastern Congo. The ICGLR pact led to the initiation of Regional Initiative on Natural Resources, a program that helped to formalize, certify and also track the trade of the mineral resources. The program helped to stop trafficking of the illegally mined minerals across the borders by the rebel groups. Furthermore, the program would help curtail the smuggling of arms into the hands of the rebel groups that were given in exchange for the minerals. The initiative has made some progress in enabling the government to monitor the sale of the country's variable resources. The primary limitation of ICGLR has been inability to fully deal with the issues of violations of human rights. Also, the economic interests and immediate security resolutions laid out in ICGLR pact have not been implemented fully.¹²⁵

4.4.3 Goma and Nairobi Agreements

In 2007, a democratically elected government under President Joseph Kabila took office and its primary objective was to get rid of the CNDP rebel group in the eastern

¹²⁴ Tull, D.M., 2009. Peacekeeping in the Democratic Republic of Congo: waging peace and fighting war. *International Peacekeeping*, 16(2), pp.215-230

¹²⁵ International Crisis Group. 2012. *Eastern Congo: why stabilization failed*. Available from: <[http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/africa/central-africa/dr-congo/b091-eastern-congo-why-stabilisation-failed](http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/africa/central-africa/dr-congo/b091-eastern-congo-why-stabilisation-failed)> [Accessed 14 September 2018].

Congo. However, the efforts of the military to fight and eliminate the CNDP militia group did not bring forth results in the North Kivu and South Kivu. It appeared CNDP was receiving help from Rwanda to help keep check on the FDLR that was still seen as a threat by the Rwandese government. Thus, the government of DRC was forced to use alternative means to handle the situation rather than the forceful military confrontation. Rwanda and DRC were invited into negotiations that took place in Kenya in late 2007 during which the Nairobi agreement was signed. The Nairobi Agreement preceded the Goma Agreement that was signed later in early 2008.

The Goma Agreement was initiated by the Congolese government to bring the rebel groups into a table for negotiations in a bid to end the rampaging conflicts in the eastern region of DRC.¹²⁶ The rebel movements such as CNDP and FDLR got into the talks and signed a pact to halt the fighting within their territories. However, these negotiations were ignored even before the ink dried as the armed groups went on to exploit minerals and use violence to secure their territories. The armed groups sent a clear message that they were unwilling to cooperate and work with the government in its endeavor to end conflicts in the eastern Congo. The terms of the agreement were to integrate the regular Congolese into the army, demobilization and disarmament to help end conflicts in the region.¹²⁷ It was perceived that the government was in a mission to recover the mines in the eastern Congo and that the security forces that had been deployed by Kabila's administration were an impending threat to the militia. The locals tolerated the armed groups such as Mai Mai which sought to protect the locals from invasion by other rebel groups and provided them with jobs at the mines.¹²⁸ During the

¹²⁶ Högladh, S., 2011. Peace Agreements 1975-2011-Updating the UCDP Peace Agreement Dataset. *States in armed conflict*, 55, pp.85-105.

¹²⁷ Autesserre, S., 2006. Local violence, national peace? Postwar "settlement" in the eastern DR Congo (2003–2006). *African Studies Review*, 49(3), pp.1-29

¹²⁸ Ibid

month of September in 2008, fresh attacks emerged in the North Kivu and it became evident that the Nairobi and Goma agreements made no sense.¹²⁹

4.4.4 Tripartite Plus Commission

In December 4th, 2007, the United States advocated for a peaceful negotiation that came to be known as the Tripartite Plus Commission in Addis Ababa. This agreement was determined to help resolve the problem of FDLR that caused conflicts in eastern DRC and was seen as a potential threat to Rwanda as it comprised of the Hutu militants who had been involved in genocide. The Tripartite Plus Commission brought into negotiations Rwanda and DRC on the measures to address the FDLR problem since it was a problem to both countries. The talks called for full implementation of the Nairobi communiqué that had been signed during the Nairobi agreements. The DRC government had stated its plans of holding public sensitization campaigns through the military operations that would help end the conflicts in eastern Congo. The UN Security Council had resolved to establish sanctions on the Ex-FAR/Interahamwe to curtail their activities in the region. The four delegations committed to strengthening their borders with the aim of preventing the illegal cross-border movements that enabled the groups to recruit, seek aid and supplies from the two countries.¹³⁰

4.4.5 Pretoria Peace Agreement

In 2002, another peace agreement was signed between Rwanda and DRC in Pretoria, South Africa. The Pretoria Peace Agreement was aimed at convincing Rwanda to remove its troops from DRC as a solution to the second Congo war. This Pretoria Peace Agreement required that in three months Rwanda to have its troops withdrawn from the

¹²⁹ Boshoff, H. and Hoebeke, H., 2008. Peace in the Kivu's? An Analysis of the Nairobi and Goma Agreements.

¹³⁰ Sural, A.N., 2007. A pragmatic analysis of social dialogue in Turkey. *Middle Eastern Studies*, 43(1), pp.143-152.

Eastern Congo. The reason why Rwanda had dispatched over 20,000 soldiers in DRC was to prevent any future attack by the Hutu militia, Ex-FAR fighters, in revenge after being overthrown from power. The Interahamwe had at one time received support and help from President Kabila who armed them so that they could fight Rwanda and Uganda after he wanted them out of the country in 1998. The Pretoria accord was signed by Rwanda after DRC agreed to disarm the Hutu militia. In the peaceful negotiations brokered in South Africa, President Kagame of Rwanda lamented the danger the former soldiers posed given that they instigated the 1994 genocide.¹³¹ The ex-FAR soldiers posed threat to the Tutsis in Rwanda and those living in DRC and that the focus of the government was not to forcefully have the Hutu militia repatriated to their home country in Rwanda.¹³²

4.5 Conclusion

In conclusion the different approaches adopted to help in controlling violence in DRC have helped to attain some progress in changing the state of the country. The ongoing conflicts have hindered the efforts to attain stability as most part of Eastern Congo is controlled by rebel movements. For the sake of economic interests and security of the country, there have been several mediations that sought to stabilize the nation. The efforts to end the fights have forced the newly elected government of President Joseph Kabila to engage the warring sides into attaining a common ground that will help stop the fights. Some of the agreements that have contributed to the transition in the country although not to full stability are Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, Goma Agreement, Nairobi Agreement, Tripartite Plus

¹³¹ DeRouen Jr, K., Ferguson, M.J., Norton, S., Park, Y.H., Lea, J. and Streat-Bartlett, A., 2010. Civil war peace agreement implementation and state capacity. *Journal of Peace Research*, 47(3), pp.333-346

¹³² Tull, D.M., 2009. Peacekeeping in the Democratic Republic of Congo: waging peace and fighting war. *International Peacekeeping*, 16(2), pp.215-230

Commission and Pretoria Peace Agreement. By involving the rebel movements in negotiations, President Kabila hoped that it will help end the conflicts that are mostly experienced in the Eastern Congo. However, not much progress has been attained with the dominant rebel movements such as FDLR and CNDP that continue to cause conflicts in the region where they illegally exploit mineral resources. By giving the communities in the Eastern Congo a chance to participate in decision making in the government may provide a better leverage to attaining peace in the region. However, continued exploitation of resources has continued to deny the government the revenues emanating from mineral resources. Despite the different peace agreements helping to end the civil wars in DRC, failure to fully implement the plans has still left the Eastern Congo under conflicts. The inability to completely end the conflicts is attributable to disagreements between the stakeholders on the suitable policies that will restore the bleeding state that has been a victim of historical injustices.

Chapter Five

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Summary

The multi-dimensional nature of the DRC's protracted conflicts is associated with different factors some of which the country is in control of and others it could not help. The occurrence of the 1994 genocide changed the narrative of DRC by plunging it into turmoil despite its ongoing political instability under dictatorship of President Mobutu. The 1994 Genocide led to over 2 million Hutus fleeing to Eastern Congo in seek of asylum after Rwandese Patriotic Army took over power. They Hutus were escaping revenge from the Tutsis most of who they had massacred during the genocide. The ex-FAR soldiers also escaped with arms as refugees and crossed over to DRC, they started forming a resistance and attacking the civilians. The Rwandese government was afraid that these insurgents would organize themselves and fight back. So they formed a front alongside Ugandan troops to pursue the Hutu ex-FAR fighters and bring them to justice in Rwanda. However, the plan changed when they decided to join hands with Kabila who was a long-term opponent of President Mobutu. Ugandan and Rwandan troops worked alongside ADFL of Congo that was led by Laurent Kabila to oust President Mobutu in 1997. The totalitarian leadership of President Mobutu purged the nation into economic crisis due to mismanagement, corruption and poor governance that left the country in large debts, inflation and overall economic deterioration by the time he was expelled from power.

DRC has been a victim of poor governance that has rooted its resources as the inability to have a democratic and legitimate government has given room for dictators to preside over the second largest country in Africa. The use of military to overthrow a sitting president by the two dictators within four decades of their leadership has hindered the

nation from attaining prosperity. The greed for power and desire to cement his authority forced President Mobutu to commit many atrocities against his opponents. The current state of instability has its origins from historical injustices of poor leadership that allowed for corruption in the core public institutions, rooting and illegal exploitation of minerals. The illegitimate government created a complexity of situations that have heightened the state that later went through two major wars, one in 1996 that ousted President Mobutu and another in 1998 that pushed Rwandan and Ugandan troops out of the country. These circumstances shows that the wars in DRC have been centered on the power which means control of the rich mineral resources that is influential in the country.

The challenge of governance crisis in the DRC is undoubtedly a complicated one. Unlike natural resource wars experienced in West Africa's Liberia and Sierra Leone which relatively had very few national and individual interests at stake, the protracted conflict in the DRC proved to be one with multiple interests. Under the guise of protecting human rights and fighting of terror, the United States and France cunningly promoted their national interests in the scramble for the Congolese natural resources through their multi-national organizations. The lack of development policies to transform the country and inability to end the internal conflicts has continually led to economic crisis in a war-torn nation despite of its unexploited potential of mineral resources.

The national government should find ways to integrate the rebel groups into its systems and have their ideologies and concerns addressed. Effective monitoring of the borders can help in preventing trafficking of illegally sourced minerals and smuggling of arms. The government should tighten security by increasing military presence in the Eastern Congo to secure the vulnerable parts that are targeted by the rebel movements. The

government has the great task of cleansing its institutions to eliminate corruption. The current conflicts can be halted through negotiations and advocating for democracy and upholding human rights. The government has the responsibility of sensitizing the public of its initiatives of reinforcing peace, dealing with corruption and show accountability in its management of public resources. The significance of the county government in helping restore peace cannot be ignored because it is the body that is lawfully mandated under the constitution to enhance development within the region. The national government has had a greater responsibility in restoring peace through its constant efforts to beef up security and crack down the armed groups that illegally exploit the resources.

5.2 Conclusions

The protracted conflict in DRC is an evidence of a nation being haunted by its fortunes given that the country has adequate resources that can pave way for development yet it has been undergoing conflicts that revolve around control of the same mineral resources. The leaders ascending to power have failed to show integrity and desire to liberate the country from its internal and external struggles most of which are attributable to the country's abundant mineral resources. The mineral resources of DRC are beneficial to a few individuals who have accumulated wealth in unscrupulous means and to some through supporting rebel groups and foreign companies or allowing them to illegally exploit the mineral resources. Conflicts, underdevelopment and instability in the DRC could largely be linked to the protracted conflicts that the country has been undergoing in the African state. Most of the studies conducted on the conflicts in DRC have attributed them to poor governance, mismanagement of resources and political instability. The abundance of natural resource alongside weakened institutions due to poor governance has been identified generally as the key elements.

The weak political systems have had serious implications for both economic growth and sustainable and social development of the country. The instability of the political system has been experienced under DRC's first government since independence that was led by President Mobutu Sese Seko to the current regime of President Joseph Kabila. The government of President Mobutu was characterized by corruption, brutality, foreign armies, regional ethnic militias as well as abundance of minerals.

The presence of abundant mineral resources in DRC has captivated competition for the resources by individuals, companies and the neighboring countries that illegally want a share of the Congo's untapped wealth. Each party has been influenced by selfish interests and greed to have a share of the DRC's mineral resources. Amidst these selfish interests of different groups, the country plunged into a division which led to mushrooming of armed groups seeking to exploit and benefit from mines particularly from the Eastern Congo. For instance, there were reported cases of countries such as Rwanda exporting diamonds yet the country has no diamond mineral reserves. Such indicators have shown how the neighboring countries have taken advantage of the wars by smuggling of minerals that have been exploited illegally.

The protracted conflicts have consistently undermined a clear and balanced assessment of the facts. The involvement of outsiders in the DRC crisis and their influence on the armed groups that control most mining areas in the Eastern Congo has been put in question as the current government is struggling to stabilize the situation. The armed groups such as M23 and FDLR are involved in rooting of mineral resources in the region and there is a need to halt the rebel movements which have led to mass atrocities. The efforts of the government to engage them through mediation talks have failed to bear fruits as the groups continue to abuse human rights by perpetrating coordinated attacks on the civilians.

5.3 Recommendations

Change in DRC is deeply rooted in the way the government chooses to conduct its business by initiating policies that will end the fights between the rebel groups and the Congolese army. The Congolese army is working alongside UN intervention brigade to help liberate the region and bring to an end the ongoing crisis. If the illegal mining in the state has to be brought to an end, the government has to halt the illegal activities of the rebel movements. The peace process obligations have not been met fully after there were government negotiations with the rebel groups some of which that have been supported by the neighboring states. For stability to be attained there is a need for implementation of peaceful accord by the parties to avoid escalating the wars through deployment of soldiers to stamp out the rebel groups. Also, the government should reinforce its disciplinary measures on its security agencies since there have been claims of the military cooperating with some traders in the illegal trade.

The government should also advocate for regional economic integration which abides by the laws of all the members. By providing initiatives to revive trade and interaction beyond the borders under strict legal guidelines, it will reduce the increased illegal trade. The cross-border economic integration will increase transparency and provide the government an opportunity to control smuggling of illegal arms back into the country. By tracking the types and quantities of mineral resources being exported the government will be in a sole position to earn its revenue. The state should also be in the verge of legalizing the mining and allow the communities to be a stakeholder to the income generated from their mines through providing employment and setting a share of the income for their infrastructural development.

The end of ‘divide-and-rule’ strategy of President Mobutu that propagated ethnic violence is long gone and a new era that allows for democracy under President Joseph

Kabila presents a ray of hope for political stability. However, the current president has been criticized for being reluctant to honor a constitution that only allows for two-five-year terms in office by prolonging his term and failing to allow for immediate general elections for a new leader. Extending his term in office has led to severe unrest in the country that has resulted into displacement of over 1.4 million and death of over 300 people in Kasai Province. Such incidents shows that the country has not yet stabilized as there are increased incidents of abuse of human rights and ongoing violence in the post-transition dawn that the government has been unable to address fully. The government should work relentlessly to reinstate formal justice systems and other independent public institutions that can serve the people with integrity. The lack of capacity by the present government set up structures that will ensure security and peace in the entire country leaves the country vulnerable to ethnic violence.

The religious groups still have a major role in pushing for mediation and long-term resolution to the ongoing conflicts in the eastern Congo. The successive efforts of the religious groups in advocating for peace after the 2006 general elections helped ease the tension in the country as the results were disputed by opposition leader Jean-Pierre Bemba. The religious groups and civil movements should be given a platform at the mediation table to engage the government on projecting resolutions that bring peace and sustainability to the country. By providing an environment for reconciliation among all the stakeholders will help in community peace building and development, end of civil strife, respect for human rights and poverty eradication. Therefore, the religious groups, communities and other stakeholders should be engaged in the peace building process because they all have a chance of impacting a positive change in pushing for policies, reforms and measures that can alleviate crisis in DRC.

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