

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

INSTITUTE OF DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

**MANAGING ENDEMIC CONFLICTS: ANALYSIS OF REGIONAL MECHANISM FOR
RESPONSE TO DRC CONFLICT**

By

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**Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of degree of
masters of arts in International Studies**

DISCLAIMER

The information contained in this study is the result of my academic research carried out by me. The views and/or observations expressed in this research are my own and they do not reflect/or represent in any way the official position of the National Defense College.

DECLARATION

DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been submitted for the award of a degree in any other institution of higher learning.

Sign: _____ Date: _____

Jerome Ngendahimana

RECOMMENDATION

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as Supervisor:

Sign: _____ Date: _____

Prof. Amb. Maria Nzomo

DEDICATION

I dedicate my work to my loving wife Anne Marie and my wonderful children Natacha, Raissa, Anita, James and Dan whose words of encouragement and push for tenacity still ring in my ears. I also dedicate this work to my many friends and church family who have supported me throughout the process. I will always appreciate all they have done, especially Dr Mogambi for the many hours of proofreading.

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ABSTRACT

Regionalism has emerged as a new mechanism for conflict resolution after the Cold War and has succeeded in bringing peace and prosperity to Europe and South East Asia. Inspired by these successes the present study analysed the potential of regionalism in the DRC, where millions of lives have been lost in the last decade. The study found that regionalism has high potential to resolve this conflict as the regional forces have very much involvement in the onset and escalation of conflict. The international actors can support this effort of regional actors to establish peace in the region. Social justice, democracy, good governance and social development that ensure all Congolese feel safe and secure within DRC are needed to stop the activities of local militant groups. In addition, through mutual trade, agreements and integration, economic and political interdependence can be established between the neighbouring countries in order to avoid conflict in the African Great Lakes region. The main role for the international actors is to support regionalism in Africa and facilitate the peace process in the region without directly intervening in the internal matters of African States.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

- ABAKO: Alliance des Bakongo (Bakongo Alliance)
- ADF-NALU: Allied Democratic Forces- National Army for the Liberation of Uganda
- ADP : People's Democratic Alliance (Alliance Démocratique du Peuple)
- AFDL : Alliance des Forces Démocratiques de Libération (Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo)
- AFRICOM: (US) Africa Command
- APCLS: Alliance des Patriotes pour un Congo Libre et Souverain (Alliance of Patriots for a Free and Sovereign Congo)
- ASEAN: Association of Southeast Asia Nations
- ASF: African Standby Force
- AU: African Union
- CEPGL : Communauté Economique des Pays des Grands Lacs (Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries)
- CIAT : Comité International d'Accompagnement de la Transition
- CNDP: Conseil National pour la Décence du Peuple (National Council for the Defense of the People)

CNRD:	Conseil National de Résistance pour la Démocratie
DP:	Democratic Party
DRC:	Democratic Republic of Congo
DDR:	Desarmament, Demobilization and Reinsertion
ECOWAS:	Economic Community of West African States
EU:	European Union
FAR:	Forces Armées Rwandaises (Rwandese Armed Forces)
FARDC:	Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (DRC Armed Forces)
FDC :	Forces de Défense du Congo (Forces for the Defense of Congo)
FDD	Forces de Défense de la Démocratie (Forces for the Defense of Democracy)
FDLR	Front Démocratiques pour la Libération du Rwanda (Democratic Front for the Liberation of Rwanda)
FNI:	Front des Nationalistes et Integregationistes (Nationalist and Integregationist Front)
FNL:	Forces Nationales de Libération (National Forces for Liberation)
FOLC:	Forces Œcuméniques pour la Libération du Congo (Ecumenic Forces for the Liberation of Congo)
FRPI:	Forces de Resistance Patriotique en Ituri (Front for Patriotic Resistance in Ituri)

GW:	Global Witness
HRW:	Human Right Watch
ICC:	International Criminal Court
ICG:	International Crisis group
ICGLR:	International Conference for Great Lakes Region
ICJ:	International Court of Justice
IGAD:	Intergovernmental Authority for development
IMF:	International Monetary Fund
INGO:	International Non-Governmental Organization
LRA:	Lord Resistance army
M23:	March 23 Movement
MLC:	Mouvement pour la Libération du Congo (Movement for the Liberation of Congo)
MNC:	Mouvement National Congolais (Congolese national Movement)
MNCs:	Multinational Organizations
MONUC:	Mission des Nations Unies au Congo (UN Mission in Congo)
MONUSCO:	Mission des Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation du Congo (UN Mission for the Stabilization of Congo)

MPLA: People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola

MPR: Mouvement Populaire pour la Révolution (Popular Movement of Revolution)

MRLZ: Mouvement Révolutionnaire pour la Libération du Zaïre (Revolutionary
Movement for the Liberation of Congo)

MRND: Mouvement Républicain National pour la Démocratie et le Développement (National
Republican Movement for Democracy and Development)

NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization

OAU: Organization of African Union

ONU: Organisation des Nations Unies (United Nations Organization)

OTP: Office of the Prosecutor

PARECO: Patriote Résistants Congolais (Coalition of Congolese Patriotic Resistance)

PM: Prime Minister

PNP: Parti National du Peuple (People's National Party)

PRP: Parti pour la Révolution Populaire (People's Revolution Party)

PSA: Parti Solidaire Africain (African Party for Solidarity)

RCD: Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie (Congolese Rally for Democracy)

RCD-ML: Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie- Mouvement de Libération (RCD-Liberation Movement)

SADC: Southern Africa Development Community

SPLA: Sudanese People Liberation Army

UN: United Nations

UNITA: National Union for the Total Independence of Angola

UNHCR: United Nations High Commission for Refugees

UNSC: United Nations Security Council

UPC: Union des Patriotes Congolais (Congolese Patriots Union)

USA: United States of America

USSR: Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

WB: World Bank

WWI: World War I

WWII: World War II

CHAPTER 1: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0. Introduction

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has been under conflict since independence. Despite all efforts from international organizations and signing of several agreements between parties to DRC conflict, some areas, particularly in the eastern part, are still witnessing clashes and violence. The crime rate is at its peak, several brutal crimes like rape and murder have become a common practice, a large number of people are internally displaced, and the quality of life of the people living in these areas is at its worst.¹ There is, therefore, a serious need to come up with the right mechanism to resolve this conflict.

Different mechanisms to conflict resolution emerged during the Cold War, which are being used in studies on DRC conflict. However, during the Cold War, the focus of the international politics remained on the avoidance of third world war between the two power blocs. There was not much focus on the conflicts going on in the countries of Asia and Africa, newly developed after the process of decolonization and highly vulnerable to inter- and intra-state violence.² This negligence to such conflicts was ironic not only because they were more frequent but also because they had high intensity in causing loss of several lives.³ The conflict in DRC, for

¹ Ted Dagne, *The Democratic Republic of Congo: Background and Current Developments* (Congressional Research Service, 2011)

² Joseph S. Nye and Sean M. Lynn-Jones, "International Security Studies: Report of a Conference on the State of the Field." *International Security*, Vol. 12, No. 4(1988), 27; Caroline Thomas, "New Directions in Thinking about Security in the Third World," in Ken Booth, ed., *New Thinking about Strategy and International Security* (London: HarperCollins Academic, 1991), 269.

³ Amtiv Acharya, "The periphery as the core: The third world and security studies." Presented at *Strategic in Conflict: Critical Approaches to Security Studies*, York University, Toronto, 12-14 May 1994, 3-4.

instance, has caused loss of some 5.4 million lives and only in 2 years, between 2005 and 2007, more than 20,000 rape cases were registered in just one province of the country.⁴

After the Cold War, both the academia and policy makers felt the need to look beyond the westernized or europeanized view of the world and to pay attention to other important issues faced by the so called “Third World.”⁵ Regionalism emerged as a solution to this problem with its focus on conflicts that might not have important value for the global security but matters a lot for the security of that region. Regional mechanism to conflict resolution refers to the use of regional cooperation as a strategy to the management of conflict. The mechanism often operates in the form of formal and informal regional organizations with focus on regional security issues and establishment of peace in the region.⁶

Since DRC conflict has both intra-state and inter-state elements, regionalism appears to have potential in resolving this conflict.⁷ The research has tested this regional mechanism to conflict resolution for the case of DRC, in order to point out some solutions that can help accelerate the conflict management process and bringing a peaceful end to this problem.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

The conflict in DRC, being the most violent after WWII, has caused loss of millions of lives and is among those conflicts that are in serious need to get resolved. Since mainstream mechanisms to conflict resolution have been unsuccessful so far in finding a lasting solution to this problem,

⁴ Birthe Steiner, Marie T. Benner, Egbert Sondrop, K. Peter Schmitz, Ursula Mesmer, and Sandrine Rosenberger, “Sexual violence in the protracted conflict of DRC programming for rape survivors in South Kivu, ”*Conflict and Health*, Vol. 3, No. 3, (2009), doi:10.1186/1752-1505-3-3.

⁵ Mohammad Ayoob, “Security in the third world: the worm about to turn.” *International Affairs*, Vol. 60, No. 1. (1984), 41-51.

⁶ Mely Caballero-Anthony, *op cit.*, 41.

⁷ Alagappa defines “regionalism” as “an approach to conflict management that refers to the lead role for regional organizations in the management of local and regional conflicts”. Muthiah Alagappa, “Regionalism and conflict management: a framework for analysis”, *Review of international Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 4, (Oct, 1995), p. 359.

there is need to find some alternative mechanisms and regionalism can serve as a good solution to the problem. Since regional approach is a relatively new theory to conflict resolution and management and has been popularized mainly after the success of the European Union, not much has been written so far on its application to the problems in DRC. Although few studies have been found to recommend this approach for establishment of peace in Africa, a thorough analysis of the potential of the regional mechanism in case of African conflicts has not been conducted so far. Furthermore, the studies on regionalism are often found to focus on the role of regional organizations and states actors operating within that region.

The research not only has tested the potential of regional mechanisms to conflict resolution in DRC, but also has provided some alternative solutions to this problem by defining the roles key regional and global actors need to play.

1.2. Research Questions

The study sought answers to the following questions:

1. What is the potential of the regional approach to the resolution of DRC problem?
2. What role can the key regional actors play in resolving the DRC conflict?
3. What role can international actors play in supporting the regional solution to DRC conflict?

1.3. Objectives of Research

The main objectives of the research were:

- a. To investigate the potential of regional approach in resolving the DRC conflict.

- b. To identify the roles of regional and global actors in the regional approach to resolution of DRC conflict.
- c. To recommend the steps global and regional actors can take in supporting the regionalism for resolution of DRC conflict.

1.4. Justification of the Study

The DRC conflict presents a test case for the scholars of conflict management and resolution in finding a peaceful solution to the problem. Although some treaties and agreements have been signed between the major forces in Central Africa to resolve DRC conflict, the problem remains. While international players can play their role in promoting peace in the region, these problems cannot be addressed fully without the sincere involvement of regional players.

The regional mechanism to conflict resolution produced successful results in the cases of Europe⁸ and South East Asia⁹, which further encourages its application to the conflict-prone region of Africa. The cases of Europe and South East Asia also attest to the fact that the conflicts are not because humans are aggressive and power hungry or because there is struggle of power between states but because there are certain needs like social identity, freedom, food, shelter, and others that if not satisfied can result in aggression and conflicts. Regional organizations in Europe and South East Asia have neither worked on the psychology of humans nor tried to create a balance of power, but rather, through negotiation and mutual consent, have developed a system in the regions that ensure the satisfaction of major needs of all regional players. This study, therefore, can provide some proposals towards finding lasting solutions to the DRC conflict by

⁸ Christopher Hill, "The EU's capacity for conflict prevention." *European Foreign Affairs Review*, Vol. 6, No. 3. (2001), 315-334.

⁹ Mely Caballero-Anthony, "Mechanism of Dispute Settlement: The ASEAN experience." *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, Vol. 20, No.1 (1998), 38-66.

looking into this neglected regional mechanism having high potential for management and resolution of DRC conflict.

1.5. Literature Review

Before we examine some literature on DRC conflict, we looked at the concept of conflict in general and examined the concept of regionalism in conflict resolution in particular. The notion of conflict, its causes, effects and management was abundantly analyzed by many theorists and scholars and is largely documented. Although many definitions of conflict have been adopted, we agree that the conflict is simply a process in which one party perceives that its interests are being opposed or negatively affected by another party, and generally, one of the parties in conflict is blocking the other party's interests or goals.¹⁰

Causes of conflicts are of diverse forms. Some causes are individual characteristics, others are interpersonal factors and others are simply issues which have been there for more or less long time and have been neglected or have not been taken care of appropriately. Of course there is always interest behind each issue. Amongst individual characteristics are personality, attitudes, values, goals or aspirations, frustrations and desire for autonomy. It is agreed that personality factors and other individual differences such as attitudes have minor impact on conflict.¹¹ Besides, personal and social values have strong effects on conflicts though individual individuals and various societies value conflict quite differently.¹² Some, particularly those in western countries, view it as a part of life. Others, especially those from East Asian cultures, consider that

¹⁰ James A. Wall and Ronda Roberts Collister, "Conflict and Its Management". *Journal of Management*, Vol. 21, No.3 (1995), p. 518.

¹¹ Thompson, L, "Negotiation behavior and outcomes: Empirical evidence and theoretical issues". *Psychological Bulletin*, No.3 (1990): 515-532.

¹² Augsburger, D.W., *Conflict mediation across cultures: Pathways and patterns*, (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 1992).

conflict is, by essence, bad and should be avoided. Consequently, these latter cultures are less apt to initiate or maintain conflict.¹³ In the same context, one can also mention the propensity to conflict of nomad and pastoralist societies in Africa (Karamajong, Turkana, Dinkas and Nuer in East Africa, Peuls and Touaregs in West Africa) as they view conflict as a part, perhaps a beneficial part, of life. It was argued that conflict is a traditional culture for pastoralists in the Horn of Africa.¹⁴

It is also agreed that several aspects of goals will initiate conflicts. When goals and aspirations are high because of perceived power and societal norms, a person is more apt to come to conflict with another.¹⁵ This reasoning is found within most economic theories of conflict.¹⁶ According to this theory, if there is interdependence between parties, one side's goal attainment will usually generate conflict because the goal's achievement is at the cost of the other's outcomes. There is "zero sum total" game. Also, one may note that individual's, group's or nation's frustration have a tendency to render relationships with others difficult and conflictual. Likewise, an individual's, group's, or nation's desire for autonomy will generate conflict when pitted against another individual's, group's or national's need requirement for interdependence.¹⁷

¹³ Lebra, T.S., *Japanese Patterns of Behavior*, (Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1976).

¹⁴ Kennedy, Mketu, *Pastoralism and conflict in the Horn of Africa*, Africa Peace Forum/Saferworld/University of Bradford, 1998, p.4.

¹⁵ Pruitt, D.G. & Rubin, J.Z., *Social Conflict: Escalation, Stalemate, and Settlement*. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1986).

¹⁶ Coombs, C.H. & Avrunin, *The structure of conflict*, (Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum G.S. 1988).

¹⁷ Evans, M.K., "Department secretaries: Unsung heroines in the resolution of professional-organizational Conflict", *Human Organization*, No. 46, (1987), 62-69.

Interpersonal factors include communication and power struggle among others. It is generally agreed that poor or misunderstood communication is source of conflict.¹⁸ Therefore, effects of communication are considered to be double-edged. On one hand, positive communications, that is communications where parties value each other, generate understanding and minimize the chances of conflict. On the other hand, negative communications where one or both parties undermine each other generate misunderstanding and increase the probability of conflict to occur.¹⁹ Besides failed communication, power struggle is also source of conflict especially when conducted in non democratic environments.

Within groups, governments and nations, the structure of relationships is modelled by laws, norms and distribution of power and resources. This interdependence necessarily produces effects and one of the effects comes from power imbalance. It is when the structure creates power imbalances that the weaker party oppose to the stronger influence and finds conflict as a way of increasing power.²⁰

How about the issues? Generally, when parties or groups come into conflicts, it is over issues. Issues can be domestic, regional or international.²¹ Issues can also be understood in 3 categories: underlying issues, proximity issues and trigger issues. Underlying issues are issues related to the history of the groups. It have been said that all conflicts have memory. Underlying issues have

¹⁸ Beyond Intractability, *General Information about Communication Problems*.

<http://www.colorado.edu/conflict/peace/problem/commprob.htm>, [accessed on 12 March 2014].

¹⁹ Pondy, L. R., "Organizational conflict: Concepts and models", *Administrative Science Quarterly*, I., (1967), 296-320.

²⁰ H.H. Kelley, E. Berscheid, A. Christensen, J.H. Harvey, T.L. Huston, G. Levinger, E. McClintock, L.A. Peplau & D.R. Peterson (Eds.), *Close Relationships*, (New York: W. H. Freeman, 1983), Pp. 361-396.

²¹ Kamudhayi, O., "Actors, Issues and Interests in Conflict", *Lecture notes*, National Defense College Kenya, August 2013

been there for very long time and they are associated to sources of conflicts. Proximity issues are developments that seem to worsen underlying issues because they become the explanations (“this is because”). Proximity issues mobilise people and bring them together. Trigger issues can be defined as events that inform the beginning of conflict. They are main events that start conflicts (“enough is enough!”). Trigger issues are not the core, they are only excuses. Proximity and trigger issues are associated to causes of conflict. Underlying, proximity and trigger issues can either be big or small, complex or simple. Complexity is one characteristic that makes the issue more conflictual. Complex and multiple issues are more likely to produce misunderstanding, to provoke divergent interests and to unearth contradictory goals.

However, while complex and multiple issues generate conflict, they can also make the conflict solvable. As stated above, the complexity of issues generates conflict and this can be done through tension and confusion. Nonetheless, complex and multiple issues can be divided into simple and tangible ones, hence becoming tradable. The same process can also be applied to vague issues which can be transformed to clear ones. While complex and multiple issues may end up into a conflict as well as its resolution, some other issues do not; rather they perpetuate the conflict and make it intractable and endemic. Those are issues such as issues of principle or non-negotiable needs, large or indivisible issues.²² In such issues (i.e., power sharing, security, basic needs), parties stick to their positions and once into conflict over them, they find that trades, reciprocal give and take are difficult.

Interests involved are important when managing conflicts. One should always ask what is the interest behind the issue, having in mind that what causes the conflict is not the issue per se but

²² Rouhana, N.N. & Kelman, H.C., “Promoting Joint Thinking in International Conflicts: An Israeli- Palestinian Continuing Workshop”, *Journal of Social Issues*, 50, (1994), 157-178.

the interest. If the interest is not addressed, the conflict will persist. In addressing the different interests, the conflict manager has also to consider visible and invisible actors that may be involved in the conflict. Visible actors are those that are actively participating in conflict. They are physically involved and very easy identified. Sometimes they are even the least important. Invisible actors are not actively involved and they operate in the background. They are either thinkers, supporters or suppliers and are responsible for logistics, finance, mobilization, morale, etc. Invisible actors are the most important and it is critical that they be well identified.

Each conflict is a process. The conflict process is seen as an action-counteraction process. This means that when a party realizes that another is likely to negatively affect his position, goals or interests, he considers how to deal with the threat and then takes action. The other, after awareness and assessment, reacts. Conflict then takes place as the parties counter each other's reaction. Sometimes issues or causes lead to a triggering event which set ablaze an already smouldering fire.

Like any phenomena in social science, conflicts have effects. There are effects on structure, effects on issues, resolutions and residues. When the conflict occurs between groups or organisations, effects within structures are likely to appear. Those are for instance changes in leadership to a more autocratic or authoritarian style.²³ Conflicts also transform the structure relationship between groups or individuals. Groups or organisations can develop contentious interests as well as increase discrimination and favouritism.²⁴ It is generally agreed that conflicts change issues. During a conflict, simple issues become complex; few issues beget a number of

²³ Pruitt, D.G. & Rubin, J.Z., *Social Conflict: Escalation, Stalemate, and Settlement*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1986).

²⁴ Bettencourt, B.A., Brewer, M.B., Croak, M.R. & Miller, N. "Cooperation and the reduction of intergroup bias: The role of reward structure and social orientation", *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 28, (1992): 301-319.

others; clear issues give place to cloudy ones and tradable issues become principled and then disputes become more difficult to resolve.²⁵ Another set of products produced by conflicts are resolutions and residues. The resolution may be an explicit or tacit agreement. But deadlocks are also possible. In any case the results can benefit both sides (integrative results) or benefit one side at the other's expense (distributive results).²⁶ With or without resolution, conflict usually produces positive or negative residues or consequences. Negative residues are those where parties suffer frustration, mutual distrust, physical harm, shame, dishonour, refugees or dead. Positive results are mutual trust, improvement of groups, efficiency, productivity, quality of decisions, challenging ideas, adaptation for organizational survival or resolving issues which, if not dealt with, would have worse long-run consequences such as violence and war.²⁷

In a conflict, there are moments of increased and decreased intensity. Escalation is a process of increased intensity or worsening of the conflict. According to some scholars, this intensity is characterized with four elements: tactics going from light to heavy; proliferation of issues; parties becoming increasingly absorbed in the struggle; goal shifts from self-advancement to subverting or punishing the other.²⁸ When parties see no way of ending conflicts without suffering high losses, the escalation will continue and worsen. It is generally agreed that most of the conflicts de-escalate or move towards a state of decreased intensity. The desire for de-escalating a conflict unfolds when the parties realize the high cost of conflict. It is important to note that de-escalation is not the reverse of escalation as de-escalation does not return the parties, issues and situation to their former state. Certain conditions promote de-escalation. One of the conditions is anticipation of a common enemy. Another one is a stalemate situation wherein on

²⁵ James Wall and Ronda Collister, *Conflict and Its Management*, p.525.

²⁶ *Ibidem*.

²⁷ Robbins, S.P., "Conflict management and conflict resolution are not synonymous terms", *California Management Review*, 21, (1978): 67-75.

²⁸ James Wall and Ronda Collister, *Conflict and Its Management*, p.526.

or both parties find that the escalation has been too costly, therefore they chose to try benefits and costs of de-escalation. A third condition is fatigue which seems to produce the same result. Lastly, conciliation by one side in conflict or by a third party (mediation) may also de-escalate a conflict.

Each conflict takes place in a particular environment. That is what is called the context of conflict. Scholars have approached this subject from different perspectives. Some consider the context as a conflict setting and attempt to describe that setting as an organizational one.²⁹ Others consider the context as an independent variable under investigation, for instance the high (versus low) pressure to come to an agreement³⁰ or power.³¹ A third category of authors define the context as the field in which the conflict is embedded. A fourth group of authors insist on the structural level (interpersonal or organizational) when defining the context of conflict.³² When considering the perspective that sees the context as the field in which the conflict is embedded, one may realize that each conflict unfolds and evolves in a specific environment or context. Contextual or environmental elements generate the conflict and affect necessarily its process. They impact on the causes, the conflict itself, the escalation, the effects and the management of the conflict. For that reason, conflict managers have always to take in account those environments factors for them to increase chances for success.

Most conflicts benefit from attempts for their management and resolution. This process is known as conflict management. As it has already mentioned, conflict managers may come from one of

²⁹ Morrill, C. & Thomas, C.K., Organizational Conflict Management as Disputing Process. *Human Communication Research*, 18, (1992): 400-428.

³⁰ Baron, R.A., "Attributions and Organizational Conflict: The Mediating Role of Apparent Sincerity", *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 69, (1988a): 272-279.

³¹ Zartman, I. & Touval, S., "International Mediation: Conflict Resolution and Power Politics", *Journal of Social Issues*, 41, (1985): 2745

³² Putnam, L.L. & Wilson, S.R., "Communication Strategies in Organizational Conflicts: Reliability and Validity of a Measurement Scale", in M. Burgoon (Ed.), *Communication Yearbook*, (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, (1982), Pp. 629-652

the parties or from both parties in form of conciliation. But, conflict managers may also come from third parties and in that case we talk of mediation. We may mention that Mediation is most used and most successful. However, it is important to note that there is suitable and favorable moment for a mediator to enter in a conflict. This appropriate moment is known as “the Ripe Moment”, that is when there are high chances for success. William Zartman distinguishes four types of “Ripe moment”³³: the “Mutual Hurting Stalemate Moment”, the “Mutual Catastrophe Moment”, the “Caged-Entrapment Moment” and the “Mutual Enticing Opportunity”. Mutual Hurting Stalemate is a concept based on the notion that the parties are tired and have reached a plateau. They find themselves locked in a conflict and realize they cannot win; therefore they seek a way out to avoid mutual loss. Mutual Catastrophe is a situation when the two parties are all in danger and they have reached a precipice. They all realize they may fail if they continue fighting. They both understand that pain can be increased if nothing is done about it now. The Caged-Entrapment Moment unfolds when each of the parties finds himself as prisoner. None of them is free because the more he invests, the more he loses. Caged- Entrapment moment is considered as a variant of the Mutual Catastrophe. Another type of ripe moment is also considered: the “Mutual Enticement Opportunity”. The concept of Mutual Enticing Opportunity is based on the understanding that parties during a conflict come to realize that there is a possibility of sharing power that did not exist before. Hence, they are willing and ready to seat on the same table. One may note that the ripe moment can be created by the mediator in bringing the stronger party to the table of negotiation by weakening him and empowering the weaker.

³³ Zartman, I. W., “Ripening Conflict, Ripe Moment, Formula and Mediation”, in Ben Dahmane, D. and McDonald, J., eds., 1986, *Perspectives on Negotiation*, (Government Printing Office, 1986). See also: Kamudhayi, O., *Diplomacy and Management of Conflict: Theory and Practice of International Mediation*, *Lecture notes*, National Defense College Kenya, September 2013.

Theorists distinguish two types of mediation: the unitary mediation where there is one mediator and the multiparty mediation where mediators are multiple and the framework usually institutional (i.e., regional organizations). Also, mediators are usually grouped into three categories: endogenous, exogenous and heterogeneous. Endogenous mediators are those who come from within the conflict itself and the conflict system. Exogenous mediators come from outside the conflict system. Heterogeneous mediators come from outside the conflict itself but inside the conflict system. This last type of mediators is considered to be more suitable as they have an idea of the conflict and the capacity to remain objective and to be not easily manipulated.³⁴

A large number of studies have found economic reasons behind the conflict in DRC, claiming that the natural resources in the region lay at the centre of the conflict.³⁵ However, it seems difficult to create a boundary between social, economic and political reasons behind the escalation of DRC problem because all are very much interlinked. Vlassenroot and Huggins have identified the access and control over agricultural land to be one important economic reason for clashes in the region. They have pointed out that such access does not only bring economic wealth but also political power.³⁶ Similarly, Montague linked the exploitation of resources, particularly Coltan, with the conflict in DRC but found it to be closely associated with the tribal social structure of the region.³⁷

³⁴ Ibidem, Kamudhayi, O., Diplomacy and Management of Conflict.

³⁵ Ingrid Samset, "Conflict of Interests or Interests in Conflict? Diamonds & War in the DRC." *Review of African Political Economy*, Vol. 29, No. 93-94 (2002), 463-480; Gilbert O. Onyango, Ibidem., p.27-33.

³⁶ Vlassenroot, Koen, and Huggins. "Land, migration and conflict in eastern DRC." in Chris Huggins and Jenny Clover, eds., *From the ground up: land rights, conflict and peace in sub-Saharan Africa* (Institute for Security Studies, 2005): 115-195.

³⁷ Dena Montague, "Stolen goods: Coltan and conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo." *SAIS Review*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (2002): 103-118.

Studies that attempted to find solution to this problem have shown consensus that the solution needs to be political not military.³⁸ The military intervention by the UN peacekeeping forces or the actions taken by the governmental forces against rebels has been found to cause serious humanitarian issues.³⁹ EU, which has been very active in running the military missions in the region have also reached the conclusion that the solution ought to be political with focus on regional and local dynamics. The council of EU recently met in Brussels to find an appropriate solution to the problem, where they reached to a conclusion that

“Sustainable political solutions to the complex crises are paramount and any military action must be embedded in an appropriate political process, both locally and between the DRC and its neighbours, as it is not to be considered as an alternative to a comprehensive solution. Beyond that, a comprehensive regional security concept should be proactively sought and encouraged.”⁴⁰

The conflict has involved multiple actors including rebellious groups like Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo (AFDL), Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD), Congo Liberation Movement (MLC), National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP), Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda (FDLR), Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), the Movement of March 23 (M23) and the different Mayi-Mayi groups as well as neighbouring countries like Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Angola, Namibia, Chad, Sudan and Zimbabwe. However, the efforts to resolve the conflicts have overlooked a number of actors, particularly the unarmed ones.⁴¹ Scholars have asserted that the only solution to the problem is

³⁸ Sagaren Naidoo, "The role of Track Two Diplomacy in the Democratic Republic of Congo Conflict", *African Journal of Conflict Resolution* Vol. 1, No. 2, (2000): p. 86.

³⁹ Human Rights Watch, *Democratic Republic of Congo: UPR Submission September 2013*. <http://www.hrw.org/news/2013/09/24/democratic-republic-congo-upr-submission-september-2013> [Last accessed 8 November 2013]

⁴⁰ The Council of European Union. "Council Conclusion on the Great Lake Region" *Foreign Affairs Council Meeting*, Brussels, 22 July 2013, 2.

⁴¹ Sagaren Naidoo, "Rebels may scupper DRC ceasefire plans." *Sowetan*, 14 Apr. (2000), 9.

possible by involving all actors to the problem, both state and non-state.⁴² Also, neighbouring countries have to be taken in account. As put by Gilpin, Morris and Funai, “To the extent that the underlying causes and drivers of the DRC conflict are regional, solutions must involve its neighbours.”⁴³

The regional nature of the conflict has resulted in complicating the nature of conflict in two respects, as identified by Naidoo.⁴⁴ First, the conflict is escalation of internal conflicts of the neighbouring countries and the actors involved in those conflicts are using areas of DRC for their own battles. Naidoo pointed out some of these conflicts as between “the MPLA government of Angola and the UNITA rebel movement; the former minority Tutsi government in Burundi and the pro-Hutu rebels of the Forces for the Defence of Democracy (FDD) and the National Liberation Forces (FNL); the Sassou Nguesso government of Congo-Brazzaville and militias backing the ousted president Pascal Lissouba and his ally, the former prime minister, Bernard Kolelas; the Rwandese government and the ex-FAR and Interahamwe; the Museveni government in Uganda and the Lords’ Resistance Army (LRA) and the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF); and the Sudanese government and the Sudanese People’s Liberation Army (SPLA).”⁴⁵ Second, due to the vulnerable situation in DRC, it has become the subject to the inter-state conflicts between neighbouring African countries, for instance between Sudan and Uganda. Countries in the neighbourhood are fighting not only over the resources in the country but also for gaining political influence in the region.

⁴² Gilbert O Onyango, *op cit.*, 54.

⁴³ Raymond Gilpin, Catherine Morris and Go Funai, *Beyond Emergency Responses in The Democratic Republic Of Congo: Regional Solutions for a Regional Conflict* (Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2009), 4.

⁴⁴ Sagaren Naidoo, “Track two diplomacy,” *op cit.*, 92-94.

⁴⁵ Sagaren Naidoo, “Track two diplomacy,” *op cit.*, 92.

In addition to the regional actors, there is involvement of many global actors in the conflict as well. In 2003, for instance, the European Union sent a mission codenamed “Artemis” in the region for “stabilization of the security conditions and the improvement of the humanitarian situation” which on closer analysis revealed that the real reasons for such intervention was to promote their military image⁴⁶. The intervention might have produced good consequences for the EU image but was a failure in solving the conflict, mainly because of its military nature and also due to the lack of understanding of regional dynamics. Similarly, the large amount of funding provided by international organizations in the region has been unsuccessful in improving the conditions due to their lack of focus on the root causes of the DRC conflict.⁴⁷ It appears, therefore, that for playing a positive role in the region, these global forces will have to work closely with the regional actors and will have to find a context-specific solution to the problem.

1.6. Theoretical Framework

The study has analysed the DRC conflict and proposed solutions using regional approach to conflict resolution. Regionalist theory refers to the regionalization of international security where security is analyzed in regional and sub-regional set-ups. According to this theory, a more important role is given to regional organizations in maintaining peace and security in their regions or sub-regions.⁴⁸ Besides intervention by (sub) regional organizations in conflicts, supporters of regional approach argue that regional economic and political integration are mitigating factors to intra and inter-state conflicts. Furthermore, they continue to assert that regional mechanisms to conflict have the potential to present a systemic approach for addressing

⁴⁶ Catherine Gegout, “Cause and consequences of the EU’s military intervention in the Democratic Republic of Congo: a realist explanation.” *European Foreign Affairs Review*, Vol. 10 (2005), 427.

⁴⁷ Prendergast, John and Noel Atama, “Eastern Congo: An Action Plan to End the World’s Deadliest War,” *Enough*, July 16, 2009. www.enoughproject.org/publications/eastern-congo-action-plan-end-worlds-deadliest-war

⁴⁸ Alagappa, “Regionalism and Conflict Management: A Framework for Analysis”, pp. 359-387.

endemic conflicts.⁴⁹ For the purpose of this study, regional mechanisms may be defined as formal and informal ways or means put in place by (sub) regional organizations to manage conflicts in their (sub) regions.

In applying this theory to DRC conflict, the research examines how some regional actors are involved in DRC conflict and more importantly, the role regional actors can play in resolving DRC conflict. While international community still has a role to play in the search of the solution for DRC conflict (i.e., global actors are best equipped to address humanitarian crises and can give financial support), the role of regional actors remain determinant. However, their success will depend on how they will manage to identify and help to address the deeper causes of DRC conflict.

1.7. Hypotheses

- a. Regional approach does not have any potential in resolving the DRC conflict.
- b. Regional approach has high potential in resolving the DRC conflict.
- c. Regional approach requires other supporting approaches in resolving the DRC conflict.

1.8. Research Methodology

The study is a qualitative desk-based research having explorative design. Qualitative method allows the researcher to understand the conflict in more depth and insight. The researcher looks into details on the current situation in DRC and examines the elements within it that require regional solutions to the problem.

⁴⁹ Anna Ohanyan, Regional Integration as a Conflict Management Strategy in the Balkans and South Caucasus, <https://www.google.com/search?q=Regional+Integration+as+a+Conflict+Management+Strategy+in+the+Balkans+and+South+Caucasus>, [retrieved 12 Oct 2013]

The study uses both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources include informal interviews and independent consultations. Through internet and through telephone, the researcher has interviewed various categories of people in the area under this study. These include the United Nations Special Representative in DRC, the United States Special Envoy in DRC, the *Mission de l'ONU pour la Stabilization du Congo* (UN Mission for the Stabilisation of Congo-MONUSCO) Force Commander, the Secretary General of International Conference on the Great Lakes region (ICGLR), the Secretary General of *Communauté Economique des Pays des Grands Lacs* (Economic Community for Great Lakes Countries-CEPGL), the FARDC Chief of General Staff, the Governor of North Kivu and the Vice-President of North Kivu Civil Society.

Nevertheless, the main source of data is the secondary data based on the reports published by different international governmental organizations like United Nations (UN), European Union (EU), African Union (AU), ICGLR as well as international non-governmental organizations (INGO) like Human Rights Watch (HRW), Global Witness (GW) and International Crisis Group (ICG). The literature on regional mechanism to conflict resolution published in the form of books, research papers and specialised journals was also reviewed. The internet was also used. The time frame for the research is 1960-2013, that is from the very advent of the conflict till the current situation.

The data collected was analysed and interpreted based on the research objectives. The findings are presented in descriptive form to infer on regional conflict management.

1.9. Chapter Outline

The study has the following chapter outline:

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Conflict in DRC: Background and current situation

Chapter 3: Regional mechanisms to DRC conflict resolution

Chapter 4: Findings and Data Analysis

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND AND CURRENT SITUATION

2.1. Introduction

The understanding of dynamics and causes of DRC conflict requires an overview of the state's history from the colonial era up to the very recent period. The brutal colonial regime, the negation of democracy and political will, the blind backing and endorsement by international community of the Mobutu dictatorial regime and the Laurent Kabila's conquest of power by force, the interference of foreign powers in DRC internal affairs, the incapacity of the government to defend the country and its resources, all are factors that can help to understand the humanitarian crisis that the country is going through.

2.2. Historical Overview of DRC conflict

Conflict in DRC is not a novel one as its roots lie deep in history of Africa. The factors causing DRC conflict are linked to the societal, political, and economic environment of the country and, therefore, the analysis of the cultural context, political background, and economic milieu of the problem is a necessity to comprehensively understand the real dynamics of DRC conflict. Although some of the cultural factors require understanding of even the pre-colonial period, most of these factors have their origins in the concluding days of colonial period. The chapter, therefore, gives a brief account of the history of DRC, starting from the independence of Congo in 1960s till the onset of new wave of violence in the recent past, with a very brief insight to the colonial era as a foundation to the historical overview.

2.2.1. A brief insight to the Colonial Era

The genesis of DRC conflict may be found parallel to the period of colonization in Africa. The struggle between the African freedom fighters and the European colonial powers prepared the

African societies for resistance against imperial forces; a preparation that aroused a sense of self-dignity in them and enabled them in fighting against the new form of imperialism within their states. As a colony of Belgium, the Congo continued to suffer from political, cultural, and economic exploitation inherited by the Belgian government from King Leopold.⁵⁰

The resistance against colonial rulers in Congo has unique features, mainly because of the weakness of pre-colonial regimes that stopped them from initiating any powerful armed resistance against European armies. Instead, as pointed out by Nzongola-Ntalaja, main resistance came from the structures devised by the colonial powers themselves such as the agricultural labour groups, workers' camps, and colonial armed forces. This initial resistance was against exploitative taxation system, forced labour, and coercive recruitment in army. However, these resisting movements took a new and more rebellious shape as the colonial regime consolidated itself and refined its methods of exploitation in the name of administration.⁵¹

Freedom struggle against the colonial powers during early 1900 were led by mutineers from the colonial army and some rulers of ethnic groups and majority of the leadership in pre-colonial state took no part in it. Nzongola-Ntalaja explained two reasons behind this reluctance of pre-colonial empires in joining the rebels: firstly, they were not enjoying any authority and their involvement was of no significance and secondly, it was more fruitful for them to remain attached to their thrones under colonial authority than to leave its luxuries for the independence of Congo from Colonial powers.⁵²

⁵⁰ Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo: From Leopold to Kabila: A People's History* (New York: Zed Books, 2007), 26-27.

⁵¹ Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo: From Leopold to Kabila*, 41-42.

⁵² *Ibid*, 42.

Another important feature of colonial period that must be taken into account is the role of USA in the region. USA was the first country to recognize the government of King Leopold II and was also among those European countries that forced the Belgium to take over Congo Free State from the King, after reports of “brutal economic explosions.”⁵³ US involvement in the region arose out of its interests in the natural resources of the land. In this regard, it is important here to remind one that the Uranium used for the manufacturing of first atomic bombs by USA was taken from the soil of DRC.⁵⁴

Lastly, another emphasis needs to be made on the ethnic diversity of the region that is the defining feature of this conflict. During the colonial period, Congo was a vast area of ethnic diversity, residing more than 250 ethnic groups having many common cultural traits, including a common language, the Bantu.⁵⁵ The ethnic boundaries of the region were not similar to the national boundaries so most of the ethnic groups in Congo have their presence in other neighbouring African countries as well. As explained in detail by Nzongola-Ntalaja,

*The Congo’s ties to its immediate neighbours are reinforced by the fact that many of its ethnic groups straddle national boundaries. Examples include the Kongo, who are also found in Angola and Congo-Brazzaville; the Ngbandi, in the Central African Republic; the Zande, in Sudan; the Alur, in Sudan and Uganda; the Hutu, Tutsi and Twa, in Rwanda and Burundi; the Bemba, in Zambia; and the Ludna, in Zambia and Angola.*⁵⁶

This ethnic diversity and the spread of ethnic groups across the border is an important element of the backdrop of current conflicts in the Great Lake region and explain why DRC conflict cannot be studied with the traditional state-centred approaches.

⁵³ Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, “Patrice Lumumba: the most important assassination of the 20th century,” *The Guardian*, January 17, 2011.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo: From Leopold to Kabila*, 14.

⁵⁶ Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo: From Leopold to Kabila*, p.14.

2.2.2. Decolonization and Political Crisis

On 30 June 1960, the freedom fighters finally got successful in freeing their country from Belgium rule and in establishing Republic of Congo ruled by local authorities. *Mouvement National Congolais* (Congoles National Movement-MNC) party has won the election and, therefore, elected its party leader Patrice Lumumba, as the Prime Minister of the country. Many other political parties also took a share in power, most prominent of which include *Alliance des Bakongo* (Bakongo Alliance-ABAKO), *Parti Solidaire Africain* (African Unity Party-PSA), and *Parti National du Peuple* (National People's Party-PNP).

However, it did not put an end to the rebellious movement and shortly after the independence a new wave of clashes and violence erupted in the country, often termed in history as Congo Crisis. Nzongola-Ntalaja held that this crisis in 1960s was actually the decolonization crisis as the decolonization in Congo was different with the usual arrangement of decolonization in other regions, marked by a compromise between the colonial powers and moderate nationalists having some sort of democratic identity.⁵⁷

Before 1960s, the majority of conflicts in African region were between the colonial powers or “white” rulers and freedom fighters. In 1960s, however, with the shift of power to African rulers, the conflict changed its shape and these rebellious groups started “reform rebels” against the corrupt and repressive rulers.⁵⁸ These groups felt that despite the shift of power to indigenous African rulers, there is not much transformation in the economic and political structure and the real Africans are still facing the same authoritarianism and subjugation.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo: From Leopold to Kabila*, p. 95.

⁵⁸ William Reno, *Warfare in Independent Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 119.

⁵⁹ Alex de Waal, “Left-Wing Militarism from Asmara to Kigali” in *Liberators in Power* (unpublished manuscript, 2004), 1.

One feature that continued from the previous anti-colonial struggles to rebellious movements against new government was the mutiny in armed forces, attributed to their displeasure over the continuation of old practices and policies in the army. In particular, they were furious to find that the previous “white” commanders of the colonial army would keep their posts in the new armed forces. Just a few weeks after the independence local armed troops led by General Emile Janssens started a revolt and demanded the dismissal of all “white” commanders, promotions and increment in incentives. Although Lumumba tried to calm the situation by appointing Africans at the commanding positions, most of these were not based on merit which further agitated the mutineers. The most devastating blunder to his government was also made among these appointments of unqualified persons and that was of Joseph Mobutu as the chief of staff.

All these efforts of Lumumba bore no fruit and finally after the military intervention of Belgian forces, he has to appeal to the UN for intervention through peace-making troops. There are several important dimension of the UN intervention in DRC that must be taken into account. The very obvious point is the realization by Lumumba of the severity of the situation and its false hope that by joining the foreign powers through UN platform, it can save its government. Another very important dimension is the role of US, who wanted to use UN as a cover to protect American interests in the region by repressing the freedom fighters who American leaders perceive to be communist.⁶⁰ UN intervention was also favoured Belgium as it can legalize their efforts to militarily intervene in their old colony.⁶¹

On September 1960, the President Joseph Kasavubu dismissed Lumumba who declared this action to be unjustified. The main conflict between the two leaders was in their political

⁶⁰ Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo: From Leopold to Kabila*, 99.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

approach where the former was a conservative while Lumumba was a staunch nationalist. In reply to the dismissal by Kasavubu, Lumumba himself dismissed the President, resulting in an environment of ambiguity and chaos. It finally ended up with the military seizure of Mobutu and arrest of Lumumba. Lumumba was later kidnapped and killed by the Belgian execution squad on the order of Belgian and American governments, who were fearful that an independent Congo under Lumumba would go in alliance with USSR.⁶² This served as a major blow to the democratic movement in the region, a blow whose effect is still evident in the today politics of DRC.

Kasavubu appointed another PM Moise Tshombe, together with whom he led the government for next five year. In order to deal with rebellion in Kisangani (former Stanley), the PM appointed some white mercenaries who had fought under his leadership in the army. This action was not approved by the local population and caused severe damage to the status of Tshombe in both the eyes of Kasavubu and the public. Kasavubu finally dismissed Tshombe in 1965 but before he could appoint another Prime Minister, Mobutu took control over the capital and ended his regime.

2.2.3. Mobutu's Regime and the New Struggle for Democracy

Mobutu regime of 32 years was perhaps the most devastating regime of all during which most factors causing the conflict arose. The ethnic conflicts in the region were very limited in terms of the intensity of violence prior to the start of Mobutu's government. These conflicts till 1980s were mostly economic in nature with "autochthonous" groups fighting with "exogenous" ethnic groups over the access and control over land and natural resources.⁶³ However, during Mobutu's

⁶² Nzongola-Ntalaja, "Patrice Lumumba."

⁶³ Koen Vlassenroot, 'Reading the Congolese Conflict,' in ed. Koen Vlassenroot and Timothy Raeymaekers, *Conflict and Social Transformation in Eastern DR Congo* (Gent: Academia Press Scientific Publishers, 2004) 41.

period, ethnicity was used as a tool by politicians to gain popularity which resulted in sharpening of divide between ethnic communities or the region and the onset of highly violent conflict among ethnicities.

In addition to all this bloodshed sponsored by the Mobutu regime, the government was also found involved in corruption to the extent that the term *le mal Zairois* is believed to be coined by Mobutu himself.⁶⁴ According to a rough estimate some 14 billion dollars were accumulated as external debt during this period.⁶⁵ However, not a single percentage of this huge amount was used for the improvement of a normal citizen life. According to the World Bank estimates, the per capita income declined at a rate of 2.2 from 1965 till 1990.⁶⁶ 1970s were in particular the hard period during which the country suffered from harsh economic downfall with a notable rise in external debt. According to the figures reported in the work of Young and Turner, in 1977 the external debt was around \$3.5 billion with \$800 million in arrears on repayment.⁶⁷

Mobutu government also caused serious damages to the administrative structure of Congo. As observed by Reno, during the Mobutu regime “administration became incidental to the profitable exploitation of resources for personal gain”⁶⁸. Mobutu established a one-party system, the *Mouvement Populaire pour la Revolution* (People Movement for Revolution- MPR) and kept holding elections with only one candidate – Mobutu himself. Throughout this corrupt and dictatorial period, Mobutu enjoyed the support of US for two reasons: his strong opposition to

⁶⁴ Crawford Young and Thomas Turner, *The Rise and Decline of the Zairian State* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984), 74.

⁶⁵ Leonce Ndikumana and James K. Boyce, “Congo's Odious Debt: External Borrowing and Capital Flight in Zaire.” *Development and Change*, Vol. 29 (1998), 195.

⁶⁶ World Bank, *World Development Report 1992* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992) 7.

⁶⁷ Young and Turner, *The Rise and Decline of the Zairian State*, 75.

⁶⁸ Willian Reno, “Sovereignty and Personal Rule in Zaire” *African Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 1, no. 3 (1997), 39.

communism and his monopoly over the natural resources. In particular, Mobutu used the natural resources as an incentive to bargain US for its support to his government at international level.⁶⁹

However, by 1990 all sins of Mobutu regime were noticed by the international community and, in particular, the governments in USA and France that pressured Mobutu to bring democratic reforms in the country and to improve the economic conditions.⁷⁰ Ironically this onset of the end of US support to Mobutu coincides with the end of the Cold War, providing a good reason behind this recall of long-forgotten liberal values. Under these pressures, Mobutu finally announced the political reforms which had some potential to pave way for democratic government but were later turned out to be useless. Till then, Mobutu's position has become very vulnerable and, with the loss of support from International players, his control over the country was also weakened. This prepared the environment for the onset of first and second civil wars in the country and the end of Mobutu's government.

2.2.4. The First Congo War

Although some of the rebel reformers in Africa got successful in gaining a position of power in their countries, they did not keep their efforts limited to their state boundaries. Their success encouraged them to sponsor rebel movements in the neighbouring countries, which resulted in the insecurity throughout the Great Lakes Region of Africa. The purpose of this state sponsorship of rebel groups in neighbouring African countries was not to expand the territory of the state but to overthrow the opposing regimes in those countries, while "opposing" was usually defined in terms of ethnicity of the ruler. This state partnership with rebel groups and destabilization of regimes in this region remained one of the central features of African politics

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 46.

throughout the 1980s till the mid-1990.⁷¹ This important feature of regional politics is also the main underlying factor behind the onset of First Congo War and the end of Mobutu's government.

The roots of First Congo War can be found in the civil war in Rwanda when in October 1990, a group composed mainly by Tutsi refugees from Uganda and with the benediction of President Museveni waged a war against the Hutu government under Habyarimana leadership. The Rwanda civil war ended in 1994 following the Tutsi genocide and resulted in the establishment of FPR-led government. The losing party, the *Mouvement Revolutionnaire National pour le Development* (National Revolutionary Movement for Development- MRND) and its allies, fled to the neighbouring countries, mainly in the then Zaire and Tanzania. A number of 1.2 million Rwandan Hutu refugees fled in eastern Zaire. This humanitarian crisis quickly transformed into a diplomatic and security crisis between Zaire and the new Rwandan government, due in large part to the presence among the refugees of members of the former *Forces Armées Rwandaises* ("ex-FAR"), as well as *Interahamwe*. It is also worth to note that this crisis was exacerbated by the longstanding alliance between President Habyarimana and Mobutu Sese Seko former regimes.

While settling in the refugee camps in Eastern Congo, they rearranged their military structure and took control of refugee camps to invoke people to take revenge in supporting local Hutu militias to attack and loot Tutsi living in Eastern Zaire. In addition to this, they started launching raids in Western Rwanda from refugee camps in North and South Kivu. Thom claimed that Mobutu regime was not actually supporting this ethnic violence and anti-Rwandan raids; their control over the region was weak and it was not practically possible for them to control "*1.2 million refugees...containing tens of thousands of armed militants without reaching some*

⁷¹ Jeffrey Herbst, *States and Power in Africa* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 104-106.

arrangement.”⁷² However, for the world and for Rwandan government, Mobutu’s long support to Hutus and his government’s failure in stopping them from killing Tutsis and attacking Rwanda was enough to put him in the enemy’s list.

Although not confirmed by other independent sources, there are accusations that Zairian authorities were actually providing military support to Hutu militants through military training and supply of heavy weapons.⁷³ On the other hand, the Rwandan government also started giving military training to Congolese Tutsi and other anti-Mobutu’s groups, which finally led to the ‘Banyamurenge’ rebellion and the formation of *Alliance des Forces Démocratiques de Liberation* (Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo- AFDL) under the leadership of Laurent-Désiré Kabila. In 1980s, after the Simba rebellion against Mobutu regime failed, Laurent Kabila, a former follower of President Lumumba turned to smuggling gold and timber on Lake Tanganyika. After, he was established in Dar-es-Salam in Tanzania where he ran a brothel and bar and did some petty trading in Uganda.⁷⁴ In the quest of a Congolese face for intervention in Zaire, President Museveni reportedly presented Laurent Kabila to President Kagame.⁷⁵ The Rwandan government first sought to take help from international community for any combined action but after failure in getting desired support⁷⁶, started informal talks with African leaders who finally agreed to support a joint military action against Hutu militants and, if need arises, to topple the most enduring regime of Africa – the Mobutu regime.⁷⁷ Finally in

⁷² William G. Thom, “Congo-Zaire’s 1996-97 Civil War in the Context of Evolving Patterns of Military Conflict in Africa in the Era of Independence,” *The Journal of Conflict Studies*, Vol. XIX, no. 2 (Fall 1999), <http://journals.hil.unb.ca/index.php/JCS/article/view/4358/5015> [Accessed January 15, 2014].

⁷³ Leaked UN Report Outlines Arms Trafficking," *Foreign Broadcast Information Service* (FBIS), 20 December 1996.

⁷⁴ The Economist, *Obituary of Laurent Kabila*, 18 January 2001

⁷⁵ Kevin C. Dunn, "A Survival Guide to Kinshasa: Lessons of the Father, Passed Down to the Son" in John F. Clark, ed., *The African Stakes of the Congo War*, Palgrave MacMillan: New York, 2004, p. 54

⁷⁶ John Pomfret, "Rwandans Led Revolt in Congo," *Washington Post*, 9 July 1997, p. 1.

⁷⁷ Thom, “Congo-Zaire’s 1996-97 Civil War.”

October 1996, the Rwandan army, supported by the United States, collated with the rebels of Eastern Congo, including both Tutsi and other ethnic groups, invaded Congo – then, Zaire. Rwanda was also supported by Burundi and Uganda and towards the seizure of Kinshasa Angola joined the coalition.

In the initial phase of the war, the fighting was limited to the Kivu provinces but then spread to the province of Haut Zaire, from where it advanced westward and finally extended to all important strategic areas of the country culminating in the fall, in May 1997, of Mobutu's regime in Kinshasa. In October 1996, the rebel groups formed *Alliance des Forces Démocratiques de Libération* (Alliance of Democratic Forces for Liberation-AFDL) under Kabila leadership who announced himself as “the leader of the revolution.” The alliance was made by a fusion of four party formations namely: the *Parti de la Révolution Populaire* (People Revolution Party-PRP) of L.D. Kabila; the *People Democratic Alliance* (Alliance Démocratique du Peuple- ADP) under Déogracias Bugera leadership; the *Conseil National de Résistance pour la Démocratie* (National Resistance Council for Democracy- CNRD) of André Kisase Ngandu and the *Mouvement Révolutionnaire pour la Libération du Zaïre* (Zaire Liberation Revolutionary Mouvement-MRLZ) led by Anselme Masasu Nindanga.⁷⁸ Kisase and Masasu will be later killed under suspicious circumstances.

For some, this involvement of AFDL in the fight was the main reason behind the change of objective from liberating Hutu refugees from Interahamwe militants to the determined intention of ousting the Mobutu regime.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Qui a tué Kisase Ngandu?, <http://www.lecongolais.cd/qui-a-tue-andre-kisase-ngandu> [retrieved 26 January 2014]

⁷⁹ Thom, “Congo-Zaire’s 1996-97 Civil War.”

For the international community the main concern was the severe violation of human rights. The Hutu militants were using the civilians as their shields and in just few weeks of flight deep in Congolese jungle, some 9,000 people were killed, most of them civilian. Although United Nations formed a multinational force as early as October 1996, it failed to do much in the war as the Rwandan army, for whom presence of foreign force was a hurdle to their military strategy, quickened their efforts for making the refugees returned to Rwanda. They launched attacks on almost all refugees' camps in a way to neutralize them and make sure the refugees are returned home. This resulted in collapse of the main reasons for launching a multinational force in Eastern Zaire and, thus, the role of UN in the war was compromised.⁸⁰ However, these early attacks in the camps resulted in splintering of refugees, many of which were sent to Rwanda but a large population fled to South and Northwest, providing another reason for AFDL and Rwandan army to advance further deep in the country.

As the army advanced toward Kinshasa, after getting successes in other areas of the country, efforts were made by Mobutu to solve the matter on table. However, with the passage of time, the resistance from Congolese army was declining till it reached to the point of almost non-existent. The table talks, therefore, failed to reach any conclusion as one party *i.e.* AFDL was sure of her success. One major reason behind this success of AFDL was of course the foreign support and assistance by the local population. Although the rebel fighters did face some resistance in Kisangani, they finally got successful in entering Kinshasa on 16 of May 1997 and in just three days they took full control of the capital city of Zaire. Mobutu has been already flown out of the country, so Kabila took his seat and became the president. Shortly after the

⁸⁰ "Second Exodus Could Halt Intervention," *Financial Times* (London), 19 November 1996.

establishment of his government, he changed the name of the country from Zaire to the Democratic Republic of Congo.

2.2.5. The Second Congo War

Just a year after the end of First Congo War and establishment of Kabila's government, the country found itself in another episode of bloodshed with the name of Second Congo War. It is perhaps wrong to mark a boundary between the two civil wars as the reasons for the two are same and the Second Congo War is more or less a continuation of the First Congo War with new actors. The government of Rwanda and Uganda, who have supported Kabila in gaining the government of Congo soon realized that the person does not has the abilities to stabilize the economy, to create national consensus by negotiating with opposition forces, to develop an ethnic balance, and by stopping members of ADF and Hutu militants from attacking Rwanda and Uganda.⁸¹

On the other hand, the Congolese population was not happy with the President for its failure in sending back the Rwandan forces and most believed his government to be a puppet government run through Rwandan and Uganda.⁸² The majority of public was also against the Congolese Tutsis and, as a result, the President started moving away from his prior allies. He made some new friends like Sudan and tried to gain support of Hutu militants for the protection of his government.⁸³ This definitely led to the further distancing between Kabila and Rwandan government and as soon as the President announced the exit of Rwandan army, he faced the

⁸¹ International Crisis Group, Congo at War: A Briefing on the Internal and External Players in the Central African Conflict, November 17, 1998

⁸² Thomas Turner, "The Kabila's Congo," *Current History*, Vol. 110, no 736 (May 2001): 217; Tatiana Carayannis, "The Complex Wars of the Congo: Towards a New Analytic Approach," *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, Vol. 38, no. 2-3, 241-242

⁸³ Jason Stearns, *Dancing in the Glory of Monsters: The Collapse of the Congo and the Great War of Africa* (Public Affairs, 2011) 183.

retaliation in the Congolese army. The government of Rwanda also took this announcement as opening of final knot and in August 1988, the Rwandan army was again entered in DRC with the objective of removing Kabila from the power.

Using the same strategy as past, the Rwandan government took support from rebel forces within DRC who joined together and formed a militia namely *Rassemblement Conglais pour la Democratie* (Congolese Rally for Democracy-RCD).⁸⁴ Unlike Mobutu, however, Kabila was still enjoying the support of some important regional actors like Angola and Zimbabwe who sent their troops in the country to protect the regime.⁸⁵ Some new actors soon joined the two parties as the war continued, with Burundi and Uganda on the side of Rwanda while Namibia, Sudan and Chad on Kabila's side.⁸⁶ In total, nine countries, two rebellion movements and more than twenty local and foreign armed groups were involved in the conflict.

From 1998 to 2003, the fighting continued killing thousands of people, a great majority of which were civilians and an uncounted number of crimes like abduction, rapes, looting etc. Finally in 1999, a ceasefire agreement was signed in Lusaka between all the regional states belligerents to end the war. The agreement was expected to end the conflict but due to the refusal of signing the agreement by rebel movements RCD and MLC it failed to stop the fighting and a small scale war kept continued in DRC.⁸⁷

The situation got further worsened with the assassination of Kabila in 2000, who was replaced by his son Joseph Kabila. However junior Kabila soon made some very good moves in favour of

⁸⁴ Reyntjens, *The Great African War*, 238

⁸⁵ Herbert Weiss, "War and Peace in the Democratic Republic of Congo," *Current African Issues*, Vol. 22 (2000), 14.

⁸⁶ Christopher Williams, "Explaining the Great War in Africa: How Conflict in the Congo Became a Continental Crisis" *The Fletcher Forum Of World Affairs*, Vol. 37, no. 2 (Summer 2013), 89-90.

⁸⁷ Steams, *Dancing in the Glory of Monsters*, 185-186.

peace and finally succeeded in agreeing the Rwandan and Ugandan forces to pulling troops back to their countries.⁸⁸

Finally in 2003, the signing of the Pretoria Peace Agreement with the participation of RCD and MLC resulted in the end of the Second Congo War. It was soon followed by the establishment of Transitional government in the same year. The new government installed a new constitution in 2005, under which elections were held in 2006 in which Joseph Kabila's party got notable success and he became the elected president of DRC.⁸⁹

2.3. Current Situation and Main Actors

No effort to reach at a peaceful solution to the conflict has yet been fruitful as the country is still suffering from chaos with horrendous attacks on civilian population by armed groups as well as Congolese military forces. According to Human Rights Watch's report, the Congolese army has been involved in crimes like killings, rapes, recruitment of under-age soldiers, and many other abuses. They have killed more than 730 civilians during military operation in September 2009 and around 105 in an attack on western Masisi territory in 2010.⁹⁰

During the presidential elections in 2011, crackdown of armed group was considered as the main political agenda, yet not much success has been seen so far. However, some notable events did take place that showed a positive side of the picture. Three years back, in 2011, the government took action against its own military as a Lieutenant Colonel and some of his officers and soldiers have been found guilty of mass rape in the town of Fizi.⁹¹ On 20 November 2013, one year after the commission of mass rapes in Minova, the DRC authorities have commenced prosecutions of

⁸⁸ "Kabila praises Kagame talks" *B.B.C. News*, February 7, 2001

⁸⁹ Seema Shekhawat, *Governance Crisis and Conflicts in Democratic Republic of Congo* (Working Paper No. 6., Mumbai: University of Mumbai, 2009) 8-9.

⁹⁰ UN News Center: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=37580>, [Last accessed 15 October 2013]

⁹¹ Dagne, *The Democratic Republic of Congo*, 1

the perpetrators. These mass rapes were perpetrated by soldiers of FARDC during their retreat after M23 had seized the city of Goma in November 2012. The government supported by MONUSCO's Force International Brigade and Forces has ousted M23 from Goma and North Kivu and went on into taking strong action against Allied Defence Forces (ADF/NALU) and FDLR. These actions constitute a very clear stance over the issue. The surrender of the M23 rebel group is a good sign, which if took positively and managed properly can lead to a period of peace in the region.

Like many other conflicts in the third world countries, the main actors in DRC conflict are state and non-state actors, internal and external. Amongst external actors some are regional and others global. Internal actors are the DRC government itself together with its army, *Forces Armées de la République du Congo* (Congolese Army- FARDC) and the diverse armed groups operating on DRC soil. Among those armed groups, some are foreigners like *Rwanda Democratic Liberation Front* (Front Démocratique pour la Liberation du Rwanda- FDLR) and *Allied Defence Forces* (ADF). External actors include powers such as USA and France, international organizations like United Nations (UN) and European Union (EU), neighbouring countries and regional organizations. Other external actors are multinational mining corporations and international criminal groups. A brief description of internal actors, their activities and objectives is important for the bird's eye view of the problem.

2.4. Conclusion

From the review of historical events leading to the current conflict situation in DRC, it is evident that the conflict cannot be studied from the usual realist lens of power hunger. It appears to be a war of survival, where the perception of "survival" is highly influenced by the colonial and post-colonial experiences of endurance of strong over weak. Not only are regional players fearful of

intervention from the neighbouring countries but the events in history also show that the desire for control of natural resources by international actors, and of establishing governments of their liking by the regional actors have posed another threat.⁹² The non-state actors have no hope of gaining their rights in the unjust and undemocratic societies of Africa and have therefore chosen the offensive and militant way to gain control over the resources and to establish their social identity in the country. The problem, therefore, can only be solved once there is justice in DRC that ensures that the basic human needs of all ethnic groups will be satisfied, including their right of identity, and the sovereignty of each state in the region will be respected by both the regional and international actors.

CHAPTER 3: REGIONAL MECHANISM TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION

3.1. Introduction

Conflict and Peace Studies emerged as a field after the WWII and since then, scholars of this field are constantly trying to come up with better and practical ways to prevent, resolve, and manage conflicts. Since the aim of this study is to assess the relevance and effectiveness of regional mechanism to DRC conflict resolution, the chapter discusses the concept of regional

⁹² Koen Vlassenroot and Timothy Raeymaekers, "Introduction" In ed. Koen Vlassenroot and Timothy Raeymaekers, *Conflict and Social Transformation in Eastern DR Congo* (Gent: Academia Press Scientific Publishers, 2004), 13.

mechanism to conflict resolution and its application in the African context. However, to build a strong foundation for that discussion, the chapter begins with the details on the concept of conflict resolution and its relationship with other conflict concepts. It is followed by the explanation of the difference between the conflict resolution mechanism and conflict resolution strategy and some suggestion on how to select the most suitable strategy or mechanism for any conflict. The lessons learned from this review of literature are given as the conclusion at the end of the chapter.

3.2. Conflict Resolution

Conflict Resolution emerged as a concept in the peace studies where its application was mainly to the armed conflicts between states.⁹³ Later the field gained importance because of the relevance to conflict resolution theories and concepts to unarmed conflicts as well and currently the term is being used by psychologists and human resource managers as well as peacemakers. There are many other terms related to conflict and peace studies that have also gained popularity in the recent years like conflict management, conflict prevention, and conflict transformation. In text and hand books these terms have been defined separately and are treated as different to each other. For instance Azar differentiates conflict resolution from the conflict management by placing conflict resolution as the last process of conflict management followed by the avoidance, prevention and settlement of conflict.⁹⁴ Similarly, many other writers conducted conflict resolution versus conflict transformation debates.⁹⁵

⁹³ Peter Wallensteen, *Understanding Conflict Resolution: War, Peace, and the Global System* (3rd edn. London: SAGE Publication, 2009), 5.

⁹⁴ Edward E. Azar and John W. Burton, eds., *International Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice* (Boulder: Lynne Reinner, 1986), 253-279.

⁹⁵ Dianna Francis, *People, Peace and Power: Conflict Transformation in Action* (Pluto Press, 2002) 28; John Paul Lederach, *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation: Clear articulation of the guiding principles by a pioneer in the field* (Intercourse: Good Books, 2003) 28-33.

Ramsbotham, Miall and Woodhouse, however, held that this debate on the label is irrelevant as whether we call them conflict resolver or transformer or manager or regulator, the main task they all are doing is same and that is settle disputes and conflicts peacefully through different means. They held that it is more appropriate to use the term conflict resolution for four reasons. First, it was the earliest to emerge in the field of conflict and peace studies while the other terms are relatively new to the field. Second, probably because of the first reason, it is more widely used than the other ones. Third, the general public and media are more familiar with this term than the other ones and lastly because other terms like conflict transformation are not determinate.⁹⁶ Therefore, conflict resolution can be used, and has been used in this work, as an umbrella term having a range at one end of which there is conflict prevention while at the other end there is conflict transformation. For this generic use of the term conflict resolution, the study has borrowed the definition from Schellenberg who defined conflict resolution, simply, as a marked reduction in social conflict whether achieved through conscious efforts or through environmental changes.⁹⁷

However, there should be no confusion between conflict resolution and peace as conflict resolution is not merely the absence of conflict but the readiness shown by the parties to live together without waging a war. In this sense it is more practical than peace but in other sense, it is also more specific than peace as it does not involve development of a system of justice and

⁹⁶ Oliver Ramsbotham, Tom Woodhouse and Hugh Miall. *Contemporary Conflict Resolution* (3rd edn. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011), 5-6.

⁹⁷ James A. Schellenberg, *Conflict Resolution: Theory, Research, and Practice*. (Albany: State University of New York, 1996) 9.

integration.⁹⁸ As put by Schellenberg, “not all attempts to resolve conflict lead to justice or mutual satisfaction.”⁹⁹

Gambari held that for durable resolution of a conflict, it is necessary to understand the root causes of the conflict as ending the causes will automatically end the conflict caused by them. These causes are not just limited to the political one but also include the economic, societal, and individual ones.¹⁰⁰

3.3. Conflict Resolution Strategies or Mechanisms

In the literature on conflict resolution strategy and mechanism, the term strategy or mechanism has been defined in quite a similar way. Caballero-Anthony defines conflict resolution mechanism as an umbrella term used to refer to any process, method, device, technique or “anything employed in a whole” for resolving or managing conflict.¹⁰¹ In his work he used the term mechanism and strategy interchangeably to refer to ways for conflict resolution and management. However, in this study, I have used the two terms as different from each other. Throughout the study, the term conflict resolution mechanism is used in a broader sense to refer to the main plan for resolution of conflict that is based on the level at which the conflict is resolved and the number and nature of actors involved in conflict resolution process. These mechanisms include global, regional and national mechanism of conflict resolution of which the main debate is between the first two.¹⁰²

⁹⁸ Wallensteen, *Understanding Conflict Resolution*, 10.

⁹⁹ Schellenberg, *Conflict Resolution*, 9

¹⁰⁰ Ibrahim A. Gambari, *Enhancing Global and Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Management and Resolution* (RSIS Working Paper No. 258, Singapore: S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, 2013), 1.

¹⁰¹ Caballero-Anthony, “Mechanisms of Conflict Resolution,” 41.

¹⁰² Joseph Leppgold, “Regionalism in the Post-Cold War Era: Incentives for conflict management,” In Paul F. Diehl and Joseph Leppgold, *Regional Conflict Management* (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 10.

Both global and regional mechanisms to conflict resolution are centred on the liberal idea of collective security that asks all nations of the world to consider any threat to the security of one state to be threat for security of all states¹⁰³ but the national conflict resolution mechanism is derived from the idea of the sovereignty of a state and its responsibility to resolve conflicts on its own. National conflict resolution is a realist idea that has no much more appreciation in the peace and conflict studies, especially in the Post-Cold War era.

On the other hand, the strategies to conflict resolution involve minor techniques employed to resolve conflict once the mechanism is defined. These include peacekeeping mission, negotiation, mediation, disarmament, arms control and many others. A single mechanism to conflict resolution can be planned with multiple strategies. Mechanism is therefore a broader term including conflict resolution strategies among many other factors.

Apart from the relevance to the selected mechanism, the selection of strategy for resolving a conflict is also based on the answers of a number of questions, few of which are: (1) What are the factors causing the conflict?; (2) How much time has been passed since the onset of the conflict? (3) How many and who are the parties to the conflict? (4) How many and who is/are the spoilers¹⁰⁴ to the peace process? (5) Which spoilers are included in peace process and which are not? (6) What efforts have been made in the past for conflict resolution and why were they unsuccessful?

¹⁰³ Gambari, *Enhancing Global and Regional Mechanisms*, 1.

¹⁰⁴ Spoilers are persons or groups who were part or not to the conflict resolution process, that seek to obstruct or undermine conflict settlement using a variety of means including violence. For more details, see: Edward Newman, Oliver Richmond, (ed.), *Challenges to Peacebuilding: Managing Spoilers During Conflict Resolution*, (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 2006).

Answers to these questions help a practitioner in understanding the complexity of the problem and in devising a solution most suitable to it. For instance, negotiation cannot work in win-lose situation or when the conflict is very old one rooted in the culture of the two societies. In these situations one first needs to prepare ground for negotiation through diplomacy and confidence building measures.

During the Cold War the entire focus was on the management and resolution of clashes between the two power blocs in order to avoid any possible confrontation between the two nuclear powers that can intensify into a nuclear war. The major wars were between nation-states and were actually the proxy wars fueled by the ideological clashes between the two blocs.¹⁰⁵ However, with the end of Cold War, the main threat to the peace of the world is from the intra-state wars or civil war fought within the border of one state.¹⁰⁶ One major problem with these intra-state conflicts is the complexity and ambiguity associated with it due to the absence of a clear battle ground and involvement of more than two parties, many of whom have implicit involvement through a militant group.¹⁰⁷ Furthermore, the main drivers of these intra-state conflicts are not the ideological divide as was the case in Cold War, but the dissatisfaction of some groups within states. This dissatisfaction is usually the result of unmet needs of these groups and the conflict is actually the outcome of the efforts of these groups to satisfy those needs forcefully.

The traditional strategies of conflict resolution and management like diplomacy and wars are not designed to deal with this ambiguity and there is need to create some new strategies or to revive

¹⁰⁵ Muzaffer Ercan Yılmaz, "Resolving Internal Conflicts in Post-Cold War Era: Is peacekeeping enough?" *Journal of Economic and Social Research*, Vol. 8, no. 2 (2006), 28-29.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 27.

¹⁰⁷ Santosh C. Saha, *Perspectives on Contemporary Ethnic Conflict: Primal Violence or the Politics of Conviction* (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2006), 7-12.

some neglected old strategies for dealing with such conflicts.¹⁰⁸ The new suggested strategies are power politics, transformation of conflict through reconciliation, structural prevention, and normative change.¹⁰⁹

3.4. Regional Mechanism to Conflict Resolution

With the establishment of United Nations and the victory of liberal democracy over communism, some pro-American scholars came up with the prophecies of a just and peaceful world where there will be no clashes over ideologies and all states will work together for prosperity and development.¹¹⁰ However, the hope soon dies with the outbreak of various wars in Central Asia, Eastern Europe and Africa. The global mechanism to conflict resolution through UN peacekeeping had failed and the need was felt to bring up new efforts that are more regionally centred. This revival of the regional mechanism to conflict resolution in the post-Cold War era is the result of a number of factors, as described by Diehl.¹¹¹

The concept of regionalism in conflict resolution literature is not a recently development one. Although United Nations was mainly founded on the idea of global conflict resolution, Chapter 8 of the Charter of United Nations also recommends for the settlement of disputes at regional level with the help of regional organisations. However, initially region was treated as an intermediate actor with the world or state serving as the main actor.¹¹² In the last decade, however, its

¹⁰⁸ Committee on International Conflict Resolution, "Conflict Resolution in the Changing World," in Committee on International Conflict Resolution, Paul C. Stern, and Daniel Druckman, eds. *International Conflict Resolution after the Cold War* (Washington DC: National Academy Press 2000), 1-3.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.* 4-9.

¹¹⁰ Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Avon Books, 1992), 287-321.

¹¹¹ Paul F. Diehl, "Introduction" In Paul F. Diehl and Joseph Lepgold, *Regional Conflict Management* (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 1-3.

¹¹² Björn Hettne and Fredrik Söderbaum, "A regional approach to conflict prevention and management" (Presentation, Conference on comparing different approaches to conflict prevention and management: Korean Peninsula and the Taiwan Strait. Program for Contemporary Silk Road Studies, Uppsala University, Stockholm, 16-17 December 2005), 2.

significance has increased with the success of EU and ASEAN in designing a conflict resolution policy and in maintaining relative peace in their regions.

Regional organizations were also present in the world even before the Cold War. They started emerging after the end of WWII but were initially based on the concept of regional security rather peace, and were highly influenced by the ideological contest during the Cold War.¹¹³ The end of the Cold War brought a new phase for the Conflict Resolution with the change in the nature and objective of regional organizations founded on the change in the nature of conflicts. Regional organizations that succeeded in surviving even after the end of Cold War made some changes in their structure and functions with respect to the structural changes in International system, which eventually resulted in renewed attention to the concept of regionalism and the growing recognition for the role of regional organization in conflict resolution and peace building.¹¹⁴ This renewed attention is with respect to the change in the nature of conflicts as most of the conflicts since the end of Cold War are regional involving actors from a specific region and, therefore, requires resolution through regional cooperation.¹¹⁵

Diehl gave another reason for the irrelevance of global conflict resolution for such conflicts. According to him, the post-Cold War regional conflicts are no more important for the economic and security interests of the world powers residing in Europe and Northern America. The only exceptions he provided are the Gulf war and the Civil Wars in Afghanistan.¹¹⁶ This seems untrue as the recent examples of Arab spring and African first and second wars can be put to explain the interest of US and Europe. The main reason is not the lack of interest but the lack of understanding of the ethnic and cultural roots of conflicts. Only regional powers have the

¹¹³ Caballero-Anthony, "Mechanisms of Conflict Resolution", 39; *Ibid.*, 1.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 40.

¹¹⁵ Wallensteen, *Understanding Conflict Resolution*, 210-211.

¹¹⁶ Diehl, "Introduction," 2.

potency to understand the dynamics of these conflicts due to sharing the similar historical experience. Furthermore, the increased focus on regionalism does not automatically refer to the denial of the importance of global mechanism to conflict resolution. But instead, as put by Hettne and Söderbaum, with this increased emphasis on regional mechanism to conflict resolution, “the relationship between multilateral (UN) and regional approaches have become strenuous and diffuse.”¹¹⁷

The role of regional actors is in particular important in case of mediation as these can better understand the problems of the party states due to shared culture and values. However, due to the direct security and political interest of these neighboring states, they are more prone to take sides and to exploit the situation if there is no regional organization or infrastructure to keep an eye on the mediation process.¹¹⁸

Among the various other tools for conflict resolution, the ones relevant to the regional mechanism are the ones matching with the institutional capacity of these regional organizations and are based on the level of abidance by member states.¹¹⁹ However, it does not mean that each conflict ought to be resolved as a unique one as it will undermine the strength of regional organization and will not allow them to extend the conflict resolution beyond a defined circumstance. Instead, the organization should define some rules and norms for conflict resolution in their region that all actors should accept in order to build a regional framework for conflict resolution.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ Hettne and Söderbaum, “A regional approach to conflict prevention and management,” 2.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹¹⁹ Caballero-Anthony, “Mechanisms of Conflict Resolution,” 42.

¹²⁰ Wallensteen, *Understanding Conflict Resolution*, 215.

3.5. Regional Mechanism to Conflict Resolution in DRC

Africa is among the most war-affected areas of the world where poverty, political chaos, societal backwardness, religious extremists, and cultural orthodoxy all play together to make situation worse than ever. Although there are some exceptions, majority of the clashes in the region are centered on regional politics and are the outcome of the local factors based on complex ethnic structure, shared colonial and imperial experiences, and clash over natural resources. During the Cold War, the two superpowers, especially US took care that these ethnic and religious clashes as well as dispute over access to resources did not escalate into civil wars by placing an imperial government of their choice that can control the situation. This also helped the US in exploiting the nature resources of the region but resulted in the creation of environment where struggle over natural resources became the first and foremost requirement for survival.

However, after the end of Cold War, these conflicts quickly became regionalized and civil wars erupted in the region. The governments did not receive the support of Western Powers as they were receiving during Cold War, and due to their ethnic and religious affiliations, were unable to get major support from the local population as well. They also kept on waging wars against each other in addition to mass murdering their own citizens. The result was further escalation of chaos in the region and the growing militancy in the masses as they are needed to secure their life, property, and identity endangered by the activities of government forces. With the increasing regionalization of the conflict, the need for regional solution to the problem has also increased.

A number of regional and sub-regional organizations have attempted to play their role in settling disputes peacefully in the region and in establishing a peace-friendly environment in Africa. And these efforts are not without success as these organizations have succeeded in mitigating the

intensity of violence and in managing conflicts that the UN and World Powers have failed to deal with. According to the report put forward by Wilson Center,

*“Nothing contributes more to this positive trend [in Africa] than the coming of age of the regional structures of Africa, primarily focused on economic integration, export and trade promotions and development. Increasingly, over the last decade, these regional bodies have begun to understand and to take on a prominent role in conflict resolution with their neighbors, both formally and informally.”*¹²¹

A brief detail of the regional and sub-regional organizations of Africa and their role in African conflicts and in DRC conflict is provided as follows:

Efforts to unite the countries of Africa and to provide a regional platform for solving their issues through talks have been going on for past many decades. In 1963 Organization for African Union (OAU) was established with the objective of promoting unity among the African states and to intensify cooperation among them in order to improve the lives of people of Africa.¹²² Peaceful settlement of disputes was among the cited principles of organization, as provided in its Charter.¹²³ The organization was later replaced in 2002 by African Union (AU) with little changes in the objectives yet the principle of resolution of conflict through peaceful means remain there. Gambari considered AU to be the “most developed regional organization in the developing world for conflict resolution and peace-keeping.”¹²⁴ Others also held that in case of regional approach to conflict resolution AU has better define charter and structure than OAU.¹²⁵

¹²¹ Steve McDoland, “Introduction” In Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, ed. *African Regional and Sub-Regional Organizations: Assessing Their Contributions to Economic Integration and Conflict Management* (Washington DC: The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, October 2008), 3.

¹²² Charter of OAU, Available from http://www.au.int/en/sites/default/files/OAU_Charter_1963_0.pdf [Last accessed January 18, 2014]

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ Gambari, *Enhancing Global and Regional Mechanisms*, 4.

¹²⁵ Amir Stepak, “African Organizations: Economic Integration and Conflict Management,” In Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, ed. *African Regional and Sub-Regional Organizations: Assessing Their*

The establishment of Peace and Security Council and the creation of African Standby Force (ASF) are initiatives meant for operationalizing the concept of maintaining peace and security at continental level. In African Great Lakes Region, International Conference for Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) is playing a significant role in addressing conflicts in the region. Its role in attempting to resolve DRC conflict needs to be stressed as the organization is at the origin of the Force International Brigade in DRC.

However, majority of the regional and sub-regional organizations in Africa are economic in nature like *Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)*, *the South African Development Community (SADC)*, and *Inter-Governmental Authority for Development (IGAD)*. Franklin Moore, the Deputy Assistant Administrator of USAID in Africa, held that the focus on economic growth and development is important yet it does not fulfill the more important need of peace and security for the region. He also pointed out that these economic regional organizations in Africa are better in resolving intra-state conflicts rather inter-state conflicts, which are more common in the region.¹²⁶

Nonetheless, as pointed out in the preceding chapter, the nature of conflicts in Africa are a mix of inter and intra-state conflicts as civil wars in DRC had involvement of many intra-state militant groups as well as neighboring states. These organizations, using principle of economic interdependence, can help greatly in reducing the involvement of state actors in the civil wars so that the states can have better control over the militant organizations in their respective states. For instance, SADC which is an economic organization has tried to intervene in the DRC conflict by appointing mediators and the members of this organization also helped DRC in

Contributions to Economic Integration and Conflict Management (Washington DC: The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, October 2008), 9.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 10.

surviving against the intervention by Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi in 1998.¹²⁷ More recently, Tanzania, South Africa and Malawi helped Congolese army, through the Intervention Brigade and under UN umbrella, to ousting M23 from North Kivu Province.

3.6. Conclusion

Among the various mechanisms and strategies to conflict resolution, regionalism has been found to have a potential to resolve the post-Cold War conflicts because of the several reasons including the change in International structure leading to lesser role of world powers in regional conflicts, the shift in the nature of conflict from ideological to ethnic and religious, and the success of the regional organizations like EU and ASEAN. The regional organizations of Africa have also played their role but they are yet unsuccessful in resolving many conflicts. However, the entire picture is not as gloomy as is often described because in the last few years a number of African states have democratized and their economy is grooming as well. Regional organizations have their share in this positive change and they seem to offer a very good platform for the resolution of DRC conflict, if utilized effectively.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

4.1. Introduction

In the second African war in DRC, there was involvement of seven state armies along with the local militant groups. Some of these militant groups were also getting support from neighbouring

¹²⁷ Gavin Cawthra, *The role of SADC in managing political crisis and conflict: the cases of Madagascar and Zimbabwe* (Mozambique: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2010), 11; 30.

states. The details of this involvement and the reasons behind this have been covered earlier in the Chapter 2. In this chapter we will analyse the role played by internal actors that include the DRC government and the various armed groups operating in DRC and external actors including the regional countries involved in DRC conflict and the international actors. We will analyse the role these regional and global actors can play in the resolution of the DRC conflict.

4.2. Internal actors

Internal actors include the DRC government and the armed groups that operate in DRC. These armed groups are either foreign militia fighting against neighbouring countries they come from or local militia that claim to fight against these same foreign countries or armed groups.

4.2.1. The DRC government

DRC's problems have roots in its colonial system, its post- independence political 'turbulences' and Mobutu dictatorial regime. DRC's history is characterized by a catalogue of domination and robbery. The DRC government has never succeeded to represent or protect its people. On the contrary, it has often served as a source of absolute power and personal enrichment. The current crisis in eastern Congo is partly rooted in this history of predation and corruption. Mobutu systematically used the country's mineral wealth to silence potential rivals, and to enrich himself and his allies. The amount of money stolen by Mobutu from his country is estimated at least \$5 billion, much of it deposited in international banks in Switzerland. After the end of Mobutu regime, the new government has been unable to protect and improve the welfare of the population and the situation has even worsened. According to the International Rescue Committee, since 1998, 5.4 million people have died and every month, more than 45,000 people die from hunger, preventable disease, and other consequences of violence and displacement. In

2009, over one million people have fled their homes within Congo due to armed conflict. Rape in Congo exists on a scale seen nowhere else in the world and Eastern Congo is certainly the worst place in the world to be a woman.¹²⁸ The crisis in DRC eastern Congo illustrates the historical patterns at the root of this conflict: as long as the Congolese government cannot control its territory, provide basic services or effectively protect its population, and as long as diverse armed groups are able to prosper from illicit trade in natural resources and complex regional alliances, eastern Congo will remain a battlefield and innocent civilians will continue to pay a tragically high cost.

4.2.2. Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda

One of the DRC problems is the fact some of the rebel groups are not from DRC but have their roots in other neighbouring countries. The Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) is a military group composed of Rwandan Hutus militia that was formed in 2003 during the last phase of Second Congo War. However, the militants that formed this group have presence in the Eastern Congo for over 15 years.¹²⁹ It is actually a continuation of ALIR, a group formed by the Rwandan refugees and combatants and, still, majority of the leadership is composed of the former members of former Rwandan army, the FAR.¹³⁰

According to the 2014 estimates, FDLR has strength of around 2,000 combatants.¹³¹ But due to the MONUSCO's DDR program, offensive Rwanda's campaign for voluntary repatriation, both coupled with poverty, hunger and diseases in inhospitable Congolese forests the figure has

¹²⁸ Human Rights Watch, World Report 2010: <http://www.hrw.org/world-report-2010/democratic-republic-congo-drc>

¹²⁹ Dagne, *The Democratic Republic of Congo*, 6.

¹³⁰ Hans Romkema and De Veenhoop, *Opportunities and Constraints for the Disarmament and Repatriation of Foreign Armed Groups in the DRC: The Cases of FDLR, FNL, and ADF/NALU* (The Wilson Center, 2007), 11.

¹³¹ MONUSCO, the Foreign Armed Groups, <http://www.monusco.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?tabid=10727&> [Retrieved May 7, 2014]

significantly reduced to around 2,000 combatants. The group has multiple political and military objectives including overthrowing the government of Rwanda.¹³² However, another *de facto* objective of the group is to protect the main leadership that has charges of genocide in 1994.¹³³ The group has been accused of being involved in the killings of Tutsis for past many years and its main leaders living in Europe were arrested. FDLR president Ingace Murwanashyaka and his deputy Straton Musoni were arrested in Germany in 2009 and the Executive Secretary Callixte Mbarushimana was arrested in France in October 2010 on charges of mass murder and crimes against humanity by the ICC.¹³⁴ United Nations Sanctions Committee has also sanctioned three other FDLR members, namely Gaston Iyamuremye, Felicien Nsanzubukire to its sanction list.¹³⁵ Therefore, the group is residing in DRC for the security sake and also to make some money through the financial aid coming from Congolese leadership and some individual refugees. The group is scattered in North and South Kivu.

4.2.3. Lord's Resistance Army

Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) is among the most brutal armed group in the area. The group is basically a Ugandan armed group that has been operating there since 1980s and has recently arrived in DRC in 2005.¹³⁶ For more than three years, the group did not get involved in many violent activities and was basically farming, poaching and mining in the localities of Garamba Park, in the Eastern province of Orientale. During that period, from 2006 to 2008, there were efforts to establish peace in the region and peace negotiations were being held to reach at an

¹³² The official website of FDLR gives out this objective, <http://www.fdlr.org> [Last accessed January 17, 2014]

¹³³ Romkema and De Veenhoop, *Opportunities and Constraints*, 11.

¹³⁴ Dagne, *The Democratic Republic of Congo*, 1.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

¹³⁶ Steven Spittaels & Filip Hilgert *Mapping Conflict Motives: Province Orientale (DRC)* (IPIS, 2010), 7.

agreement acceptable to all parties. Although the main leader of this group, Joseph Kony, took part in these peace negotiations, he did not endorse the peace agreement.¹³⁷

In September 2008, however, in reply to *Operation Rudia* by *Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies en République Démocratique du Congo* (MONUC) and Congolese army, the group started terrorist activities by targeting civilian population. The army responded to these terrorist activities by another operation, named Lightning Thunder. This further escalated the problem and resulted in large scale massacre by LRA, usually known as *Christmas Massacre*.¹³⁸ The brutality committed by LRA during that period including torturing, raping, maiming and killing of several civilians made it a symbol of violence and the first party to receive indictment in International Criminal Court.¹³⁹

Currently LRA is not enjoying a significant presence in DRC and it is mainly residing in Central African Republic and Sudan. Many of their commanders and combatants have either been killed during the operations or have surrendered. The estimated strength of the group in DRC is around 200 combatants. These combatants are mostly scattered in small groups due to the military operations launched against them.¹⁴⁰ Although LRA still claims to have a single political agenda of combating against the regime of Uganda, their actions seems more the result of the need of survival rather any political gain.¹⁴¹

¹³⁷ Van Puijenbroek J. & Plooijer N., *How EnLightning is the Thunder? Study on the Lord's Resistance Army in the border region of DR Congo, Sudan and Uganda* (The Netherlands: IKV Pax Christi, February 2009), 6-7

¹³⁸ Human Rights Watch, *The Christmas Massacre: LRA attacks on Civilians in Northern Congo* (Human Right Watch, February 2009), 17.

¹³⁹ Tim Allen, *Trial Justice: The International Criminal Court and the Lord's Resistance Army* (Lonon: Zed Books, 2006), 25-52.

¹⁴⁰ Spittaels and Hilgerrt, *Mapping Conflict Motives*, 8.

¹⁴¹ Spittaels and Hilgerrt, p.17.

4.2.4. National Congress for the Defence of the People

The National Congress for the Defence of the People or CNDP was formed in 2006 during conflicts in North and South Kivu. It was established in order to protect Tutsis of Eastern Congo from fighters of FDLR but was found to have involvement in many human rights violations and also fought a civil war with the Congolese army in 2008.¹⁴²

The founder and the main leader of the group, Brig Gen Laurent Nkunda, who has been accused of forcing some 230,000 people to migrate from Kivus¹⁴³, is now under house arrest in Rwanda. He was a former intelligence officer in the anti-Mobutu forces of President Kabila and left the army in 2005 to form a militia officially to protect his Tutsi brothers against Hutu militants.¹⁴⁴ With the arrest of the main leader and the signing and conduct of joint military offensive between Rwanda and Congo, *Operation Umoja Wetu* in 2009, the group split.¹⁴⁵ Most of the combatants joined Congolese army or other militant groups. The group was formally disbanded in 2012. However, some of its militants remained active even within the FARDC and it is believed that many of the members of M23 group were the ex-CNDP members.¹⁴⁶

4.2.5. Allied Democratic Forces

Founded by Ugandan Muslims, the Allied Democratic Forces or ADF is mainly present in Uganda-DRC border area, in Beni district. It is mainly a rebel group fighting against Ugandan government but has been involved in some activities in DRC as well. In 2010, the Congolese armed forces launched a military operation against them which caused notable damage to the

¹⁴² “The Crisis” *Raise Hope for Congo*. Available from <http://www.raisehopeforcongo.org/content/armed-groups> [Last accessed January 15, 2014]

¹⁴³ Stephanie McCrummen, “For Tutsis of Eastern Congo, Protector, Exploiter or Both?” *The Washington Post*, August 6, 2007.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁵ Dagne, *The Democratic Republic of Congo*, 6.

¹⁴⁶ “The Crisis” *Raise Hope for Congo*.

group. However, the FARDC failed to completely curb the group and it remained active in the region. Recently, in 2013, it attacked a village in Watalinga sector of North Kivu, abducting and killing civilians living there.¹⁴⁷

4.2.6. National Liberation Forces

The National Liberation Forces (FNL) is a Burundian rebel group that once again rebelled and took up arms against the Bujumbura government after the 2010 elections that were boycotted by the opposition. They use DRC's South Kivu province as a fallback base especially the Rusizi valley between Burundi, Rwanda and DRC.

4.2.7. Ecumenical Forces for the Liberation of Congo

The Ecumenical Forces for the Liberation of Congo (FOLC) is backed by former rebel leader and former DRC interior minister Antipas Mbusa Nyamwisi. It was active in Beni district in the northern part of North Kivu but has agreed to lay down its arms in earlier 2013.

4.2.8. Mai-Mai Militia

The Mai-Mai militia is not a unified group but is a combination of multiple militant groups having no political or military objective, other than defending their local territory. They were preceded by similar units in previous struggles, particularly the Simbas, who fought for the 'second independence'. The Mai-Mai supported Kabila's invasion but fought against the occupation of the Rwandan army and its allied militias. There are at least 20 Mai Mai factions. They operate in North and South Kivu, as well as in other regions, notably Katanga and Ituri. Some of the groups have less than 100 members and team up with other groups when they need

¹⁴⁷ "Wikileaks Cable: Uganda: Adf Clash With Updf Near Tourist Lodge". Embassy Kampala (Uganda): Wikileaks. 2007-04-17

to fight; others number more than 1,000. ¹⁴⁸These groups are usually formed as a reaction to the presence of foreign forces as they claim to protect their lands from these groups, which they consider invaders who are trying to seize their land and other resources. However, these ideas are not fully translated in their action, as the main targets of this group are innocent civilians and international organizations and they are mainly involved in activities such as looting, raping and killings for their own benefits. ¹⁴⁹ Some of these militia groups:

Mai Mai Tcheka: Led by Lieutenant Colonel Mayele a.k.a Tcheka, the group is one of the most deadliest groups. It is also known as Nduma Defence of Congo and is active in the Walikale district of North Kivu. The group targets FDLR combatants and Rwandan Hutu refugees.

Raia Mutomboki: This armed group claims to defend the local population against external ‘invaders’, especially the FDLR. The movement, which has four main factions, appeared in 2011. It carries out attacks against the FDLR and their families and against local Kinyarwanda-speaking communities. The movement, whose name translates as "angry citizens", is active in both North and South Kivu mainly in Shabunda and Masisi districts.

Mai Mai Nyatura: The group evolved from the former Hutu Mai Mai group PARECO or Resistant Congolese Patriots. Many of the fighters integrated into the DRC army during the 2009 reintegration process, but the remainder continued to fight, mainly against the M23.

¹⁴⁸ AFP, Democratic Republic of Congo's key armed groups, July 17, 2013 11:35pm

¹⁴⁹ Dagne, *The Democratic Republic of Congo*, 7.

Alliance of Patriots for a Free and sovereign Congo (APCLS): The group is based in Masisi in North Kivu. It represents the interests of the Hunde people and fights groups made up mainly of Kinyarwanda speakers, notably the M23.

Mai Mai Kifuafua: These fighters also operate in the Walikale area. They are drawn from the Tembo ethnic group whom they claim to defend interests.

Congolese Defence Forces (FDC): This vigilante group is active in Shabunda in South Kivu whose fighters call themselves 'Guides'.

Mai-Mai Kata Katanga: Based in north east of Katanga Province, this secessionist group claims to fight for the independence of Katanga Province because they have not benefited from its rich mineral deposits.

Armed groups operating in Ituri district: Three major ethnic groups, the Hema, the Lendu, and the Ngiti are involved in the conflict in Ituri. Under Thomas Lubanga Dyilo, the Hema formed the Union des Patriotes Congolais (UPC). The Force de Résistance Patriotique en Ituri (FRPI) was formed by the Ngiti and some Lendu in 2002, and Germain Katanga became the top commander of all FRPI forces. Some Lendu also formed the Front des Nationalistes et Intégrationnistes (FNI) led by Mathieu Ngudjolo Chui. In 2003, the FNI and the FRPI formed an alliance known as the FNI/FRPI. One year after, in March 2004, the DRC Government referred the alarming situation on all of its territory, including Ituri, to the International Criminal Court (ICC) and in June 2004, the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) opened its investigation into crimes committed in the DRC since July 1, 2002. Right now, the Prosecutor has initiated four cases arising from the situation in the DRC: the case of Thomas Lubanga Dyilo, the case of Germain

Katanga and Mathieu Ngudjolo Chui, and the case of Bosco Ntaganda. On 10 July 2012 Lubanga was sentenced to 14 years of imprisonment. Ngudjolo was acquitted on 18 November 2012 and released from custody on December 2012. Katanga and Ntaganda cases are still under investigation.

4.2.9. M23

M23 is a armed group formed in 2012 out of a mutiny by some army officers, most prominently Bosco Ntaganda and Sultani Makenga. It is believed that the government of Rwanda and Uganda were behind this mutiny but the group claimed that it was formed in response to the breach of peace agreement by the government that was signed in 23 March 2009 between CNDP and the government in order to integrate CNDP members into armed forces.¹⁵⁰

The group got hold of Goma in 2012 but later withdrew from it with the offer of peace talks. Brig Gen Makenga replaced Ntaganda and took the leadership of the group. After clashes between factions over leadership within the group, the leader Ntaganda surrendered before US Embassy in Kigali, providing another sign of the group's interest in solving the issue peacefully. Despite the international pressure, the peace negotiation never took a solid shape and in August 2013, the Congolese army supported by MONUSCO's Force International Brigade claimed to get hold over the main M23's strongholds. Finally in November 2013, the group surrendered and asked for diplomatic means to reach a solution.

4.3. Regional actors

Regional actors are countries and organizations from Africa and specifically from the Great Lakes region that have played or are playing a significant role in the DRC conflict. The role of

¹⁵⁰ Raise Hope for Congo, *The Crisis*, <http://www.raisehopeforcongo.org/content/crisis>, [accessed on 21 March 2014]

regional organizations like ICGLR has been already ... in chapter 3. In this section emphasis will be put on various regional countries that were involved in DRC conflict.

4.3.1. Rwanda

Although almost all neighbouring countries have played some role in the DRC conflict, Rwanda and Uganda are declared by the UN Panel of experts to be “the godfathers of illegal exploitation of natural resources and the continuation of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo.”¹⁵¹ Hutus that migrated from Rwanda to Congo are believed to be the main force of destabilization in the region. The civil wars in North Kivu during early 1990s were also the result of clashes between immigrants of Rwanda, mainly between Hutu and Tutsis.¹⁵² Similarly, during Second Congo War, not only Rwandan army took direct part in the war but the government of Rwanda also provided support to rebels in Congo and led to the formation and success of RCD. Currently, in a UN report on DRC conflict Rwandan government was accused of providing support to M23 group. Although the government is constantly denying its role in the DRC conflict reported by UN, some independent investigations have continuously accused Rwandan troops for supporting M23 insurgents.¹⁵³

The main concern for Rwanda remains the security threat by the FDLR who have not renounced to their attacks inside Rwanda. Also, the government in Rwanda has concerns over the killing of Tutsis in DRC by the Hutu militants. Thus, the demilitarization of these ex-FAR militias is critically important for improving the relationship between DRC and Rwanda. In the Lusaka Agreement of 1999, an effort was made to reach a cooperative mechanism to deal with these

¹⁵¹ United Nations, *Report of the Panel of Experts on Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of Congo* (New York: UN Security Council, 12 April, 2001), §221.

¹⁵² Luca Jourdan, “Being at War, Being Young: Violence and Youth in North Kivu,” ed. Koen Vlassenroot and Timothy Raeymaekers, *Conflict and Social Transformation in Eastern DR Congo* (Gent: Academia Press Scientific Publishers, 2004), 158.

¹⁵³ David Blair, “Rwandan Fighting an Illegal War in the Congo” *The Telegraph*, 24 November 2012.

armed groups. However, the mechanism failed to produce any result mainly because of the lack of trust from both sides and also because of the poor capacity of the governments in verifying and keeping an eye on the activities of the troops.

Later in 2004, another effort was made to improve the Lusaka Accord. The Tripartite Agreement that was sponsored by the US was aimed to deal with the issue of illegal militant groups in the Great Lake region. In 2005, it was further expanded to include Burundi and has been successful so far in dealing with many problems. However, the problem is still far from solved, owing mainly to the lack of trust.

The interest of Rwanda in DRC is not only ethnic in nature as provided in previous chapters but also economic. Although Rwanda is also rich in terms of natural resources, it has made a good sum of profit by smuggling tin, tantalum, and tungsten and selling them out to the world with Rwandan labels.¹⁵⁴ The minerals smuggled from Congo are, thus, important to balance the trade deficit of Rwanda and are one important motive behind the support to Tutsi rebels in DRC. These Tutsi are victim of Hutu's and DRC troops' punitive activities and need Rwanda's support against them. In return, they help Rwandan government in getting their share of mineral resources of DRC.

Considering this closer role of Rwanda in DRC conflict, it is clear that no peace agreement can be fruitful without involvement of Rwanda. The United Nations also needs to play its role in making Rwanda stop supporting militant activities in DRC and although sanctions have been

¹⁵⁴ John Prendergast and Sasha Lezhnev, "Rwanda the key to Congo's peace" *CNN Global News Views*, 1 November 2013, <http://edition.cnn.com/2013/11/01/opinion/lezhnev-prendergast-congo-rwanda/> [Last accessed 23 February 2014].

found to be useful in this regard¹⁵⁵, focus should also be given to the security and economic factors underlying the issue. Prendergast and Lazhnev provided a very good solution to convert the economic motive for Rwandan role in conflict into a reason for initiating peace. They suggested,

*“Rwanda and Congo can grow together if Rwanda becomes a gateway for international businesses to invest in Congo's natural resource sector, while attracting investors on the basis of good roads, electricity, transparent business regulations and banking institutions.”*¹⁵⁶

4.3.2. Uganda

Uganda played its role in both First and Second Congo war supporting the Tutsi's groups in Congo against the militant Hutus migrated from Rwanda. Uganda was a strong supporter of Kabila's government yet soon, due to the inability of Kabila in controlling Allied Democratic Front's attacks on Uganda, it joined hands with Rwanda in thwarting the Kabila's regime.¹⁵⁷ However, since both states have their own interests in the country, the clashes between Uganda and Rwanda over control of land in Congo resulted in the division of RCD in a Rwandan supported section of RCD and a Ugandan supported section namely RCD-*Mouvement de Libération* (RCD-ML). However, Uganda's policy of divide and rule also caused internal problems and clashes in RCD-ML.

All these divisions and clashes had direct impact on the politico-military landscape of Congo as each rebel group got control over different areas of the country and kept fighting with each other

¹⁵⁵ United Nations, “Rwanda and Uganda distance themselves from DRC conflict” *eNCA*.
<http://www.enca.com/africa/rwanda-and-uganda-distance-themselves-drc-conflict> [Last accessed 23 February 2014]

¹⁵⁶ Prendergast and Lezhnev, “Rwanda the key to Congo's peace.”

¹⁵⁷ Christopher Williams, “Explaining the Great War of Africa,” 88.

over control of more land and natural resources.¹⁵⁸ The country, consequently, was divided into different regions under control of different rebels group.

Just like Rwanda, Uganda has also rejected the report by UN Commission and held that it is “a compendium of rumours deeply flawed in methodology, sourcing and standard of proof.”¹⁵⁹ In 2005, International Court of Justice (ICJ) has also accused Uganda for smuggling natural resources of Congo during its five-year control of Congo’s border area. Solutions similar to one pointed out above with regard to Rwanda are applicable in the case of Uganda as well. However, since US has a notable role in supporting Uganda’s economy, it can pressurize the government for finding a peaceful solution to the problem. And the last developments where Uganda acted as a mediator between DRC government and the M23 rebels indicate a significant change of US policy towards the region.

4.3.3. Burundi

Burundi has been suffering from civil war much before the onset of civil war in DRC and has lost about 200,000 lives in these conflicts.¹⁶⁰ It will not be wrong to say that what the world is now seeing in the DRC is an outcome of the spillover of civil war and genocides in Burundi, Rwanda and other neighbouring countries.¹⁶¹ Clark agreed with this connection between civil wars in Burundi and DRC and gave a detailed explanation of how the ethnic conflict spread to Congolese soil in 1990s and not earlier.

“Congo-Kinshasa was the theatre for the other conflict born of precocious state failure... The dramatic deflation of state authority attending a decolonization gone awry was cushioned

¹⁵⁸ Koen Vlassenroot, “Reading the Congolese Crisis,” ed. Koen Vlassenroot and Timothy Raeymaekers, *Conflict and Social Transformation in Eastern DR Congo* (Gent: Academia Press Scientific Publishers, 2004), 51.

¹⁵⁹ Xan Rice, “Uganda rejects UN report on war crimes in Congo,” *The Guardian*, 2 October 2010, 2.

¹⁶⁰ Crawford Young, “Contextualizing Congo Conflict: Order and Disorder in Postcolonial Africa,” In John F. Clark, ed. *The African Stakes of the Congo War* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 14.

¹⁶¹ Herbert F. Weiss, *War and Peace in the Democratic Republic of Congo* (Nordiska Afrikaninstitutet, 2000), 1.

initially by the security and logistic presence of UN peacekeeping force throughout the country. The UN withdrawal and final exclusion of most Lumumbist followers from the Kinshasa regime by late 1963, led to the decision by a number of key Lumumbists in October 1963 to launch an armed uprising. Regime complexion in neighbouring Congo-Brazzaville and Burundi offered initial bases for this enterprise. The weakened condition of state fabric, unusual in the 1960s but widespread in 1990s, permitted a rapid snowballing expansion of rebel forces, especially in the east.”¹⁶²

One important factor that contributed to this spread is the refugees that migrated from Burundi after 1993 coup and from Rwanda after 1994 genocide. Several hundred thousand immigrants from Burundi and Rwanda not only resulted in intensification of local versus non-local conflict but also brought the Hutu-Tutsi conflict to DRC. These refugees served as the major threat to the regime of Mobutu who was apparently not fully aware of the problem and failed to manage the refugee camps effectively.

The role of Burundi during First Congo War is subject to controversy. Filip Reyntjens believed that in the First Congo War, although the government in Burundi was in support of Rwanda and Uganda, not much military support came from there.¹⁶³ However, Mobutu constantly accused Burundi for training and militarizing the “Banyamulenge” – the Tutsi population living in the eastern border area of DRC¹⁶⁴. And Clark agreed that after 1998, the Hutu militant groups of Burundi have built close links with the Hutu rebels in eastern DRC and have been the main source of arms supply in the country. Also, during Second Congo War, Burundi assisted the anti-Kabila rebels.

Burundi had some security interests in DRC. Being a minority Tutsi-based government, Burundi felt threatened from the Hutu militant groups like Forces for the Defence of Democracy (FDD) and National Liberation Forces (FNL) that have been using DRC as bases for conducting attacks

¹⁶² Young, “Contextualizing Congo Conflict”, 20.

¹⁶³ Filip Reyntjens, *The Great African War: Congo and Regional Geopolitics, 1996–2006* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 42, 61.

¹⁶⁴ Osita Afoaku, “Congo’s Rebel: Their Origin, Motivations, and Strategies,” In John F. Clark, ed. *The African Stakes of the Congo War* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 171.

inside Burundi.¹⁶⁵ In addition to it, some authors argue that there are economic reasons behind the support of rebel groups in DRC as well. Through these rebel groups, they say, Burundi, just like Rwanda and Uganda, exploits the natural resources of DRC, an accusation that has always been refuted by the three countries. Furthermore, in the areas under control of Hutu rebels, majority of consumer goods are exported from Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda, which are sold at higher prices.¹⁶⁶

As a result of the tripartite agreement, the relationship between DRC and Burundi has now improved.¹⁶⁷ In 2010, refugees living on both sides of borders were arranged by UNHCR to return to their respective countries as these refugees are the main target of ethnic violence and also a major cause of tension between the two countries.¹⁶⁸ Efforts have also been made to revive the agriculture in the border area of DRC and Burundi in order to create employment for refugees.¹⁶⁹ In 2001, DRC also removed the case it had filed against Burundi in International Court of Justice. So there is much hope in the case of improving relationship between the two states.

4.3.4. Angola

In the First Congo War, Angola supported the Rwandan intervention in DRC. At that time, the interest of Angola in DRC was focused on countering the rebel group UNITA that was against Angolan government and since UNITA was getting support from Mobutu, it was in favour of Angola to get rid of Mobutu regime. In the Second Congo War, nevertheless, Angola changed its

¹⁶⁵ Thomas Turner, *The Congo Wars: Conflicts, Myths and Reality* (New York: Zed Books, 2007), 10.

¹⁶⁶ Clark, *The African Stakes*, 209.

¹⁶⁷ Dagne, *The Democratic Republic of Congo*, 4.

¹⁶⁸ IRIN, "In Brief: Thousands of DRC, Burundi refugees to return home" *IRIN News*, 28 September 2010. <http://www.irinnews.org/report/90608/in-brief-thousands-of-drc-burundi-refugees-to-return-home> [Last accessed 24 February 2014].

¹⁶⁹ Crisis Group Africa, *Understanding Conflict in Eastern Congo (I): The Ruzizi Plain* (Bruxelles: International Crisis Group, 2013), 8.

side and instead of realigning with Uganda and Rwanda it supported the Kabila regime. The main reason behind supporting Kabila was to avoid any escalation of conflict that can lead to power vacuum as crisis situation eventually would have helped UNITA in getting stronghold in Southern Congo and in exploiting the diamond reserves of Angola. For this reason, Angolan forces were the main block for RCD in their attempt to move southward toward the smuggling of arms and diamonds, further escalating the issue.¹⁷⁰

Weiss considers the shift in Angolan policy in favour of Kabila as a “cutting edge of the difference between” first and second Congo Wars and that this decision had “a determining impact not only on the war, but on the entire political evolution of Central Africa.”¹⁷¹ It was the Angolan support that had the surprising effect on Rwanda and Uganda, as a result of which Kabila got the time to gain support of more African friends like Zimbabwe, Namibia, Chad and Sudan. Had Angola not been supportive of Kabila’s regime, it would have been fallen even before the entry of any other African country.¹⁷² Despite all the positive effect of this support on Kabila’s government, it was a wrong policy in terms of Angolan national interest. Later events revealed that although Angolan army got successful in avoiding creation of a power vacuum, it failed in getting control over UNITA and their military operation against UNITA in 1998 was an utter failure that costs the army serious losses. The shift in balance of power, on the other hand, helped UNITA establish their stronghold in the country.¹⁷³

Angola, however, has shown some inclination toward peace process. In 1999, Angola was also involved in the Lusaka agreement as a result of which it withdrew its forces from DRC. It is also member of International Committee to Accompany the Transition (CIAT), an International body

¹⁷⁰ Naidoo, 92

¹⁷¹ Weiss, *War and Peace*, 15

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 16.

aimed to facilitate peace agreements and inter-state cooperation in the region.¹⁷⁴ This does not, however, mean that the government of Angola has established peaceful relationship with DRC. The tension is still there as evidenced by the expulsion of Congolese refugees from Angola in 2010, majority of which were women being detained by Angolan forces for over a two week and were raped and tortured before they were expelled to their country of origin.¹⁷⁵

4.3.5. Chad

Chad was among the allies of Kabila's government in the Second Congo War.¹⁷⁶ In a summit meeting, Chad agreed to provide logistic support to the government against Tutsi rebels and send an armed troop of 2000 members. Some believe that France was behind Chad's involvement in Second Congo War, as France wanted to regain influence over Great Lake Region after its failure to get control of Rwandan genocide.¹⁷⁷

However, Chad received severe criticism because of that involvement as its soldiers were accused of grave human rights violation including looting, murder and rape. As a result of the pressure from human rights organizations and global actors, Chad finally withdrew its forces quite earlier.

4.3.6. Namibia

The main interest of Namibia in DRC is also mainly material in nature. During the time of Second Congo War, Namibia's President Sam Nujoma was running family business in mining and many of the family members were interested in getting easier access to mines of DRC. Since

¹⁷⁴ Zoë Marriage, *Formal Peace and Informal War: Security and Development in Congo* (Oxon: Routledge, 2013), p.125.

¹⁷⁵ IRIN, "ANGOLA-DRC: Expulsions."

¹⁷⁶ Weiss, *War and Peace*, 14, 17.

¹⁷⁷ Clark, *The African Stakes*, 65.

there were not many security interests of Namibia in DRC, President suffered from severe criticism from its citizens and opposition politicians for involving Namibian army in a foreign war.

4.3.7. Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe played a significant role in Second Congo War and was among the main supporters of Kabila's regime. It not only sent its National Army to fight on Congolese soil but also its modern air force and Special Air Service. Zimbabwe troops provided notable defence to Kinshasa and its air force caused serious destruction to rebel army blocking their entry into the capital.¹⁷⁸ The noteworthy success of Zimbabwe forces is evident since their recapturing of Inga Dam from rebel occupiers which was the main source of electricity for the capital.¹⁷⁹

Since Zimbabwe did not share a border with Congo, just like Namibia, it does not have similar security threats as that of Rwanda, Uganda or other neighbouring countries. The main interest of Zimbabwe in DRC is economic. An evidence of this economic interest is outlined in the confidential report of UN Investigation Panel that held that during the Second Congo War, Zimbabwe was aiming to "consolidate its well-established presence in the local commercial structure" and used its troops for the same purpose.¹⁸⁰

4.3.8. South Africa

Although South Africa does not share borders with DRC, it is an important regional actor when it comes to peace making in African continent. It has shown both the capacity and political will in resolving the conflict of DRC in the past and has often hosted the dialogue program between

¹⁷⁸ Clark, *The African Stakes*, 129.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 97-98.

¹⁸⁰ Koen Vlassenroot and Timothy Raeymaekers, "Introduction" ed. Koen Vlassenroot and Timothy Raeymaekers, *Conflict and Social Transformation in Eastern DR Congo* (Gent: Academia Press Scientific Publishers, 2004), 29.

the conflict parties. For instance in 2002, Thabo Mbeki mediated the dialogue between DRC and Rwanda that resulted in the agreement of Rwandan government to withdraw their troops from Congolese soils in return of assurance from Kabila's government of controlling the ex-Far militia's activities against Congolese Tutsis and stopping their attacks on Rwandan border area.

Some authors on conflict studies believe that this creation of post-Apartheid South Africa as a regional hegemony is a Western strategy to devise an African solution to the African problem after finding out that the African countries do not trust the Western mediators.¹⁸¹ However, in my opinion it will be very narrow analysis of the situation as the emergence of regional solution to the problem is not mere the Western strategy to make their favoured states take the role of peacemakers but rather an systematic response to the changes at the global level. As pointed out earlier, this regionalization of peace process is a post-Cold War phenomenon and was the outcome of the emergence of one superpower in the world. Therefore, the role of South Africa in DRC conflict should not be taken with scepticism. Nevertheless, South Africa should not be the only regional actor working as a mediator and sponsor of African peace process. Other countries who are not party to the conflict can also play their role in this regard. The participation of Tanzania and Malawi as members of SADC to the International Force Brigade (IFB) under MONUSCO in DRC constitutes a new and positive move within the framework of regional conflict resolution.

4.4. International Actors

The role of international actors in DRC conflict is crucial. The present section is aimed to relook at the DRC problem with special regard to the policies and activities of international actors,

¹⁸¹ Jonas Ewald, Anders Nilson, Anders Narman, and Patrik Stalgren. *A Strategic Conflict Analysis for the Great Lakes Region* (Sweden: SIDA 2004), 40.

including both foreign states as well as the international organizations like UN, World Bank, IMF etc. However, before analysing the role played by these international actors, the researcher has given a brief account of the issues that international actors can play in resolving the DRC conflict. The purpose of highlighting the issues is to differentiate the role of international actors in regional mechanism of conflict resolution with their role in the global mechanism. It was deemed important to explain that regionalization is not to neglect the other important actors and to focus only on the regional ones but to prioritize the problems in a way that regional actors serve as the main players while international actors facilitate this regionalization.

Once the issues have been identified, the researcher has individually examined the role played by international donors like World Bank, IMF, UN, EU, USA and France. While examining their historical role, the researcher has tried to find answer to the question on why these actors intervene in DRC problem and what benefits or drawbacks they caused to the peace process in DRC.

4.4.1. Issues for international Community to Intervene

One important issue for the international community and civil rights activists is the presence of militant groups in the DRC that serve as a threat to neighbouring countries like Rwanda and Burundi. The issue, which was present in the region for last many decades, has now become more clear and publicized with the improving relationship at the government level of DRC with Rwanda and Burundi. The international players are concerned about moderating and modulating the activities of these militant groups. The first step being the recognition of these armed forces and their involvement in the peace talks, there is still much to do for the normalisation of situation. This is because there is still presence of FDLR in the Eastern DRC that need to be

controlled and countered in order to further improve the relationship with neighbouring countries and to make them agreed to respect the sovereignty of DRC.

Despite the fact that this issue has been highlighted several times by the governments of Rwanda and other neighbouring states during peace processes as an argument to explain their intervention in DRC, the International community and Congolese forces have usually overlooked its importance in the past and have even rejected it at some points. Many civil activists and scholars reject this argument of African countries on the ground that during the two civil wars, the Rwandan and Ugandan militant forces co-existed with these Hutu militants instead of combating with them. The real reason behind such intervention, as has been provided in the last chapter, is claimed in works on DRC conflict to be economic in nature. The western thinkers usually came up with the view that the main attraction for neighbouring countries is the natural resources present in DRC and presence of these militant groups is used just to give justification for entering in DRC and to exploit the minerals of the country.

Although the economic dimension of the issue is rightly at the core of the conflict, the security and political dimension is equally important to be considered. Since recently international community has started recognizing and accepting this argument, serious efforts are being made to talk to these militant groups and to convince them, through force or negotiation, to repatriate. The positive results have started coming out like the expulsion and demobilisation of many Hutu militant groups and the sentencing of some rebel groups' founders by the International Criminal Court.

The regular armed forces of all foreign countries including Rwanda have now left the Congolese territory. In addition, Ugandan government has announced that its army will no more enter into

the Congolese soil again. Although this does not mean that the Ugandan government will stop indirectly keeping its influence in DRC, it is a good sign that shows that the peace talks are at least making good progress in terms of improving inter-state conflicts. The remaining problem that needs to be solved on emergency basis is the support provided by the African governments to the internal militants. Since these African countries reject this accusation and claim that they have no links with these militants, it is important to first make them recognize the links and then to denounce them. To achieve this end, important steps have already been taken. The governmental visits between Rwanda and DRC are a good way forward to the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two states. The international community should play its role in the diplomatic development. The best step to be taken in this regard to help the government of DRC is to remove the main justification for which these foreign elements enter into its territory- that is the militant organization within the country that are accused to causing security threats to neighbouring states. Once there is no justification for intervention, the economic element can be dealt with the help of negotiation and creating economic interdependency among the African nations.

In terms of internal situation, there is not much for the international community to be done. There is continuation of ethnic and racial clashes in the country but many argue that this violence has much deeper roots than the “main conflict pattern in Eastern DRC.” However, since many of these conflicts are over the access to land and resources, there is requirement to improve the living standard of people of DRC and to provide them education and health facilities. This development sector is best suited for International community to work on. With the better living conditions in the country and employment for the youth, there will be notable decline in the

recruitment of young people in militant organization, the only option currently available to youth in many Eastern areas of DRC.

4.4.2. Key International Actors

Although the number of international actors that have played a certain role in DRC is more than the one described here, the researcher has chosen only those key actors that have not only played an important role in the history of DRC, but are also having their interest in the region. Other important actors whose role was limited to specific time have not been selected. For instance, Russia's limited interest in Africa died after the Cold War and although there are indications that shows the reemergence of Russia as a global power, its activities are not large enough and thus, it cannot be considered as a key international player. Similarly, although UK and Germany did send some missions to DRC, they were through EU and these two countries have not shown any particular interest in DRC problem by now except some official declarations and positions supporting to the US.

4.4.2.1. International Financial Institutions

Since the problem of DRC is a need-based problem, as theorized in the start and has been narrated in the previous chapters, resources are required in order to fulfill the material needs of the region. The role of international donors is of particular importance in this regard. According to the estimates given by the Swedish Development Agency- SIDA, almost three fourth of the amount donated by international community is being used for humanitarian purpose, and the remaining one fourth is used in health, education, social and management sectors.¹⁸² This percentage shows the importance of international aid for the development of DRC.

¹⁸² SIDA, 171.

Due to the civil wars in the Congo, the international financial institutes like World Bank and IMF were showing reluctance in financing the economy of the country. However, in the past few years after the establishment of Joseph Kabila's presidency, these financial organizations have returned and, in 2002, when a donor's conference on DRC was held, some 2.5 billion USD were promised for the development purposes by the international donors. This positive response shows that the international donors have higher hopes from the Joseph Kabila's government. The government will have to play its role in promoting this positive image in order to improve the living conditions for general people of DRC, so to remove an important cause for the development and progress of non-state actors threatening security and peace in the country.

4.4.2.2. United Nations

The United Nations has made a number of efforts in the DRC conflict with regard to establishing peace in the region. It was the UN Security Council (UNSC) that pressurized the African countries to have a ceasefire after the first civil war through diplomatic and political means. The result was Lusaka peace agreement, which though have not yet been fully implemented was successful in ending the intervention of foreign forces in DRC for a temporary period. Later on, however, each country and rebel groups started blaming each other for violation of ceasefire. The UN efforts were also fruitful in convincing MLC for ending their rebel movement but it did not work out in case of RCD that refused to sign Lusaka agreement and kept attacking the opposing military. The attacks of RCD provided Rwandan and Ugandan army a justification to continue fighting in Congo and different Mai-Mai groups started emerging in order to defend different small ethnic groups.

The Mai-Mai groups were usually led by the tribal leaders or war lords who wanted to protect their own community or village from external invasions. However, since these Mai-Mai groups

are very large in number and do not have any cohesive elements among them, the UN cannot effectively include these groups in the peace talks and cannot easily convince them of disarmament.¹⁸³ There are other local factors as well because of which UN has failed to stop killings after Second Congo War as it had done after first Congo War.¹⁸⁴ However, many efforts have been made so far including the creation of the peacekeeping mission named MONUC or Mission of UN in Congo. The purpose of this mission, initially, was to implement the Lusaka peace agreement, to ensure the release of prisoners of First Congo War, and to monitor and support the humanitarian activities in Eastern and other parts of DRC. In 2004, the mandate of MONUC was revised by UNSC to include the preparation, management and conduction of elections in DRC in providing infrastructure and finance. Later on, MONUC was transformed into MONUSCO (Mission of UN for the stabilization of Congo). There are different units of MONUSCO currently operating in the DRC for child's protection, civic education, disarmament, and troop mobilization.¹⁸⁵

MONUSCO is an effective peacekeeping mission with good enough material and human resource to fulfill the given objectives. In 2000, MONUC had the strength of 5537 individuals which was increased to 8500 in 2002 and by 2005, it has doubled to 16000. Today, MONUSCO has some 22000 military personnel sanctioned by UNSC to maintain peace and order in the country. Although the strength of UN peacekeeping mission has kept on increasing, the situation in DRC is not yet under control. One major problem is with regard to the mobilization of peacekeeping forces and their own security as majority of these peacekeeping missions are

¹⁸³ Khan, 331

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁵ Khan, 333.

directed to Eastern provinces only.¹⁸⁶ However, recently, the situation has improved and the MONUSCO forces have been able to establish the writ of government in all regions except the Kivu provinces.¹⁸⁷

One important task that has been successfully performed by UN forces is to demobilize the non-state militant groups in the region in order to establish peace. For this purpose, not only UN peacekeeping force has arrested some of the leaders of militant groups for being involved in war crimes, but has also supported DRC forces in combating against rebel groups like FRLR and LRA. In 2006, these UN peacekeeping forces have arrested Gedeon Mutunga, a Mai-Mai group's leader, and later in 2010 another leader named Colonel Mayele was arrested by MONUSCO in Kindu Province. However, these arrests cannot ensure security in the region because some of the arrested people later fled from the prison. Also some other groups reemerged after the arrest of leadership with a new name and leadership but same ideology and objective. UN should play its role in disarming these groups and in convincing them to take part in democratic process instead of using militant means to satisfy their needs.

Apart from peacekeeping, the UN played a significant role in conducting research in the affected areas to highlight the poor humanitarian situation in the region. In these UN reports of early 2000s, important details are provided regarding the activities of Mai-Mai groups and it is clearly narrated in these reports that the main factor leading to the creation of these Mai-Mai groups is the need of protection and survival.¹⁸⁸ Details of other militant groups as well as the activities of

¹⁸⁶ Bravier (2008)

¹⁸⁷ UN Security Council, *Report of the Security Council mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo* (S/20Y c10/288, 30 June 2010), 2.

¹⁸⁸ UN, "UN peacekeepers in DR Congo on alert amid signs of new rebel build-up," *UN News Centre*, 23 December 2008, http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=29401&Cr=democratic&Cr1=congo#.UxT8C_mSySo [Available 4 March 2014]; UN General Assembly, "Situation of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo" A/55/403, 20 September 2000.

government militias are also provided in details in these reports that serve as guideline for any organization wanted to work in the region and are also a good source of data on DRC for research students like me. These reports also helped international courts in investigating the situation in the region and in providing unbiased justice to the parties to the conflict. It is on the basis of these investigative reports that the International Criminal Court (ICC) has passed rulings against some rebel leaders of DRC.

ICC is also an important actor when it comes to the conflict in DRC. In ICC and International Court of Justice (ICJ), some important leaders of rebel groups and states are tried for their involvement in war crimes and human rights abuse in DRC. The two courts have passed rulings against some of the accused including some state actors like Uganda that was ruled to compensate the government of DRC for human rights abuses in their country. However, many critics view this role of ICC as an intervention in the peace process rather than a promotion of it. They claim that the prosecutions of rebel groups' leaders after they have found guilty in the ICC could negatively affect the peace process by reducing the incentives for these rebel groups to negotiate, which will lead to further rebellious attitude.¹⁸⁹

Despite all these activities MONUSCO forces have received severe criticism from many commentators. The main criticism is on the influence of Western powers in the UN activities and it is claimed by critics that the MONUSCO is basically promoting the interests of Western powers in Africa.¹⁹⁰ Another issue is with regard to the wrongful use of power by peacekeeping forces. In particular when some armed personnel of MONUSCO were found to be involved in

¹⁸⁹ Grono, and O'Brien, "Justice in Conflict?" 15.

¹⁹⁰ Khan, 334

cases of rape, smuggling and similar other crimes, it was a major source of shame for UN peacekeeping efforts.

4.4.2.3. United States

The role of US in establishing peace in the region in the recent years is not something one can neglect as they participate to the financing of peace process and are main financial contributor in the UN. However, there is much controversy regarding the US intervention in the region both during and after the Cold War. It played a notable role in the overthrow of non-aligned Prime Minister Lumumba and in installing pro-US Mobutu during after DRC independence. Later on, through Rwanda, it helped Kabila in overthrowing Mobutu, thus keeping a state of unrest in the region, instead of helping the citizen establishing a democratic government.

Even if we look at the role of US in African region in the post-Cold War era, there are a number of issues which shows that the US governments have flaws, whether intentional or unintentional, in their policies of pronouncing peace in the region. Mwesiga Baregu, in his research on DRC conflict, termed United States to be the leader of “imperialists” operating in DRC whose main interests revolve around lust for power and wealth.¹⁹¹ Some evidence from the history proves so. The USA supported the Kabila regime for its interest in the exploitation of natural resources of DRC as Kabila was providing them easy access with many incentives. There are also reports regarding the US companies’ covert role in fuelling the two Congo Wars for monetary gains.¹⁹² Although US Africa Command (AFRICOM) claim that there are no military activities of US forces in Africa, in an investigation being conducted by Tom Dispatch, it was revealed that just

¹⁹¹ Mwesiga Baregu, “The Clones of ‘Mr. Kurtz’: Violence, War and Plunder in the DRC,” *African Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 7, no. 2 (2002), 35.

¹⁹² John Kakande, “US Army Operated Secretly in Congo,” *allAfrica.com*, June 17, 2001.

opposite to what is being claimed by AFRICOM, there is notable military intervention in DRC by the US forces and it is increasing after the 9/11 incident.¹⁹³

Also, the US Special Forces and Private Military Contractors were deployed in the region to train rebels on both sides so the war industry of US can have a place to sell their weapons.¹⁹⁴

Baregu further asserted that US and other European forces have “failed to reach a meaningful consensus on the mobilization of an effective peacekeeping force and hence prolonged the war.”¹⁹⁵ Khan has elaborated this point further and has criticized US for keeping its activities limited to the funding of peace process and not sending its armed troops in the peacekeeping forces.

Even today, the US government is being criticized for its support to Rwanda and Uganda as it has not imposed any pressure on these countries except a few “symbolic sanctions,” despite the UN reports confirming their involvement in war crimes.¹⁹⁶ This is partially because of the economic reasons as American companies have invested heavily in these countries and also because these armies are serving the interests of US in gaining political and economic influence in DRC. The US government, along with other Western governments, was also found to press the UN panel in exonerating the names of US companies involved in human rights abuses.¹⁹⁷

4.4.2.4. European Union

One cannot overlook the positive activities being conducted by EU for peacemaking and conflict resolution in the DRC. EU has sent both military and civilians mission to the DRC at different

¹⁹³ Nick Turse, “America’s proxy wars in Africa,” *The Nation*, March 13, 2014.

¹⁹⁴¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁵ Baregu, “The Clones of ‘Mr. Kurtz’,” 35.

¹⁹⁶ Inside Story Americas, “The US’ role in the DR Congo Conflict,” *Al-Jazeera*, 29 November 2012, <http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/insidestoryamericas/2012/11/201211295425270859.html> [Last accessed 11 March 2014]

¹⁹⁷ Decla Walsh, “UN cuts details of Western Profiteers from Congo Report,” *The Independent*, 27 October 2003.

occasions in order to maintain peace there and to do the developmental work for the improvement of living conditions of people of Eastern DRC.¹⁹⁸ It was among the main financiers of Lusaka peace agreement and has also mediated in peace talks among different actors of DRC conflict. EU was also among the major financiers of the elections in the country that were held in 2006.¹⁹⁹ However, in the recent elections of 2011, EU was not much satisfied with the results.²⁰⁰

However, critics have pointed out certain flaws in the EU policy towards DRC and have made recommendation for improvement. The Open Society Foundation, for instance, believe that a new peace process is needed for DRC and particularly recommends EU to explicitly condemn the neighboring African countries for their involvement in the exacerbation of ethnic conflict in DRC, stop sending financial aids to these countries except for humanitarian purposes and to demand for the end of Rwandan's turn to take non-permanent seat in Security Council till the end of its support to rebel groups in DRC.²⁰¹ For the longer term, the EU should develop benchmarks to examine the progress of its activities for the end of corruption, electoral and judicial system reformation, and law formation for respect of human rights and freedom of expression in DRC.²⁰²

Piccolino have also praised the EU for the improvement in its role in DRC yet have pointed out some important flaws in its policies like lack of coherence between the conflict management activities and humanitarian activities, failure in addressing the issue of the involvement of neighboring African countries in the crisis, and prioritization of short-term objectives over more

¹⁹⁸ Nicoletta Pirozzi, *The European Union's Crisis Management After Lisbon: Addressing New Security Challenges in the 21st Century* (Working Paper. Istituto Affari Internazionali, 2013) 10.

¹⁹⁹ Khan, 335

²⁰⁰ "DR-Congo elections: Joseph Kabila confirmed winner," *BBC News*, 16 December 2011.

²⁰¹ Marta Martinelli, *Statement on the EU's role in addressing the DRC Crises* (Open Society Foundation, December 2012), 2

²⁰² *Ibid.*

important long-term goals.²⁰³ Also the amount of financial aid given to DRC by EU is comparatively very low as compared to the amount given to other African countries.²⁰⁴

Apart from these flaws in the activities and policies of EU towards DRC, there is another much bigger problem regarding the interest of EU in the region. Jean Shaoul asserts that the main objectives behind this EU's financial aid to DRC is not humanitarian but political and is for getting greater influence over the country.²⁰⁵ One important objective is to prove the capacity of EU in resolving conflicts in the region and to show its power in comparison to United States and United Nations.

However, recently, due to the China's financial support to African governments, the EU has lost its influence over the region and is feeling deceived. Therefore, it is planning to increase its military intervention in the region instead of sending aid and civilian commissions.²⁰⁶ In the EU policy paper, it is clearly mentioned that the "Europe cannot continue to focus only on a soft power approach" and justifies a revised global policy with increased militarization in the guise of peace operations. With regard to this increased militarization policy of EU, one should keep in consideration the historical fact that the first EU troops deployed out of Europe were in DRC in 2003 with a French-led force named Artemis.

4.4.2.5. France

Rwanda is a former German colony and former Belgian mandate. After independence, the country became a close friend of France, notably during President Habyarimana's regime until

²⁰³ Giulia Piccolino, "A Litmus Test for the European Union? The EU's Response to the Crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo from 1996 to the 2006 Elections" *European Foreign Affairs Review* Vol. 15, Issue 1 (2010), 115–136.

²⁰⁴ Catherine Gegout, "Causes and Consequences of the EU's Military Intervention in the Democratic Republic of Congo: A realist explanation." *European Foreign Affairs Review*, Vol. 10 (2005), 434-435.

²⁰⁵ Jean Shaoul, "In the Name of 'peace', the European Union readies for war," *World Socialists Web Site*, 28 February 2014. <http://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2014/02/28/eumi-f28.html> [Accessed 15 March 2014].

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi. Therefore, unresolved problem of Tutsi in neighboring countries caused an escalation of the conflict, when RPF Inkotanyi launched an attack over the regime of Kigali. The attack was followed by the massacre of Tutsi in Rwanda and culminated into genocide. The Habyarimana regime was finally overthrown, resulting in migration of Hutus to the neighboring Congo (then Zaire) and Tanzania. During the war and genocide, France helped the former government and in 1994, it carried out the “Operation Turquoise” which helped the former government, Ex-Far member, Interahamwe and a population of two million in migrating to Eastern Zaire in order to regroup.²⁰⁷ During First Congo War, when Rwandan and Ugandan armies along with Tutsi militant attacked on Zaire and tried to overthrow Mobutu regime, it was believed that the France would play its role in saving the regime. However, at that time France was struggling with the poison caused by the bitter experience of belated Operation Turquoise in which it received severe international criticism. It didn’t want to involve its forces in any African conflict.²⁰⁸ It is also believed that Paris underestimated the strength of anti-Mobutu forces and was unable to predict the impact of Rwandan conflict and First Congo War on the French power in the region. However, now it is quite clear that the end of Mobutu regime at the hand of non-French forces was “a disaster for Paris and its francophone allies in Africa.”²⁰⁹

There seems to be no change in the policies of France toward Africa as it still struggles to regain its influence over the region and put an end to the Anglo-Saxons’ influence. It is claimed in one report that the France has gain considerable strength in MONUSCO and using this UN peacekeeping force as guise to save its interests in Eastern DRC.²¹⁰ France was also the main contributor to Artemis – EU military mission in DRC - with the highest number of armed

²⁰⁷ “French attempt to save face in DRC fuels instability in EAC,” *in2eastafrika.net*. Available from <http://in2eastafrika.net/french-attempt-to-save-face-in-drc-fuels-instability-in-eac/> [Last accessed 11 March 2012].

²⁰⁸ Thom, “Congo-Zaire’s 1996-97 Civil War,” 24.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

²¹⁰ “French attempt to save face in DRC fuels instability in EAC.”

personnel and convinced that other member states of EU in conducting the first ever military operation outside Europe. The reason behind this active role of France is not mere limited to its desire to regain influence over the region but also to compete with NATO in its growing global reach.²¹¹ More recently, the main concern for Paris was M23 rebel group now defeated and it is suspected to wanting to provide safe heavens to FDLR and Mai-Mai groups in the Eastern DRC in order to save French influence that was brought to an end after the First Congo War.²¹²

4.4.2.6. Multinational Corporations

UN reports have recently revealed the negative role being played by the Multinational Corporations (MNCs) in the region. A number of MNCs are found to be involved in the exploitation of natural resources, labor laws breaches, and human rights abuses. Yet the Western governments are behind these MNCs and are trying to keep their name hidden.²¹³ According to another UN report, “Corporations from around the world have sought to profit from exploiting the DRC’s natural resources on the cheap – particularly coltan, a mineral used to produce cell phones, laptops and video game consoles.”²¹⁴

The Human Rights commissions have also found that some foreign companies are not directly involved in exploitation but are helping the foreign forces in exploitation of resources in order to avoid identification.²¹⁵ Similar findings have been reported in another study where it is concluded that the MNCs are involved in illegal businesses in DRC but they “don’t operate on

²¹¹ Gegout, “The EU’s Military Intervention in the Democratic Republic of Congo,” 437-438.

²¹² *Ibid.*

²¹³ Walsh, “UN cuts details of Western Profiteers.”

²¹⁴ United Nations, *Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo* (UN Publications, 2001), 4.

²¹⁵ United Nations Human Rights, *Democratic Republic Of The Congo, 1993–2003*. August 2010. Available from http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/ZR/DRC_MAPPING_REPORT_FINAL_EN.pdf [Last accessed 19 March 2014]

their own – they have indigenous collaborators who make it difficult to organize an international embargo.”²¹⁶

4.5. Conclusion

Most of the important militias operating in DRC have been supported by the neighbouring states and the government has been unable so far in disarming and exiling these armed groups because of this support. The main reason behind this failure is the focus of the International community and DRC government on the militant groups and use of force to combat them. Instead if focus gets shifted to the causes behind the regional support of these militant groups, the problem can get solved much easily and quickly. One important pre-requirement for any peace process to get successful is the removal of all bases posing security threats to Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda. Similarly, economic interdependence should be used as a measure to counter the economic interests of regional actors in DRC and for this purpose International community can play a vital role.

The above analysis reveals an important flaw in the efforts conducted so far regarding the solution of DRC conflict at regional level. These efforts often involved only one or two of the parties to the conflict. The conflict, nevertheless, requires a comprehensive regional approach having involvement of all stakeholders whether the state actors or the non-state actors.

Important steps that the international actors can take to ensure normalization of situation in DRC include to promote, facilitate and finance the peace process and to remove the hurdles in the way of regionalization in Africa, like transnational militant activities. Since the state actors recognize these international organizations, they can play a vital role in resolving issues between DRC and

²¹⁶ Billy Batware, *The Role Of Multinational Corporations In The Democratic Republic Of Congo* (EPU, 2011), <http://acuns.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/RoleofMultinationalCorporations.pdf> [Last accessed 19 March 2014]

other neighboring states. With regard to internal situation, where there is presence of many ethnic groups, much can be done by international actors through well-advised economic support of DRC government and humanitarian activities.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Conclusion

In the previous chapters of this study, specific issues pertaining to regional mechanism to conflict resolution in DRC are discussed and explained. This chapter begins with an attempt at a look at the research questions and then the conclusions and recommendations are made. The chapter also includes recommendations for future researchers who would want to conduct studies on conflict resolution or DRC problem and for policy makers and practitioners.

Since the present research cannot cover every single aspect of the problem, some questions were selected in the initial phase of research to specify the aspects the researcher wanted to research about. The purpose of individually addressing each question is not just to evaluate the extent to which this research has covered its scope, but also to highlight each phenomenon specifically in order to give each one of them its due share of attention.

The first question of this research was “what is the potential of the regional approach to the resolution of DRC conflict?” It was basically purposed to understand the feasibility of the regionalism in the DRC conflict in consideration to the political, economic and social situation in the country. Since the main problems leading to the civil wars in DRC are ethnic and identity-based with involvement of non-state actors and the international actors have been unsuccessful in the recent history in resolving these problems, regionalism seems to have high potential in resolving the conflict in DRC. This can also be on the basis of the success of regional organizations in Europe and South East Asia. However, critics may argue that each region has some unique features and the success of ASEAN or EU cannot be taken as a justification for the success of AU. Therefore, the researcher reviewed the specifics of Africa and in particular the

Great Lakes region to see the potential of regionalism and found that they also show high potential for regionalism.

While examining the history of the DRC problem, the researcher found that the roots to the DRC problem lie deep in the history and the main issue that is being constant throughout the post-colonization of Great Lakes region is the absence of national borders in their true sense. It is worthy to note that most of the rebel groups currently operating in the DRC were found to be originated in the neighboring countries of DRC. The first and second Congo wars are basically regional wars with clear involvement of regional forces. Even recently, when the national forces of Rwanda, Uganda and other countries have withdrawn from DRC, the main rebel groups operating in DRC are being supported in a way or another by different regional actors. On the other hand, many rebel groups locating in DRC are involved in attacking the border countries. Thus, no solution to the problem can be identified without involvement of these regional actors.

Another reason for which regional approach seems to have higher potential to conflict resolution is the nature of the conflicts in DRC. The economic competition over natural resources combined together with the struggle of ethnic groups for identity and survival and the colonial legacy of rebellious civil movements are rooted in the African culture. For a foreign force, it will be hard to understand the complexity of the culture and the struggle for social identity. Practical solution to the problems with consideration to local needs and situation can be better provided by the leaders of the region itself and, thus, regional mechanism to conflict resolution in DRC can be fruitful.

The second question was regarding the role of regional actors in resolving DRC conflict. The review of literature revealed that the common colonial experiences are binding the African

regional states together but the economic competition over natural resources and the complex web of ethnicities over the region are making them opponents of each other. USA and other western powers 'effort of keeping a forced peace in the region during the Cold War has failed and the Post-Cold War with its globalization variables has modified the existing apparent equilibrium in the region. We are seeing today a natural outburst of US-imposed dictators' brutality towards certain ethnic groups and disrespect and neglect towards the fulfillment of basic human needs living in the region. Therefore, the situation in DRC is not completely unique and we can see similar ethnic conflicts and economic competition in the other states of the region as well. It is, therefore, in the interest of all to sit together and find a solution to this problem.

It was also found that the DRC conflict was not an internal problem which can be controlled through combating the rebel groups. There is clear evidence of the involvement of regional national forces and support of African states to certain rebel groups. With regard to the intervention of neighboring states in DRC conflict, it is important to take in consideration that the difference in the ethnic and national borders is the main factor behind this intervention. Since ethnicities living in DRC are spread beyond the boundaries of DRC, it is difficult to keep the affairs of DRC separate from the affairs of other neighboring countries having similar ethnic groups. Particularly, when one ethnic group feel threatened from the government of one state, they tend to seek support from the other members of ethnic groups living in the other state. Similarly, on gaining power in one state, each ethnic group wants to strengthen the similar ethnic groups in other neighboring countries.

Although some see these transnational activities of ethnicities in the region to be the outcome of the lust of power of each ethnic group, the researcher have found important economic and social reasons behind this support. The severity and intensity of the ethnic conflicts in the region is

rooted in the difficulty of these ethnic groups in getting recognition and participating in political activity.

Therefore, the main role regional actors can play for the establishment of peace in the region is to support the DRC government in putting in place inclusive politics that can satisfy all the Congolese. At the same time the DRC government should be encouraged in taking strict actions against rebels attacking the neighboring states. To end suspicion and mistrust between DRC and his neighbors, countries ought to be made economically interdependent through mutual trade agreements or even better through economic integration. In this regard, efforts to rejuvenate the Economic Community of Great Lakes Region Countries (CEPGL) need to be supported by AU and International Community.

The third question was regarding the role of international actors in supporting the regional solution to DRC problem. From the study, it was found that these international actors can help in facilitating peace process among regional state actors of Great Lakes region. However, they cannot play much role in ending the ethnic clashes and in dealing with the non-state actors. These problems are specifically to be solved by the regional actors alone, yet the international actors can do the humanitarian activities and can help the regional actors in implementation of any solution they came up with.

On the basis of the review of literature and investigative reports on DRC conflict, the study is able to draw some important conclusions. These are: (1) the DRC conflict is a complex one having a number of factors operating behind it. The colonial and imperial experiences have made people of DRC and of Africa to use military means for getting their basic rights. The intervention of international and regional actors for the exploitation of natural resources is another important

dimension. The ethnic identity getting prominence over the national identity is the factor behind transnational activities of rebel groups and their support from neighboring states; (2) Although many see the issue from a realist perspective believing the intervention by Rwanda and Uganda to be an outcome of power lust, the historical review shows that these states were fighting a war of survival and the peace is only possible through justice. Similarly, it is the need of basic necessities such as good health, education, decent life but also security, identity and political participation that is causing local groups to rebel and use militant means. Establishment of a multi-ethnic democratic government in DRC that ensure social justice is therefore needed to end this conflict; (3) regional approach has the high potential to solve the problem because of multiple reasons including the ethnic and identity-based nature of the conflict, the involvement of regional forces and transnational activities of rebel groups, the failure of international actors in establishing peace in the region and the success of regional actors in other cases; (4) the main role of regional actors is to respect the sovereignty of other states and to stop supporting the rebel groups in DRC. Regional organizations can provide a good platform for establishing peaceful ties among the regional states and in stopping them from using militant means to fulfill their needs; (5) the international actors can facilitate and support the peacemaking process carried out by regional actors but should not be allowed to intervene in the internal matters of the states.

5.2. Recommendations

Conflict resolution is a vast field of research and variety of methodologies has been used in the studies on conflict resolution. The methodology the researcher has selected for this study, *i.e.* desk-based qualitative method, is recommended for future conflict resolution studies on popular conflicts on which a bulk of literature has already been published. Through using secondary data in this study, the researcher has allowed himself to focus entirely on the critical analysis and

discussion of collected data rather on the collection. Considering the time and resource constraints for student researchers, desk-based research is strongly recommended. However, field-based research is a necessity for any recent conflict on which not much research has been done.

For future studies on DRC conflict, the researcher recommend to adopt a more specific approach looking at each dimension of the problem identified in this research. For instance, in future, researchers can study the economic causes of the problem and the extent to which economic interdependence can solve these problems. Much has been written on the ethnic and identity-based nature of the problem and there is need to look at economic and social dimensions of the problem in the future.

From the conclusions given above, some important suggestions have been found for AU, the government of DRC, the traditional leaders and the African states. AU is recommended to boost the use of the principle of economic interdependence for removing the economic causes of the conflict.

The government of DRC needs to use both force and diplomacy for demilitarizing the rebel groups as it provides the justification for neighboring states to intervene in DRC. However, demilitarization can only bring temporary peace in the region unless it is ensured that all ethnicities can enjoy security, freedom and basic human needs under DRC government. The DRC government needs to fully integrate Rwandophone community politically, economically and culturally and avoid seeing it as foreigners or simply as “half-citizen”. A devolution policy could allow relative autonomy and competitiveness between state entities and boost economy that could in return improve livelihood of people and suppress repetitive unrests. The DRC

government needs to take advantage of its geopolitical location- bordering nine countries, located between three regional important economic blocks, using two oceans for its trade-, its abundant mineral as well as huge forest and water resources, to operate economic transformation and alleviate poverty of its population which is source of endemic conflict. This demands a citizen-centered democracy, good governance, profound reform of security sector and a visionary and committed leadership.

The role of community leaders, the civil society, the church, local NGOS and private sector in the conflict resolution process in DRC has always been neglected. Yet, these community-based groups enjoy large confidence among the people because of their shared values and social networks. Traditional leaders and civil society should be fully involved in finding lasting solution to the DRC conflict.

The regional governments are recommended to increase support to regional integration, regional approach to conflict resolution and to work together for the peace and prosperity of the region and of Africa for their own good. In order to ensure maximize the chances of success in finding solution to DRC problem, there is need to harmonize collective intervention mechanisms between regional and sub-regional organizations such as UN, AU, ICGLR, SADC, EAC and CEPGL.

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