

## **Banditry and conflict in the kapotur triangle An Alternative Menu for Resolution**

### **Abstract:**

Since the late 1980s, the conflicts in northwestern Kenya and the eastern pans of Uganda have been increasing in both intensity and magnitude. Even though these conflicts differ from conventional wars, defined as violence between states or organized political groups for political motives, they share characteristics that can easily qualify them as wars. To begin with, they are fought using well-organized armed groups. Each group seems to fight under a certain clear identity that rivals the state. But unlike regular wars, these are implicitly declared. Encounters are intermittent, informed by several dynamics such as weather patterns and objectives sought after by the ruling elite. Over time, state capacity to provide security (and indeed demonstrate its sovereignty through monopolization of means of violence) in the Kapotur-' continues to be contested. This article analyses the dynamics of conflict in the Kapotur triangle. The article argues that conflicts in this region are a consequence of the dysfunctionality of the state at the internal level and collapse at the regional level. Any effective response must therefore presuppose state reorganization at both levels, to facilitate effective penetration and control of the society, infrastructural development, access to resources, and value-sharing on the part of frontier citizens. The article is organized into three sections. Section one contextualizes conflicts in the Kapotur region as a whole; section two examines the political economy of violence in the triangle in the post-election period; and section three discusses the dialectics of stabilization