

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
INSTITUTE OF DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

UNOFFICIAL DIPLOMACY AS A TOOL OF CONFLICT
MANAGEMENT IN THE GREAT LAKES REGION:
An assessment of Track One-and-a-Half diplomacy in the 1993
Burundi conflict

YOYUGI Cynthia Caroline Akinyi

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
EAST AFRICANA COLLECTION

This dissertation is submitted in partial fulfillment of the award of the degree of Master of Arts in International Studies at the Institute of Diplomacy and International Studies, University of Nairobi.

September 2006

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ABSTRACT

This study proceeds from the premise that in a world where tragedy and insecurity posed by the threat and actual existence of conflict is everybody's nightmare, conflict management and resolution consequently becomes every individual's business, not just the preserve of international bodies such as the United Nations Organisation, incumbent heads of state and accredited diplomats. In such a climate, therefore, steps to bring about the resolution of conflicts can also be taken by individuals, especially with the backing of accredited and credible regional organisations.

The study presents the historical background to the Great Lakes conflict with particular emphasis on the chronology of events as they unfolded in Burundi. It then shows how the events in Burundi link up with the wider conflict within the region. International responses to the unfolding conflict in Burundi and how these responses eventually lead to the appointment of track one-and-a-half diplomatic facilitators to the Burundi peace process are also analysed. Thereafter follows a presentation of the approaches and efforts of the appointed track one-and-a-half diplomatic facilitators to the Burundi peace process. The study eventually highlights the achievements and frustrations faced by each of the track one-and-a-half diplomatic facilitators involved in the Burundi peace process. The assessment takes into consideration the context and limitations of the prevailing socio-political climate in Burundi.

In conclusion, the study flags the important role played by track one-and-a-half diplomatic facilitators in the Burundi peace process. It also offers recommendations that could be taken into account by regional and broader international bodies when appointing or choosing track one-and-a-half diplomatic facilitators to act in similar circumstances.